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PROGRAM REVIEW GUIDELINES

Introduction

The review of academic departments is an integral part of university assessment and planning, the department's self-regulatory endeavor, and an indispensable element in the continuous improvement and renewal. The pursuit of institutional excellence is directly tied to carrying out regular, effective, consequential reviews. One experienced planner observed in *Doing Academic Planning* that "The overarching goal of the review process is to demonstrate how the program fits with the mission and future plans of the institution."

Brigham Young University–Hawaii conducts program reviews on a cyclical basis. All academic programs are reviewed every five to seven years according to a preset schedule. The Vice President for Academics confirms the schedule each year. In cases where a program requires accreditation from an external organization, every effort is made to conduct the program review as close as possible to the time that the external accreditation is scheduled using the same review processes or documents required by the accrediting agency.

Purpose

The purpose of program review is continuous program improvement. The Program Review Guidelines provide a framework for conducting a thorough, evidence-based analysis of a program in order to understand a program's strengths, identify key areas of improvement, and create a workable plan for achieving the desired improvements.

Overview of the Program Review Process

The major steps of program review are:

- 1) **Program Review Preparation.** Designate a self-study coordinator, go over documents from last program review, plan for upcoming program review
- 2) **Researching and Writing Self-Study.** Departments have 7–9 months to conduct and write a self study
- 3) **Site Visit.** The self-study is followed by a two day site visit by a review team comprised of two internal and one to two external consultants
- 4) **Feedback.** The department will get a written report from the review team and responses and recommendations from the Dean and Vice President for Academics
- 5) **Quality Improvement Plan.** The program uses the team reports, Dean's response and VP recommendations to develop a five year Quality Improvement Plan

1. Program Review Preparation

Every year the Vice President for Academics reviews and approves the upcoming year's list of programs scheduled for program review.

1.1 Preliminary Meeting. The Dean will meet with the respective program chairs to assist programs with preliminary planning for their self-studies. At this meeting copies of the program review guidelines are distributed and reviewed. The review process, data sources and timelines are discussed, and issues unique to the program are addressed. Departments review the previous self-study, review team report and improvement plan, and recommendations from the Dean.

1.2 Department Planning. The department conducts faculty meetings to plan for the upcoming program review and make self-study assignments.

1.3 Selection of Review Team and Site Visit Dates. Departments submit names for two internal reviewers from faculty outside the program and one or two external reviewers who are respected members of their discipline. The department also proposes Site Visit dates. The VP for Academics and school Dean approve the final review team and set the final Site Visit dates. Institutional Research Office staff make travel arrangements and plan logistics to accommodate the review team.

1.4 Resource and Budget Planning. From these preparatory meetings, a spectrum of resources to assist self-study efforts should be discussed with the Dean (in consultation with the Director for University Assessment) so anticipated expenses can be distributed from funds allocated by University Assessment and/or other appropriate budgets.

2. Researching and Writing Self-Study Report. Departments collect and analyze data relevant to the self-study report. The University expects broad faculty participation in the interpretation of data, discussion of results, and decisions for improvement. All decisions and underlying evidence should be made transparent to reviewers and major stakeholders affected.

2.1 Self-Study Report Outline. The majority of time and effort will be spent conducting a self-study and producing a report. The report has three parts: Assessing Program Quality; Assessing Program Sustainability; Proposed Program Quality Improvement.

Assessing Program Quality

1. Student Learning & Assessment
2. Student Satisfaction
3. Graduate's Success
4. Academic Curriculum
5. Faculty Quality

Assessing Program Sustainability

6. Student Retention, Attrition, and Graduation Rates
7. Contributions to the University
8. Societal and Professional Need

Proposed Program Quality Improvement

9. Five-Year Program Goals
10. Overview of Proposed Changes and Resources Needed

For each of sections 1 through 8, the departments conduct an evidence-based analysis of the program's quality and sustainability by: 1) discussing and analyzing relevant data (listed within each section; and 2) identifying key discoveries and propose changes for improvement.

Based on discoveries and results from these sections, the departments will create sections 9 and 10 for Proposed Program Quality Improvements to develop and maintain the quality and sustainability of the program.

