

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW: FOR PRE-PROGRAMS, NON-DEGREE PROGRAMS, AND OTHER NON-DEGREE CURRICULAR ENTITIES

I. Purpose

This section of the *Guide for Participants* describes the program review process to be used for **pre-programs, non-degree programs, and other non-degree curricular entities**. This version of the process has been developed because of the recognition of the value of the assessment information derived from the program review process for degree programs. It was felt that curricular entities other than conventional degree programs would similarly benefit from the program review process.

These programs are worthy of review because they have educational objectives that are achieved through the planned combination of required courses and educational experiences. They are offered by no single and designated faculty group; instead, the programs are offered through the Dean's office of a college, or through Academic Affairs itself. The review process developed for degree programs did not lend itself to accurately assessing the quality of these programs. This process is intended to accomplish exactly that goal.

This new process also enables the University to more completely fulfill one of the criteria that it must meet for regional accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association (NCA). According to the *Handbook of Accreditation 3/e*, Core Component 2c of Criterion Two (Preparing for the Future) is as follows: "The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement."

In what follows, reference is made to the review process for degree programs discussed in the first section of the *Guide for Participants*. In an attempt to strike the balance between brevity and clarity, an attempt has been made to avoid repetition as much as possible.

II. Definitions

Non-degree programs: Programs that do not grant degrees but do have set coursework requirements. These programs are typically cross-disciplinary and apply to students throughout the University. Examples include the **Honors Program** and the **University General Education Program**.

Pre-programs: Degree programs that are not offered by a specific department or program. Typically associate degrees, they are most frequently granted to students after completion of a set number of credit hours or courses. These credit hours or courses may not be specifically identified and may be general in nature. In some of these curricula relatively

few students actually finish these degree programs; most transfer into other programs when they are eligible or ready to do so. Examples include **Career Exploration, Liberal Arts, Pre-Law, and Pre-Pharmacy.**

“Stand-Alone” Minors and Certificates: These are baccalaureate degree minors and certificates in which there is no major program. Examples include **Spanish and Religious Studies.** “Attached” minors and certificates are reviewed with the degree program of which they are a part.

III. Summary of Procedure

1. As part of the general APR process, the review begins in the fall semester of the year before the program report is due.
2. In the absence of a faculty group, the college Dean (or other senior administrative officer) appoints a representative of the degree-granting college or the designated program coordinator to be part of the review process.
3. The next steps in the APR process are the completion of the review panel, development of a review plan, and the creation of a budget.
4. Following approval of the makeup of the panel by the Academic Program Review Council (APRC) and approval of the budget by the Office of Academic Affairs, the review panel develops surveys for the following groups (where they may be identified):
 - Alumni
 - Current students
 - Employers
 - Advisory committee members
 - Relevant faculty (i.e., those directly involved in offering the program’s requirements)
5. The panel then conducts the surveys. In sessions that include both the Dean and the Dean-appointee or designated program coordinator, information gathered from the surveys is summarized, analyzed, and used to draft the various sections of the report.
6. The final report includes sections written by the Dean and the Dean-appointee or designated program coordinator. The Program Review Panel (PRP) Chair (typically the Dean-appointee or the designated program coordinator) develops a schedule that delineates responsibility and deadlines for completion of writing the APR report.

The final report is due June 15th, two semesters after the process is initiated. It is the responsibility of the Dean to see that the deadline is met. APRC reads the report and, following this initial review of the written description of the program, meets with the panel to discuss the report and the program. Information gathered from the report and the interview with the panel is used to formulate a recommendation for the program including suggestions for program improvement. This recommendation is forwarded to the Academic Senate, usually in mid-November, for its consideration. (At the same time, the Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs receive copies of the recommendation.) After the Senate acts on the

recommendation, it is then passed on to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Steps to implement the recommendation and improvements are considered and acted on by the VPAA, President, and Board of Trustees of the University. Implementation of the recommendations is the responsibility of the designated program coordinator, the Dean of the College, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

IV. Policy: The Academic Program Review Process

Note: Where the process for non-degree programs is the same as that for degree programs, an **asterisk (*)** follows the letter of the item. Exceptions or special explanations are included as needed.

