

PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT CONTENT GUIDANCE AND EXTERNAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

As with other assessment activities, the program review process was designed with two primary goals in mind: (1) providing a structure through which programs are able to systematically and empirically identify opportunities for improving student learning and more effectively achieving other program goals, and (2) satisfying WASC requirements for outcomes-based assessment.

Guiding principles for the program review process include the following:

- Program faculty plan and implement the program review, reflect on results, develop findings, and implement recommendations *collectively*.
- Program review occurs on a 5-year cycle.
- The Program Review Report contains annual learning assessments for the previous five years. The program discusses how findings of learning assessments have been acted on.
- The draft Program Review Report undergoes a rigorous external and internal peer-review process.
- Recommendations evolving out of program review are discussed among program leadership, senior university administration, and others with decision-making authority regarding priority-setting and resource allocation.
- Results of the program review are formally considered in institutional planning and budgeting.

OUTCOMES THE PROGRAM REVIEW SHOULD LEAD TO

The program review process should produce recommendations, which if implemented, will result in outcomes such as the following:

- Better alignment of program learning outcomes and learning outcomes for required courses
- Better alignment of program learning outcomes and institutional learning outcomes
- Higher retention and graduation rates
- Improved student support systems such as advising, financial aid, library services, etc.
- Better achievement of student learning outcomes at the program and institutional level
- Higher quality educational experience for the student

THE PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

The Program Review Report is approximately 25 pages in length followed by appendices containing relevant analyses and documentation. While there is flexibility in the approach taken when writing up findings of the program review, the report must contain basic types of content. For example, every Program Review Report should contain the following material:

- Description of the mission and goals of the program and student learning outcomes
- Discussion of who the program serves/has served/should serve in the future
- Summary and discussion of learning assessment findings and actions taken on findings since last program review¹
- Summary and discussion of teaching evaluations and course-level assessment findings and actions taken on findings since last program review
- Discussion of enrollment, retention and graduation statistics

¹ It is not necessary to take existing documentation of assessment findings and refashion these materials to “fit into” the Learning Assessment Report template distributed in August 2009. It is perfectly fine to include past learning assessments in the Program Review Report “as is.”

- Summary of other relevant research findings regarding program performance (survey research findings, focus group research findings, etc.)
- Discussion of demand for the program
- Discussion of the adequacy of faculty resources
- Discussion of the adequacy of student support services and information and technology resources
- Discussion of the adequacy of classrooms and other facilities
- Discussion of the adequacy of financial resources
- Examination and discussion of curricular alignment
- Discussion of faculty qualifications and achievements
- Summary of overall findings
- Summary of actions that should be taken and resources that are needed to implement changes

A Program Review Report template is shown below. Whether the template is used, the Program Review Report must address each of the topics shown in the template to be consistent with university and WASC expectations. A program should approach discussion of each topic in a way that is most relevant and beneficial to the program. The Program Review Report should be written in a way that reflects program priorities and standards, and the program's unique mission. It is the program's responsibility to conduct its self-study in a way that results in identification of areas where improvement is possible and which results in delineation of viable actions that can be taken to bring about better achievement of student learning and other program goals.

REVIEW OF THE DRAFT PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

Upon completion of the draft Program Review Report, the document undergoes external review. Once results of the external review have been addressed (any needed changes have been made), the document is then reviewed by the Committee on Academic Standards. Steps in the review process are shown below.

STEP 1: The draft report is complete and is ready to undergo review. The report has been approved by faculty and program administrators. All learning outcomes for the program have been assessed at least once and all Learning Assessment Reports produced since the last program review are included in an appendix.

STEP 2: The draft report is submitted to external reviewers for comment.

STEP 3: External reviewers provide written feedback regarding findings of the program review and the program's use, or intended use, of research findings to improve the program and student learning. External review input can be in the form of a memorandum to the program.

STEP 4: Any needed changes are made to the draft report per external review. Documentation is included in the Program Review Report as to what changes were made/how external review input was addressed.

STEP 5: The draft report is submitted to the Committee on Academic Standards for approval. CAS will use the "Program Review Report Quality Checklist" to evaluate the quality and completeness of the Program Review Report.

STEP 6: CAS approves the draft report and/or makes recommendations regarding its quality and completeness with respect to university and WASC requirements.

STEP 7: Any needed changes are made to the draft report per CAS input. Documentation is included in the report as to what changes were made/how CAS input was addressed.

