

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURES

California State University, Bakersfield
Spring 2001

As a regional university dedicated to meeting the needs of its ever-changing region and to providing leadership and expertise for students, the region, and the world, CSUB must care about and envision the future--a future of new technologies, of changing paradigms of knowledge, and a multicultural, interdependent, one-world context. We cannot let the future just happen to us, but rather we must plan for it and shape it.

Important parts of an active planning process are critical: self-examination, review of the current program, and assessment of how well programs, curricular content, faculty expertise, students' abilities and available resources prepare the university to move forward to meet the future. Program review allows a critical look at who we are, where we are going, where we should be going, and how we can or should get there. It involves a commitment and willingness to evaluate candidly our programs, goals, objectives and activities.

Program planning is ideally an ongoing, almost everyday process. Whenever faculty develop courses or students are guided into programs to complete a major or minor, plans are being made. The present and the future are being carved out. However, planning is also long-term and more encompassing. For this reason the Chancellor's Office, under directions from the CSU Board of Trustees, mandated a systematic five-year review process whereby one-fifth of each institution's academic degree programs are reviewed each year. This five-year review allows systematic analysis of the objectives and performance of an academic unit by those best qualified to undertake such an assessment, the faculty in the program. This five year review allows a program to take a brief look backward to the last formal review, to assess the progress made toward prior goals, and to identify additional needs and objectives.

PURPOSES OF PROGRAM REVIEW

Program review aims to maintain and strengthen the quality of the university's curriculum and its ability to meet the challenges of the future. Program review should be centered on the desire to provide a quality university-level program balanced with respect for the needs of society in general and the region in particular, student abilities and interests, and career needs. Most importantly program review should allow for the determination of whether students are accomplishing the program's learning objectives. Program review should lead to informed decisions about program, faculty and student needs, curricular planning, and resource allocation and management. Through the program review process, the university is better prepared to allocate scarce resources and to plan for change.

Successful program review is dependent upon faculty willingness to engage in an intensive and comprehensive self-study process that uses both qualitative and quantitative data. There must be honest professional discourse about the evaluation criteria to be applied, changes in knowledge, the relationship of programs to each other, and the educational needs of students and society at large.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE FOR THE REVIEW PROCESS

PROGRAM UNIT ORGANIZATION:

Each department or interdisciplinary program conducting a review shall select a Program Review Committee of at least three members for each program to be reviewed. In consultation with program and department faculty and representative students, the committee is responsible for the preparation of a Self-Study and a Planning Document. The committee receives a packet containing the review guidelines and deadlines, the Program Information Profile, model program

reviews, a booklet on program goal setting, and other material. The chair of the department or interdisciplinary program is responsible for ensuring the completion of the program review. The title page of the program review document shall state that by a majority vote the program faculty has approved the Self-Study and the Planning Document and the date on which the approval was voted.

EXTERNAL REVIEW:

An external consultant will evaluate each program as part of the program review process. The purpose for the external consultant is to assist the faculty to improve the quality of their program by providing a new, comparative, and broader perspective on the program, its last five years of operation, and its plans for the next five years. To accomplish this purpose, the external consultant is provided a copy of the Self-Study, Planning Document, and other relevant documents. She/he then visits the campus for at least two days to meet with faculty, students, and administrators. The consultant conducts an exit interview with the program faculty, the chair of the University Program Review Committee, the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. Within two weeks of the visit, the consultant provides the campus with comments and recommendations regarding the program.

The program faculty in consultation with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs will select the external consultant. The selection is made from a list of possible consultants developed by the Associate Vice President's Office. The list is comprised primarily of experienced CSU faculty who hold faculty rank in the same or similar programs on their respective campuses.

The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs maintain a fund to pay for the consultants.

SCHOOL DEAN REVIEW:

After the external consultant has sent the campus a report, the relevant school dean reviews the program review documents and the external consultant's report. As appropriate, the dean meets with the Program Review Committee. The department or interdisciplinary committee is also able to submit written comments about the external consultant's report. Its comments are forwarded to the school dean and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Within two weeks of receiving the external consultant's report the school dean submits comments along with the other program review documents to the Provost and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

UNIVERSITY REVIEW:

Upon receiving the documents from the school dean, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs directs the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs to engage the University Program Review Committee in a review of the program. The UPRC consists of one faculty member elected by each of the four schools, two at-large faculty, one faculty from the Academic Senate membership and (as *ex officio*) the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. To ensure continuity in UPRC operation the members shall serve two-year staggered terms. The schools and Executive Committee should make an effort to select members who have recently been involved in a program review.

The UPRC will examine all documents developed during the review. On the basis of its examination the committee shall prepare its comments and recommendations. These are forwarded to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The UPRC shall also monitor the overall program review process, recommend changes in the policy and procedures, and assure that program review findings are utilized in university-wide curricular and budgetary planning processes.

PROVOST REVIEW

After examining the program review documents, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall meet with the Department or Interdisciplinary Program chair, the chair of the Program Review Committee, the chair of the UPRC, the school dean, and the appropriate staff deans to discuss the program and recommendations for change during the next five years. At the close of the meeting the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall prepare a memorandum identifying the agreed-upon recommendations to be implemented as well as identifying the resources that will be provided to support the recommendations during the next five years. Budgetary priority will be given to the implementation of Program Review recommendations. The program faculty and the school dean shall be responsible for implementing the recommendations.