A. Academic Program Review Council*

B. Creating the Program Review Panel*

C. Preparing the Budget*

D. Designing the Research Plan and Survey Instruments*

With non-degree programs, information about some survey items may be difficult or impossible to acquire. However, where such information can be obtained and would serve to make a point, inclusion is welcome.

E. Preparing the Evaluation Plan*

F. Style Guide Suggestions*

G. Administrative Program Review*

Dean's offices (or other appropriate offices as necessary) will need to prepare an administrative program review report for non-degree as well as degree programs.

H. Writing the Program Review Panel Report*

Additional general guidelines:

Non-degree-programs: Every attempt should be made to address the issues identified in the *Guide for Participants*. Where items or issues are deemed inappropriate, a reply of *Not Applicable* should be stated. APCR will review these responses and request additional information if judged pertinent.

Pre-programs: Where specific students within the program cannot be defined because students do not declare their major prior to application for such a degree, the information should be based on the students receiving the degree since the degree inception or the last four years, broken down by year. In addition, since pre-programs are not conventional degree programs, questions relating to program activities should be ignored.

I. Submitting the Report*

J. APRC Review of the PRP Reports*

K. APRC Recommendation*

L. Program Review Ratings*

M. Academic Senate Recommendation*

N. VPAA's Recommendation*

O. University President's Recommendation*

P. Implementation of Recommendations*

Q. Review Schedule*

R. Reviews Outside of the Established Schedule*

V. Report Content Guidelines

The following identifies the needed content for a program review report for non-degree and pre-programs.

Note: Underlining indicate items that may not be relevant to all non-degree programs.

Section 1: Program Overview

This section should acquaint the reader with the program: mission, history, impact (on the university, state, and nation), expectations, plans for improvement, and any other items that would help the reader fully appreciate the remainder of the report.

A. Program Goals

1. State the goals of the program.
2. Explain how and by whom the goals were established.

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3. How do the goals apply to preparing students for careers in and meeting employer needs in the community/region/marketplace?
 4. Have the goals changed since the last program review? If so, why and how? If not, why not?
 5. Describe the relationship of the program goals to the University's mission, and the departmental, college and divisional strategic plans.
- B. Program Visibility and Distinctiveness
1. Describe any unique features or components of the program.
 2. Describe and assess the program's ability to attract quality students.
 3. Identify the institutions that are the main competitors for prospective students in this program.
 - a. How are these programs similar and different from the FSU program?
 - b. What can be learned from them that would improve the program at Ferris?
- C. Program Relevance
- Do students come to FSU for the program? Summarize the results of the student satisfaction survey.
1. How well does the program meet student expectations?
 2. How is student sentiment measured?
- D. Program Value (Please refer to the relevant faculty survey.)
1. Describe the benefit of the program to the University.
 2. Describe the benefit of the program to the students enrolled in the program.
 3. What is the value of the program to employers? Explain how this value is determined.
 4. Describe the benefit of the program to entities external to the University (e.g., services that faculty have provided to accreditation bodies, and regional, state, and national professional associations; manuscript reviewing; service on editorial boards; use of facilities for meetings).
 5. What services for extra-university general public groups (e.g., presentations in schools or to community organizations) have students provided? Describe how these services benefit students and the community.

Section 2: Collection of Perceptions

The survey sections must include, among others, a discussion of techniques used in collecting the information, difficulties encountered during the surveying process, number and percent of respondents, and analysis of data in accordance with established methodologies. Surveys must reach respondents in many disciplines. All comments should be included, but the names of individuals mentioned should be deleted.

- A. Graduate follow-up survey: The purpose of this activity is to learn from the graduates their perceptions and experiences regarding employment based on program outcomes. The goal is to assess the effectiveness of the program in terms of job placement and preparedness of the graduate for the marketplace. A mailed or e-mailed questionnaire is most preferred;

however, under certain conditions telephone or personal interviews can be used to gather the data.

