



Guideline for Academic Program Self-study

Adapted from models from Western Carolina University, the Western
Association of Schools & College, & Heartland Community College

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Academic Program Self-Study

Introduction & Purpose

Academic program self-study is a component of the Colorado State University-Pueblo strategic planning and institutional effectiveness process. The primary purpose of systematic self-study is to maintain and support academic departments: teaching and learning; research, professional, and creative activity; and university service, community service, and outreach. It's a vehicle by which departments can better understand if and how well programs are achieving their purpose and if not, what courses of action to take to make them more successful.

The program review process described in this guide represents a shift away from input-based evidence to a learning centered, outcomes-based approach to on-going improvement and planning. It is a conceptual and practical change in emphasis from conducting a program review to a useful meaningful inquiry into the program's purpose and its effectiveness in achieving that purpose. The results of the program review should be integrated into the department and campus process of planning and budgeting. It also represents a shift from an episodic snapshot of the program's effectiveness to a more relevant and useful on-going, continuous plan of action the department can use for renewal and improvement.

The conclusions drawn from the program review are to be informed by evidence; that is, all claims about a program's strengths, weaknesses, and proposed improvements are to be supported by relevant, valid qualitative and quantitative evidence. This contrasts with program reviews that are largely descriptive and based on advocacy of the program. Consequently, responses to the standards for review included below should depend largely on evidence.

Although leadership at all levels is committed to improvement based on systematically gathered information, it is the faculty who take primary responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The 2017 CSU-Pueblo *Faculty Handbook* describes the reasons for program reviews. Program reviews are to

- Assure that each academic unit will be afforded the opportunity to assess and evaluate its program outcomes [objectives], resources, curriculum, faculty, staff, facilities, students, alumni, and other programmatic considerations;
- Provide quantitative and qualitative information that will enable the program, college, and University as a whole to enhance their planning processes;

- Communicate to the Board of Governors program review results thereby assisting the Board in its efforts to provide informed governance and coordination. (1.2.6.2.c.3)

Through the review process academic units articulate their purpose, goals, and aspirations and describe how the program curriculum and activities support their accomplishment. It is also a tool for identifying gaps between a program's intended goals and its actual performance. These gaps provide the basis for systematic annual action steps to move the program closer to achieving its goals.

Academic Program Self-Study Goals

The goals of the self-study are to:

1. Develop and enhance high-quality academic programs that are aligned with the CSU-Pueblo mission statement and strategic plan, foster collaboration among departments, and meet the educational needs of the region.
2. Encourage and support program self-improvement by highlighting program strengths, identifying opportunities for change, meeting the changing needs of stakeholders, honestly determining areas in need of improvement, and providing valid data for making budgeting decisions.
3. Provide a transparent and meaningful review of all graduate and undergraduate programs and stand-alone minors that results in systematic, actionable program improvements.
4. Involve department faculty in the self-study, its recommendations, and in implementing the on-going action plan.

Procedures for Programs with Professional Accreditation

Programs on a professional accreditation self-study cycle will complete the self-study required by the accrediting agency. The documentation used in the accreditation self-study for new or continuing accreditation may also be used for the campus self-study; however, the Provost, in consultation with the college dean and Assistant Provost, will determine the need for an external review and evaluation based on accreditation requirements compared to campus requirements.

When using accreditation reports as the campus self-study documents, a Table of Contents will be submitted indicating the pages of the report that provide the information required by CSU-Pueblo's self-study.

Information absent from the accreditation report will be submitted as appendices and noted in the Table of Contents.

Procedures for Non-accredited Programs

Non-accredited programs will submit a self-study every five years, unless other arrangements have been requested and approved by the Curriculum and Academic Programs Board, the dean, and the Assistant Provost. Requests for changes should be made in the year prior to the scheduled program review, if possible.