Copies of the documents from each program review shall be maintained in the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate Office. Copies of the concluding memorandum from the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be sent to members of the Academic Affairs Committee and members of the Budget and Planning committee. Finally, at the end of the academic year the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs shall circulate a summary of the major findings and recommendations for all programs reviewed.

GUIDELINES FOR DOCUMENTS PREPARED DURING THE PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

The program review process involves three different components, each of which culminates with a document. First, the university compiles the Program Information Profile, which the program undergoing review uses to complete part of its task. The CSUB Planning Office prepares this document in an easily usable format and for each program undergoing review. Second, the program undergoing review prepares a Self Study, which essentially reports on the program's five year history and current status. Finally, the Planning Document, also prepared by the program, lays out a plan of action for the next five years.

- I. Program Information Profile (Provided by the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Planning Office)
 - A. Student Information
 1. FTES by level for each of the preceding five years for enrollment in courses taught by the program faculty.
 2. SFR by level of course for each of the preceding five years for enrollment in courses taught by the program faculty.
 3. Number of majors, annualized and unduplicated, for each of the previous five years.
 4. Age, gender, students with disabilities and ethnicity data for program majors for the previous five years.
 5. History of graduation from the program during each of the past five years.
 6. Available data on advising, satisfaction with the curriculum, etc. for the program and parallel data on the entire university.
 7. Summary of annual exit surveys with program students conducted by the Planning Office.
 - B. Faculty Information
 1. Age, gender, ethnicity, and rank for tenured/tenure track and full/part-time temporary faculty for each of the previous five years.

C. Program Resources

1. Space and specialized teaching space dedicated to the program.
2. Expenditures on library (separated by monographs and journal subscriptions) and other instructional resources for each of the preceding five years.
3. Program expenditures for services, supplies, materials, travel and equipment for each of the preceding five years.
4. Grants, contracts, and other sources of support, both internal and external for each of the preceding five years.

D. Recommendations from the last program review endorsed by the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

II. Self Study

In preparing this document the Program Committee should respond to issues raised in the following 6 sections. Each should be written in light of the program's activity since the last program review.

- A. Actions the program has taken in response to the recommendations of the UPRC and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- B. A list of current program goals and objectives and a narrative explaining the changes that occurred since the last review.
- C. Current curriculum.
 - 1. A description of the major features of the current curriculum.
 - 2. A narrative explaining the major curricular changes that have occurred since the last review.
 - 3. A comparison of the program's curriculum (e.g., number of units required and accreditation status) with that of similar programs at other CSU campuses.
- D. Results of an assessment of the student's accomplishment of program learning goals and objectives.
 - 1. Cross-referencing the list of goals and objectives, the self-study should provide appropriate evidence of student accomplishment of each student outcome goal.
 - 2. The self-study should list the basic information competencies expected of program students when they enter upper division work in the program, identify the advanced information competencies students should acquire through completion of the program, and describe plans to assess student achievement of those competencies.
- E. A narrative describing the program's impact on CSUB's external community.
- F. A narrative describing support for students' academic progress and co-curricular activities.

III. Program Plan

On the basis of the findings from the Self-Study, the program should develop an action plan that describes what the program intends to do during the next five years. It should identify existing and new resources necessary to achieve each element of the plan. In putting together this plan, the program review should address each of the following six areas. The questions are provided to guide program planning.

- A. Curriculum. What curricular changes do you envisage during the next five years? What developments will likely cause you to change the curriculum?
- B. Program Students. Do you see the number of majors increasing during the next five years? Will those students be similar to those currently pursuing your major or do you expect to be servicing different students.
- C. Career Preparation for Graduates. Will career opportunities open to your graduates change during the next five years? How will your program adjust its curriculum and program practices to prepare the students for those opportunities?

- D. Faculty. What changes do you foresee for the program faculty? Will there be additional faculty? Will the increase be due to increase in majors? Or new programs? Or retirements? What does the University need to do to maintain the current high quality faculty?
- E. Resources. Will your current level of resources (staff, equipment, library resources, travel funds, etc.) be adequate to permit the maintenance of program quality during five years? What else is needed?
- F. Student Learning Goals. Do you envisage changes in student learning goals? Do you expect to see changes in student accomplishment of those goals during the next five years?
- G. If students are unable to complete all degree requirements (i.e., pre-requisites, major, minor, general education, and other general graduation requirements) within 180 quarter units, the program must develop a rationale and a justification for exceeding that figure.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW

September	Programs appoint committee and chair to carry out review. Chair meets with Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs to review policies and procedures. Program Committee receives Program Information Profile from the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.
October- January	Program Committee completes Self-Study and Program Plan. Committee chair and Associate Vice President agree on an external consultant, and the Associate Vice President arranges for the consultant.
February	External consultant conducts a two (2) day visit to examine program and verify the Self-Study, and assess the Program Plan. The visit culminates with an exit interview with program chair, faculty, school dean, appropriate staff deans, and Provost.
March	External consultant's report is received. School dean provides his/her evaluation of program.
April- June	University Program Review Committee reviews the program review documents and writes a report eventually submitted to the Provost. Provost meets with the program chair, faculty, UPRC chair, school dean and staff deans. Provost prepares memorandum summarizing recommendations regarding program and a plan of action for the next five years.