- B. Employer follow-up survey: This activity is intended to aid in assessing the employers' experiences with graduates and their perceptions of the program itself. A mailed or e-mailed instrument should be used to conduct the survey; however, if justified, telephone or personal interviews may suffice.
- C. Student evaluation of program: Students are surveyed to obtain information regarding quality of instruction, relevance of courses, satisfaction with program outcomes based on their own expectations. The survey must seek student suggestions on ways to improve the effectiveness of the program and to enhance the fulfillment of their expectations. Due to the nature of the student population of these programs, such evaluation should be limited to graduating students.
- D. *Relevant* Faculty perceptions: The purpose of this activity is to assess faculty perceptions regarding the following aspects of the program: curriculum, resources, admissions standards, degree of commitment by the administration, processes and procedures used, and their overall feelings. Additional items that may be unique to the program can be incorporated in this survey.
- E. Advisory committee perceptions (if existent): The purpose of this survey is to obtain information from the members of the program advisory committee regarding the curriculum, outcomes, facilities, equipment, graduates, micro- and megatrends that might affect job placement (both positively and adversely), and other relevant information. Recommendations for improvement must be sought from this group. In the event that a program does not have an advisory committee, a group of individuals may be identified to serve in that capacity on a temporary basis.

Section 3: Program Profile

A. Profile of Students

1. Student Demographic Profile

Describe the students in the program by providing the number and percentage of the following.

- a. Gender, race/ethnicity, age (use annual institutional data).
- b. In-state and out-of-state.
- c. Full-time and part-time.
- d. Attend classes during the day, in the evenings, and/or weekends.
- e. Enrolled in classes on main campus, at an off-site location, or online.
- f. Discuss how the information presented in (a) through (e) impacts the curriculum, scheduling, and/or delivery methods in the *program*.

2. Quality of Students.

Describe and assess the quality of students in the program.

- a. What is the range and average GPA of all students currently enrolled in the program? ACT? Comment on this data.

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- b. For each of the last 5 years what are the range and average GPA of students graduating from the program? ACT? Comment on this data.
 - c. In addition to ACT and GPA, identify and evaluate measures that are used to assess the quality of students entering the program.
 - d. Identify academic awards (e.g., scholarships or fellowships) students in the program have earned. Comment on the significance of these awards to the program and students.
 - e. What scholarly/creative activities (e.g., symposium presentations, other presentations, or awards) have students in the program participated in? Comment on the significance of these activities to the program and students.
 - f. What are other accomplishments of students in the program? Comment on the significance of these accomplishments to the program and students.
3. Employability of students
- a. Determine for each of the last five years the number and percent of graduates who become employed full-time within one year of receiving their degree. Comment on this data.
 - b. What is the average starting salary of graduates who become employed full-time since inception or the last program review? Compare with regional and national trends.
 - c. Determine for each of the last five years the number and percent of graduates who have become employed as part-time or temporary workers in the field within one year of receiving their degree. Comment on this data.
 - d. Describe career assistance available to the students. What is student perception of career assistance?
 - e. Indicate the number and percent of graduates who go on for additional educational training? (Give annual average.) Comment on this data.
 - f. Where do most graduates obtain their additional educational training? Comment on this data.

B. Enrollment

1. What is the anticipated fall enrollment for the program?
2. Have enrollment and Student Contact Hours (SCH) increased or decreased since inception or the last APRC review? Comment on any enrollment trends.
3. Since inception or the last APRC review, how many students apply to the program annually?
4. Of those who apply, how many and what percentage are admitted?
5. Of those who are admitted, how many and what percentage enroll?
6. What are the program's current enrollment goals, strategy, and efforts to maintain/increase/decrease the number of students in the program? Please explain.

C. Program Capacity

1. What is the appropriate program enrollment, given the available faculty, physical resources, funding, accreditation requirements, state and federal regulations, and other factors?

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2. What is the current enrollment? Please explain any difference between capacity and current enrollment.