External Reviewers

For those programs with professional accreditation, external reviewers should be engaged consistent with the expectations of the accrediting agency. For all other programs, reviewers external to the CSU-Pueblo campus will be selected. The Department Chair and/or Program Director should submit four-six names of potential reviewers and a brief summary of their academic and/or professional background to their college dean. From that list, a reviewer will be selected by the Provost in consultation with the college dean and the Assistant Provost. Invitations to the reviewer will be issued jointly by the Department Chair and the Dean. Nominees should be from high quality, respected programs at a masters I regional institution or recognized peer institution with characteristics similar to CSU-Pueblo. Expenses related to travel and honorarium for the external reviewer will be paid by the Office of the Provost.

Qualification of External Reviewers

Required credentials:

1. A terminal degree in the same or a closely related discipline as the program under review
2. Associate professor or professor rank (emeritus faculty are eligible if they had a recent academic position)
3. Does not hold an administrative position above department chair
4. Is not currently actively involved in research, teaching, or other professional projects with faculty in the program under review
5. A distinguished record of research, teaching and service in the discipline
6. An ability to conduct the review and submit a findings and recommendation report in the required timeframe
7. No close connection with any faculty member in the department

Preferred credentials:

1. A national reputation for contribution in the same discipline as that under review
2. Experience with program review and/or best practices in institutional effectiveness
3. Knowledge of or experience in a HLC accredited institution
4. Knowledge of or experience in professional accreditation of similar programs, if appropriate

The Self-Study Cycle

The self-study cycle will be coordinated by the Curriculum and Academic Programs Standards Board. Undergraduate and graduate programs in the same discipline will be reviewed simultaneously unless the department chair presents compelling reasons for separate reviews. The decision to review undergraduate and graduate programs separately will be made by the Provost in consultation with the CAP Board, department chair, dean, and Assistant Provost.

Periodically consulting with the college or school dean throughout the self-study process is recommended. Doing so may avoid significant revisions and additional information collection at the time the final draft is submitted to the dean.

Under special circumstances, the Provost may request self-studies outside the regular five-year cycle. Additional or early self-study will be conducted under such compelling circumstances as:

- The program is experiencing low productivity in terms of number of degrees awarded;
- The department faculty are not conducting systematic, authentic program assessment that results in improvement to teaching and learning; or
- Outside stakeholders such as the Colorado Department of Higher Education, the Colorado State University System, or the Higher Learning Commission, require it.

Annual Update

A brief, annual update on progress toward action steps identified in the Dean's Seminar Panel Report and Action Plan will be submitted to the college dean and Assistant Provost by June 1 for the previous academic year. Department chairs will meet with the dean and Assistant Provost to discuss the update and identify adjustments, if necessary.

Program Review Timeline

Dates below are “strongly suggested” in order to remain on schedule, except for **Bold Due Dates** highlighted.