2.2 Report Format. The report should be concise, concentrate on the key issues/evidence/conclusions, and provide an open and impartial view of the program. While writing the report be mindful that it will be viewed by a variety of constituencies: those who will directly respond to the report (external reviewers, Dean, Vice President for Academics) and those within the BYUH community who will have online access to the report at the conclusion of the program review process.

If your program has external disciplinary accreditation, please contact the Institutional Research Office to coordinate the two reviews for efficiency purposes. Efforts have been made to schedule external accreditation and program review as close as possible.

Using the Self-Study Report Guidelines, the self-study report should be 10–15 pages, single-spaced with a cover page, table of contents, report headings and sections, and appendices. The final report due two months prior to the site visit should be submitted electronically to the Institutional Research Office (pulutuk@byuh.edu) and four hard copies (placed in binders with tabs for the appendices) should be delivered to the IR Office – 1 for the Dean, 1 for the VP for Academics, and 2 for external reviewers. Prior self-study reports are available for anyone who may want to review them at this website: https://apps.byuh.edu/apps/pirat/Assessment/Program_Reviews.php

2.3 Support. While researching and writing the self-study report, the Dean, University Assessment and the Institutional Research Office are available for assistance and consultation. The IR Office will provide a standard data set to departments conducting self-studies 6–8 months prior to the site visit.

3. Site Visit. The site visit provides a constructive, balanced expert analysis of the program and the self-study report. The visit focuses on academic quality and aspects of departmental functioning that have a demonstrable impact on the quality of the program. Department matters not demonstrably related to the quality of the academic program are outside the purview of the reviewers' consultation.

3.1 Selection of Reviewers. As part of Program Review Preparation, departments nominate two internal reviewers from outside the department. Departments also recommend two members of the academic community outside of

BYUH to participate in a site review. Recommendations are submitted to the Dean and the Dean makes the final determination of the reviewers. From that point forward, the IR Office is responsible for all communications between the program and external reviewers.

The review team is chaired by one of its experienced off-campus members, and has responsibility for conducting the on-site visit and providing the final report and recommendations.

3.2 The Site Visit. Departments will host a two-day site visit at which the department's students, alumni, program faculty (adjunct and core), other personnel, the Dean, and VP for Academics will actively engage in discussions about the program with the external reviewers. The review team will gather information collectively from the self-study report and supporting evidence, on-site review of student work samples and on-site discussions. They will submit a review team report approximately two weeks after the site visit.

The IR Office in coordination with the program will schedule and organize the site visits. Departments are responsible for informing students, staff, and faculty in their school about the site visit and for preparing them to participate in group discussions with the external reviewers.

4. Feedback

Once the site visit is complete, departments will receive three forms of feedback:

- 1) Review team report: this report focuses on insights from the self-study report and the site visit and provides recommendations from the perspective of experts in the program's discipline/field as well as from a BYU–Hawaii perspective outside the program.
- 2) Dean's response: this report focuses on the quality of assessment practices in sections 1 through 8 and on alignment between results from these sections and proposed changes sections 9 and 10.
- 3) Curricular Review Committee recommendations: based on a review of the portions of the self-study and appendices that pertain to curriculum and addresses how well the curriculum meets the goals of the program.
- 4) VP for Academics recommendations: based on a review of the Self-Study Report, the review team report and the Dean's response, the VP for Academics makes recommendations informed by the President's Council

5. Quality Improvement Plan

When the departments and Deans receive all feedback, the programs should use the feedback to develop the program's quality improvement plan. The program's faculty has three months to create a five year quality improvement plan and gain approval of the Dean and VP for Academics.

Implementation should begin with the start of the next semester/term for all non-budgetary changes; all changes requiring additional resources will be integrated into the next budget planning processes. The program integrates proposed changes according to university mission, policies and procedures.

The Dean will review the quality improvement plan along with their annual assessment plans with the department annually.

Suggestions

The departments and review team members may be asked to evaluate the program review process to inform improvements for future self-studies.

This is a faculty-driven process. If you feel you can contribute to improving/streamlining this document and the program review process, please refer proposed changes to your Dean and the IR Office.