STEP 8: The final Program Review Report is submitted to VPAA, thus concluding the five-year program review cycle.

PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT TEMPLATE

PART I. INTRODUCTION/CONTEXT

The introduction to the Program Review Report provides a context for the material that follows. The introduction is primarily descriptive and includes information such as: (a) the department or school in which the program resides, (b) the mission and goals of the program, (c) a complete description of student learning outcomes (what graduates of the program know and can do), and (d) the types of employment graduates might obtain with the degree. It is important this section of the Program Review Report help the uninformed reader understand the unique aspects of the academic program in question and how the program differs from traditional academic programs and/or other programs at the university, if relevant. If the reader does not understand how the program is unique, the reader will be unable to interpret findings of the program review accurately.

PART II. WHO THE PROGRAM SERVES/HAS SERVED

This section of the Program Review Report discusses who the program serves and the external context in which the program functions. This part of the Program Review Report should describe the demographic composition of the student body, providing statistics on gender, ethnicity, age, etc. If changes in the student body have occurred over time, it can be useful to explain what the changes are and why they occurred. The program should use this section of the report to critically evaluate the status of the program with respect to who it has served, who it currently serves, and/or who it might serve in the future. Analyses should be included as an appendix and referenced as needed. For access to relevant data and analytical support, please contact [analytical support office].

PART III. PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

This section contains a summary and discussion of learning assessment activities and findings since last program review, a summary and discussion of teaching and course-level assessment activities since last program review, and statistics and commentary concerning enrollment, retention and graduation rates. This section also allows a program to summarize other relevant research findings.

A. Summary and Discussion of Learning Assessment Findings Since Last Program Review

This section contains a summary of learning assessments conducted since the last program review. All learning assessment work should be considered as a whole and reflected upon collectively. All Learning Assessment Reports should be included as an appendix and referenced in the narrative as relevant. The program should discuss the extent to which it is achieving the student learning outcomes it has set forth. This section can identify changes that have been made and which could be made to the program in the future to ensure better achievement of student learning outcomes. This section can discuss improvements that were made or that will be made to assessment methods.

B. Summary and Discussion of Teaching and Course-Level Assessment Activities Since Last Program Review

This section contains a summary of findings of teaching assessments/course evaluations undertaken since the last program review and a description of how findings were used or are being used to improve teaching and student learning. Measures of teaching effectiveness such as course evaluations, peer evaluations of teaching, and formative discussions of pedagogy among faculty are described. Relevant supporting documentation can be included in the Program Review Report as an appendix. The program can use this section of the report to discuss teaching quality and course-level learning with respect to the achievement of student learning outcomes and other program goals. The program can discuss how student teaching evaluations are used, how feedback is provided to faculty members, how the evaluations are used to improve quality, how teaching innovation is encouraged, etc.

C. Summary and Discussion of Enrollment, Retention and Graduation Statistics

In this section, the program discusses student enrollment, retention, graduation, attrition, average time to complete degree, reasons students drop-out, interventions employed to retain students, etc. A program might discuss the percentage of student who are dismissed on academic grounds or for nonacademic reasons and/or the percentage of students on academic probation. This section of the report can be used to critically evaluate the quality of the program's students with respect to academic qualifications, diversity, and likelihood of academic success. The program can identify changes that would improve the current level of quality. Analyses should be included as an appendix. For access to relevant data and analytical support, please contact [analytical support office].

D. Summary and Discussion of Other Relevant Research Findings Regarding Program Performance

This section provides the program opportunity to summarize other research activities that have taken place to assess or evaluate any aspect of the academic program. For example, while learning assessment is undertaken specifically to determine what students know and can do, student satisfaction with a program can be very important. Many programs administer student surveys, conduct focus groups, and/or engage in other research to better understand students' experiences and to inform decision-making. Some programs administer Noel-Levitz surveys, the Enrolled Students Survey, alumni surveys, etc. The Law School administers the Law School Survey of Student Engagement (LSSSE). Findings of these surveys can be discussed in this section. Relevant analyses and instruments should be included as appendices.

PART IV. PROGRAM VIABILITY/SUSTAINABILITY

This part of the report discusses student demand for the program and the degree to which resources are allocated appropriately and are sufficient to maintain program quality.