| Date | Task | Responsible Party |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| January 15 | Initial notification to departments | CAPB |
| February 15 | Confirm program intent to submit review or submit request for delay with letter of support from dean | Department Chair/ Program Coordinator/ Dean |
| March 1 | CAPB decision on delay forwarded to department, Dean and Provost | CAPB, Provost/Assistant Provost |
| April | Chairs and deans are briefed at CAPB meeting. Initial IR data is made available. Further data in early November (final spring semester). | CAPB Chair & IR office |
| September 1 | Comments on self-study draft | Dean |
| October 1 | List of potential external reviewers generated and submitted to Dean and Provost | Department Chair/Program Coordinator |
| October 15 | Self-study draft submitted to Dean | Department Chair/Program Coordinator |
| October 15 | External reviewer selected in consultation with dean and chair | Provost |
| November 1 | Final IR data available | IR director |
| November 15 | Final self-study submitted to dean | Department Chair/Program Coordinator |
| | | |
| December 7 | Update program review progress | Initiated by CAP Board chair |
| | In response to email request from CAPB Chair: submit checklist | Response from Dean, Department Chair/Program Coordinator |
| December 15 | Self-study forwarded to external reviewer Seminar panel selected | Dean Dean and CAPB |
| December-January 31 | External reviewer visit on campus | Department Chair/Program Coordinator, external reviewer |
| December-February 15 | External reviewer report submitted to dean | External reviewer |
| February 15 | External reviewer report submitted to chair and forwarded to seminar panel (Materials posted on I: drive) | Dean |
| 14 days prior | Seminar panel meeting scheduled | Dean |
| NLT than February 28 | Seminar panel convenes Submit 2nd checklist | CAPB |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| March 1 | Dean's summary draft sent to seminar panel members | Dean |
| March 8 | Dean's Summary Report and Action Plan submitted to CAPB (Materials posted on I: drive) | Dean |
| March 8- March 31 | Program review, external evaluator's report, and dean's report presented to CAPB for approval | CAPB |
| April 14 | Final report submitted to senate | CAPB Chair & Senate Rep |
| April | Vote on report during last senate meeting | Senate |
| April | Program Review Schedule submitted to Board of Governors for approval in May | Provost |
| June-August | All documents associated with Program Review archived on CAPB I:drive or website | Provost's office |
| June 1 | Annual Update of Program Review Action Plan progress submitted to Provost's Office | Department Chair/ Program Coordinator |
| July | Executive summary of program review submitted to Board of Governors for approval at August Meeting | Provost |
| July 30 | Discussion of updates with Dean and Assistant Provost | Department Chair/ Program Coordinator |
| | Presentation to President's Cabinet | Department Chair/ Program Coordinator |

NLT= not later than

Contents of Self-Study

- I. Cover Page
 - A. Program name
 - B. Program college/school
 - C. Year of review
 - D. Date self-study submitted
 - E. Name of program chair
- II. Department Chair Summary (maximum of two pages)
 - A. Key findings
 - B. Department aspirations
- III. Response to Review Standards 1-7
 - A. Response to each review standard
 - B. Supporting documents and data
- IV. Supporting Documents
 - A. External Reviewers Report
 - 1. Program strengths
 - 2. Program challenges, areas for improvement
 - 3. Summary of recommendations
 - B. Dean's Seminar Review Panel results summary and Action Plan

Program Review Standards

This section requires a comprehensive response to each standard listed below. The standards are arranged thematically to contextualize the review in the larger planning and effectiveness framework of the campus. Suggested documentation should be included as appendices and referenced in the body of the review.

Significance and Scope of the Program

Standard 1. The purpose of the program reflects and supports the mission and strategic vision of Colorado State University-Pueblo and the mission of its school or college.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Purpose of the program
2. Alignment of the purpose with the campus mission and the program's school or college
3. Distinctive aspects of the program
4. The primary strengths and challenges of the program

Standard 2. The program engages in on-going, systematic planning that reflects the campus strategic priorities.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Program's strategic plan and/or goals (desired big-picture results or purposes) and objectives (specific, measurable things the program will accomplish, at least one of which will be related to teaching and learning)
2. Ongoing planning process for developing and revising the goals and objectives
3. Relationship of the programs goals and objectives to program activities (i.e., describe the activities that accomplish the goals and objectives of the program)
4. Process of implementing the program goals and objectives

Standard 3. The program provides and evaluates a high quality curriculum that emphasizes student learning as its primary purpose.

Please reflect on the following:

Curriculum

1. Alignment of the curriculum with disciplinary standards
 - a. Establishment of and adherence to pre- and co-requisite courses
 - b. Rationale for selection and organization of courses in the curriculum
 - c. Logic, sequence, and coherence of the curriculum
2. The curriculum (i.e., course objectives) is aligned with the program's student learning outcomes
3. The strengths of your program in relation to the following, as applicable:
 - a. Multi-or interdisciplinary strengths of the programs
 - b. Alignment of curriculum to meet general education needs
 - c. Role of service course offerings that support other programs
4. Internal processes employed by the program to modify the curriculum.
5. Curriculum changes that have been made are in alignment with program goals.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

1. Summarize (and include) the annual assessment reports submitted since the previous self-study program review including documentation of program improvements.
2. Student learning outcomes are observable, measureable statements of what students will know or be able to do upon completion of the program.
3. A statement of course objectives that reflects the expected student learning outcomes of the program is present in all syllabi, including general education course offerings.
4. Assessment measures effectively evaluate the student learning outcomes and results are consistently being used to inform curricular decision-making.

