Note: Green underlined text is proposed new language; red stricken text denotes language to be deleted.

Policy 1986-04-A: *Program Review*

Adopted: July 15, 1986
Effective: July 16, 1986
Amended: October 17, 1991, October 9, 2003, and October 6, 2016

Background: The high-value and relevant academic programs of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education universities prepare our students for success in their lives and careers in our global society. Periodic program review is a best practice in American higher education that involves stakeholders in the continuous improvement of existing academic programs and programs in support of the student experience. Such review includes an analysis of past performance that is used to inform present and future directions and decision-making. The review process must be integrated with strategic-planning and budgeting processes, with regional and specialized accreditation processes, and with student-learning outcomes assessment. Criteria that direct the implementation of this policy can be found in the System Procedure/Standard for review of academic programs and programs in support of the student experience.

A. Definitions

1. Academic Programs. All programs defined in Board of Governor's Policy 1985-01-A: Requirements for Initiation or Change of Credit-Based Academic Programs. This includes all academic degree programs (academic majors) along with all tracks/concentrations, academic minors, and certificates.

2. Programs in support of the Student Experience. A broad network of programs and services delivered either in-person or virtually that directly contributes to students' educational experience and fosters student success. Examples of such programs may include the library, student life, enrollment services (e.g. undergraduate admissions, graduate admissions, bursar, and registrar), public safety, judicial affairs, financial aid, counseling, athletics, residence life, Greek life, student union and student activities, health and wellness programs, career services, academic support services, diversity and inclusion programs, tutoring, advising, and disability services.

3. ~~Academic Program Sustainability. A component of a comprehensive assessment process that uses quantitative completion data to assess the current and future sustainability of an academic program.~~

4. Modified Review: A modified review is for academic programs subject to specialized accreditation.

The modified review shall include the accreditation report, the accreditor's recommendations/suggestions, and any criteria for the *five-year academic program review* which were not addressed in the accreditation review process.

B. Purposes of Program Review

1. To assure deliberate and continuous attention to enhancement of the quality and to assess mission centrality of academic and academic programs and programs in support of the student experience within State System universities.

2. To ensure compliance with regional accreditation standard related to educational effectiveness. Middle States Commission on Higher Education requires assessment of student learning and achievement for all programs, all levels, and regardless of instructional modality.

3. To ensure compliance with regional accreditation standard related to supporting the student experience. Middle States Commission on Higher Education requires assessment of all programs and services that enhance the quality of the learning environment, contribute to the educational experience, and foster student success.

4. To analyze and employ quantitative and qualitative data, including student-learning outcomes, academic program ~~sustainability~~ completion metrics, and program effectiveness related to individual programs which will contribute to both university and State System planning.

5. To provide the chancellor and Board of Governors, as well as the council of trustees of each university, with assurance that university programs are being assessed in a systematic fashion and that plans for making continuous improvements are developed, implemented, and communicated.

C. Guidelines for Program Review

1. <u>Cycle</u>. All university programs not subject to specialized accreditation shall be evaluated at least once every five years; when deemed necessary, the university president (or designee) or the Chancellor (or designee) may require a shorter review interval for given programs. At least once every 10 years (or more frequently at the University's discretion), each program not subject to specialized accreditation shall be reviewed by an appropriate external evaluator. Programs with specialized accreditation will conduct a modified program review as outlined in the System Procedure/Standard for academic program review and programs in support of the student experience. Exceptions to the modified review will be given on a case-by-case basis by approval from the Chancellor or designee.

2. <u>Criteria for Full Review of Academic Programs</u>. In consultation with State System Universities, the Office of the Chancellor shall establish criteria for the academic program reviews. These criteria will be detailed in the System Procedure/Standard for academic program review and programs in support of the student experience.

3. <u>Criteria for Full Review of Programs in Support of the Student Experience</u>. Review criteria for reviews of programs in support of the student experience will be determined by the individual university.
These criteria shall support the university continuous improvement efforts and Middle States accreditation requirements.

D. Reporting

1. The president or designee shall keep the council of trustees apprised of program reviews and their outcomes.

2. The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will develop an appropriate procedure and timeline for periodic reporting to the Board of Governors.

E. Implementation

Immediately for Programs in Support of the Student Experience. Academic program reviews due August 15, 2017 will continue to use previously established criteria. Academic program reviews due August 15, 2018 will be required to use the new processes and criteria established in a System Standard/Procedure for Program Review.