D. Retention and Graduation

1. What is the annual attrition rate (number and percent of students) in the program?
2. What are the program's current goals, strategy, and efforts to retain students in the program?
3. Describe and assess trends in number of degrees or designations awarded in the program.
4. What are the number and percentage of students who enroll in the program who graduate from it or complete its expectations within the prescribed time? Comment on any trends.
5. On average, how long does it take a student to graduate from or complete the expectations of the program? Comment on this.

E. Access

1. Describe and assess the program's actions to make itself accessible to students. Use examples such as off-site courses, accelerated courses, use of summer courses, multiple semester-entry-points, online courses, mixed-delivery courses, scheduling.
2. Discuss what effects these actions have had on the program. Use examples such as program enrollment, faculty load, computer, and other resources.
3. How does the program's scheduling of classes advance program goals and priorities?
4. What factors hamper these efforts?

F. Curriculum

The curriculum review section must also contain appropriate check sheets and example syllabi, which may be attached as an appendix.

1. Program requirements. Describe and assess the current program requirements.
2. As part of the graduation requirements of the current program, list directed electives and directed General Education courses. Provide the rationale for these selections.
3. Indicate any hidden prerequisites (i.e., required courses that are not on the checksheet).
4. Has the program been significantly revised since the last review, and if so, how?
5. Are there any curricular or program changes currently in the review process? If so, what are they?
6. Are there plans to revise the current program within the next three to five years? If so, why?

G. Quality of Instruction

1. Describe and comment on trends in student mastery of the essentials of the subject area, using benchmarks such as professional college entrance exams or other assessment data.
2. Discuss student and alumni perceptions of the quality of instruction.
3. What collaborative departmental and individual efforts have been made to improve the learning environment and to use or add appropriate technology?

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4. What types of professional development have faculty participated, in efforts to enhance the learning environment that is pertinent to the program? (e.g., Writing Across the Curriculum; Center for Teaching and Learning, etc.)
5. What efforts have been made to increase the interaction of students with faculty and peers? Include such items as developmental activities, seminars, workshops, guest lectures, special events, student organizations, and student participation in the Honors Program Symposium.
6. Discuss the extent to which teaching and learning in this program are informed by current research and practice regarding inclusive pedagogy and curriculum.
7. What effects have these activities had on the quality of teaching and learning in the program? Please comment.

H. Composition and Quality of Faculty

Does the program have designated course sections or faculty? If so,

1. Describe how such course sections and faculty are determined or selected.
2. Describe any diversity goals of the program.
 - a. Include in the description any goals for gender and ethnicity.
 - b. What efforts are being made to attain or retain an appropriate level of diversity in the designated faculty?
 - c. Has the program met its diversity goals? Please comment.
3. Orientation: Describe and assess the orientation process for faculty who participate in the program.
4. Reward Structure: e.g., salary, professional development funds, travel funds, UCEL and FSUGR incentive money
 - a. Describe the reward structure in the program/department/college as it relates to program faculty.
 - b. Does the existing salary structure have an impact on the program's ability to recruit and retain quality faculty?
 - c. Is the reward structure currently in place adequate to support faculty productivity in teaching, research, and service? If not, what recommendations would you make to correct the situation?
 - d. Is enhancing diversity and inclusion a component of the reward structure? Please explain.

I. Degree Program Cost and Productivity Data

Submit institutional studies data. Comment on the data.

J. Assessment and Evaluation

Describe and evaluate the program's assessment mechanisms.

1. What measures are used to evaluate whether or not the program is meeting its goals?
2. How are the rigor, breadth, and currency of the degree requirements and curriculum assessed?
3. Based on these measures, describe the extent to which the goals are being reached.

Section 4: Conclusions

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Draw some conclusions based on data analysis derived from Sections 2-4 and on the collective wisdom and judgment of the PRP. In arriving at these conclusions, the PRP should summarize the relationship of the program to each of following specific categories and any other categories it deems appropriate:

- A. Relationship to FSU Mission
- B. Program Visibility and Distinctiveness
- C. Program Value
- D. Enrollment
- E. Characteristics, Quality and Employability of Students
- F. Quality of Curriculum and Instruction
- G. Composition and Quality of the Faculty