Faculty Resources, Teaching, Scholarship, and Service

Standard 4. Faculty resources are appropriate to effectively meet program mission and goals.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Credentials and appropriateness of background of faculty (full-time and part-time faculty and instructional staff) for teaching in the program
2. Description of faculty in terms of demographics, tenure, and diversity
3. Faculty involvement in continuing professional and pedagogical development.
4. Evidence of equitable distribution of instructional loads among faculty
5. Orientation of faculty and instructional staff, including teaching assistants, to department policies, goals and student learning outcomes of the program

Standard 5. The program retains and graduates well-prepared students.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Diversity of students in the program
2. Enrollment patterns relative to institutional and national enrollment patterns, and projected future program viability
3. Accuracy and consistency of student advising, mechanisms to monitor progress toward degree and use of training to provide quality advising
4. Opportunities for students to engage in faculty research, independent study, study abroad, internships, honors courses, student organizations and other enriching activities that promote retention and graduation
5. Adequacy of financial support/opportunities to recruit and retain high-quality students
6. Student performance on licensure or professional exams relative to regional and national standards, if applicable

Administrative Structure and Operational Resources

Standard 6. The program has an administrative structure that facilitates achievement of program goals and objectives.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Processes in place to ensure efficient and effective decision-making, and shared governance.
2. Support for department chairs/associate deans and others in department or program leadership roles
3. Faculty involvement in ongoing program activities such as assessment; curriculum development, review, and revision; strategic planning; and tenure and promotion standards.
4. Involvement of students, alumni, and other program stakeholders in program decision-making
5. Evaluation of chairs/associate deans, faculty, and staff

Standard 7. The program has adequate operating and staff resources to meet its goals and objectives.

Please reflect on the following:

1. Adequacy of the budget to support the mission and goals of the program
2. Currency and adequacy of facilities and laboratories, instructional technology, and library resources to support the mission and goals of the program
3. Effective and appropriate use of non-faculty staff

Documentation

External reviewer lists of sources

- a. Link to Mission/purpose of the program
- b. Links for Campus mission statement and Campus strategic plan
- c. Link to Program strategic plan, if available
- d. Links for College mission statement and strategic plan
- e. Link to Catalog copy of program curriculum
- f. Links to Curriculum plan and advising checklists
- g. Links to Transfer Guide and Four-Year Plans
- h. Links to Program's current assessment plan with curriculum map and assessment reports for each of the years since the last review
- i. Standards for faculty review, tenure, and promotion

Institutional Research data provided

- a. Number of majors and minors for each of the years since the last review
- b. Annual Student credit hour (SCH) and FTE production for each of the years since the last review
- c. Percent of majors graduating within 4yrs and 6yrs for cohorts of first time full time freshmen (FTFTF) from each of the years since the last review
- d. Program demographic profile to include 1) the number of women, first generation, ethnic minority, and international students in the program; and 2) number of students graduated each year, for each of the years since the last review

Required documentation for years since last review (Stds 3 & 4):

- a. Distribution of tenure status, gender, and ethnic origin of faculty
- b. FTE (full time equivalent) for program faculty
- c. List of credentials for all full-time faculty
- d. List of credentials for all part-time faculty for the last academic year
- e. Summary of sponsored research activities for all faculty
- f. Summary of scholarly and creative activities by tenure-line faculty
- g. Summary of service activities by tenure-line faculty

Required documentation (Std 5):