A. Demand for the Program/Recruitment Activities

In this section, trends in the numbers of student applications, admits, and enrollments since the last program review are discussed. This section could discuss the types of students that are attracted to the program and are most likely to enroll. This section might discuss recruitment activities that are most and least effective in generating the most qualified applicants. Efforts to attract underprivileged/underrepresented populations can be described here. This section contains a description of what is happening within the profession, local community and/or society that identifies an anticipated need for the program in the future (or lack thereof).

B. Adequacy of Faculty Resources

This section presents and interprets data regarding faculty resources for the program and the adequacy of these resources. The program may present data regarding the number of full-time and part-time faculty, ratio of full-time faculty to part-time faculty, student-faculty ratio, faculty workload, faculty review and evaluation processes, mentoring processes for faculty, professional development opportunities/resources provided to faculty (including travel funds), etc.

C. Adequacy of Student Support Services

This section describes the support services available to students and discusses the adequacy of these services from the program's perspective. Support services include academic and career advising programs, tutoring support, supplemental instruction, orientation and transition programs, financial support (e.g., scholarships and fellowships), etc.

D. Adequacy of Information and Technology Resources

This section describes the information and technology services available to students in the program and their adequacy from the program's perspective. These resources include library print and electronic holdings in the teaching and research areas of the program, information literacy outcomes for graduates, technology resources available to support the pedagogy and research in the program, etc.

E. Adequacy of Facilities

This section describes the facilities available to students and their adequacy from the program's perspective. Facilities include classroom space, instructional laboratories, office space, student study spaces, access to classrooms suited for instructional technology, and access to classrooms designed for alternative learning styles/universal design.

F. Adequacy of Financial Resources

This section discusses the financial resources of the department and their adequacy. The operational budget (revenues and expenditures) and trends since the last program review are presented.

PART V. THE CURRICULUM AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In this section the program discusses curricular alignment and qualifications and achievements of faculty.

A. Curricular Alignment/Sequencing of Courses

This section will discuss curricular alignment, possibly making reference to a current Curricular Matrix attached as an appendix. This section discusses the quality of the program's curriculum with respect to scope, depth, currency and student requirements for the degree. The program discusses the extent to which learning outcomes for the program are addressed in required coursework. When viewed collectively, do required courses satisfactorily address learning outcomes? Are there courses that should emphasize certain skills or knowledge more than they do currently? Should courses be removed from or added to the core curricula? Do courses taught by more than one instructor need to be made more consistent with respect to how they address course learning outcomes? Are courses taken by students in the right order? To what extent does the curriculum provide opportunities for students to learn and to develop increasing sophistication with respect to each learning outcome? What changes are needed to improve the curriculum? The process by which program coursework was shaped by consultation with external stakeholders such as practitioners in the field can be discussed.

B. Faculty Qualifications and Achievement

This section discusses the qualifications and achievements of program faculty in relation to the program mission and goals. This part of the report describes how faculty members' background, expertise, and professional work contribute to the quality of the program. Topics of discussion include the proportion of faculty with a terminal degree, the institutions from which faculty earned terminal degrees, the list of faculty specialties within the discipline (and how those specialties align with the program curriculum), teaching quality (e.g., peer evaluations, faculty self-review), the record of scholarship for each faculty member, the types of external funding awarded to faculty, the record of professional practice for each faculty member, the service record for each faculty member, the distribution of faculty across ranks (or years at institution), faculty diversity, faculty awards and recognition, etc. What is the quality of the program's faculty with respect to teaching and advising effectiveness? What changes are needed to improve the quality of program faculty?

PART VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section of the Program Review Report summarizes the overall findings of the entire self-study effort, highlighting themes that are particularly relevant to improving the academic program. This section characterizes faculty assessment of the program's strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement. Based on the data presented in prior sections, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the program? What characteristics of the program should be maintained or discontinued? What problems or issues must be addressed? This section helps the reader understand which of the various issues explored in the self-study are of greatest priority. It is important that conclusions drawn here are informed by evidence. Claims made here about the program's performance must be supported by evidence presented in the prior sections and appendices.

PART X. ACTIONS THAT WILL BE TAKEN/RESOURCES NEEDED

In this section of the Program Review Report, the program outlines actions it will take on the basis of the findings discussed in the prior section. For each action that will be taken, the program should indicate the resources and support that will be required to implement the needed changes, and the month and year by which the change will be implemented.