- a. Employment or graduate degrees held (or in progress) by graduates
- b. For programs with specified admissions standards:
 - 1) entry requirements for admission to the program,
 - 2) the number of applicants to the program,
 - 3) the number of students admitted to the program, and
 - 4) the academic qualifications of admitted students;

Suggested documentation for years since last review (Stds 3 & 4 & 5):

- a. Frequency of course offerings and mean class size for each of the previous five years
- b. Course load by instructor for the past five years
- c. Summary of student, alumni, and/or employer survey responses

Suggested documentation (Std 6):

- a. Minutes of relevant department meetings

Required documentation for years since last review (Std 7):

- a. Equipment, travel, technology, and operating expenditures
- b. List of major facilities and equipment
- c. List of major hardware and software used by the program
- d. List of major library resources, databases, and journals
- e. List of support personnel, including non-teaching graduate students

Other materials to have available access for external reviewer:

- a. Current CV for full time faculty
- b. Syllabi for all courses

Seminar Panel, Action Plan and Annual Updates

Seminar Panel

- A. The role of the seminar panel: After reviewing the self-study and the External Reviewer's Report, a Seminar Panel discusses the reports and their associated observations, findings and recommendations.
- B. Members of the Seminar Panel should include:
 - Dean
 - Department Chair/Program Coordinator
 - Provost and/or Provost's representative
 - CSU – Pueblo CAP Board representative
 - Optional members:
 - Other members of the department/program
 - Off-campus community member
 - Other faculty

All members should have a working knowledge of the degree program.
- C. Seminar Panel Meeting and Discussion
 - Dean with the assistance of the Department Chair/Program Coordinator sets date, time and place for the Seminar Panel meeting.
 - Members should read all the pertinent documents – self-study, external reviewer's report, chair's response to external reviewer's report, etc. Members should come prepared with questions about the program.
 - Focus of the Discussion
 - Quality of Program
 - Assessment
 - Centrality to Mission
 - Need and Demand with reference to capacity
 - Cost
 - External Mandates
- D. Dean's Seminar Panel Report summarizes the discussion at the meeting and includes the Program Action Plan.

Action Plan

- A. The Program Action Plan is prepared by the Dean and Program Chair/Coordinator
- B. Focus of the Action Plan
 - No-cost initiatives for the next five years
 - Low cost initiatives for the next five years with proposed funding sources
 - Major cost initiatives for the next five years with proposed funding sources
- C. Include projected timeline and responsible person(s) for each item

Presentation to CAPB and Cabinet

Program chair/director will present a summary of the report and action plan to the CAPB in the review year and then to the President's Cabinet in the following year. Please format this brief summary to include the following:

Progress on action plan items from previous program review cycle

Program Strengths

Program Challenges

Implementation of Recommendations in current action plan

Progress on new program implementation, if applicable

Resource Needs for all parts of program-what is appropriately covered, what is needed

Budget Needs for program, including proposed funding sources

Program and Action Plan Annual Updates

Updates to the Academic Program Review and Action Plan are to be completed by Department Chair and Dean and forwarded to the Assistant Provost and Provost by June 1 each year. Please include the following information.

Program:Department:

Date of last program review:

Date of next program accreditation review (if applicable):

Date of this update:

Briefly summarize annual updates to the program status including major accomplishments and challenges.

Be sure to include any program accreditation updates, where appropriate.

| | Program Impact | Proposed action (if applicable) |
|---|----------------|---------------------------------|
| Accomplishments Description | | |
| Challenges Description | | |
| Program Accreditation updates or challenges | | |

Also indicate progress within the last year on items from the current program action plan.

| Specific Item from Action Plan | Progress made on Action Plan item (indicate when completed) | Recommendations and projected timeline for further action | Resources Needs update (current, reallocation, new) | Person Responsible for further action |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
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| | | | | |

Update completed by _____

date _____

Dean's approval: yes no date _____