Academic Program Review Policy

Ⅰ. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Academic Affairs that all PSU academic programs, as required by Northwest Commission on Colleges and University (NWCCU) standard 2c Educational Resources, and any associated centers or institutes go through a periodic academic program review in order to improve the effectiveness and quality of the academic programs offered by PSU.

Ⅱ. Reason for Policy/Purpose

The academic program review process at PSU is designed to provide continuous improvement of academic quality within academic units through self-study, external review, and internal action plans. For the purposes of this document, "program review" refers to a department or division's holistic appraisal over five years of its curricular offerings (certificates, majors, minors, and graduate programs), and where applicable, its centers/institutes. Center and institute review should follow *Guidelines for Center/Institute Review at Portland State University*. Program review provides academic units the opportunity for reflection and discussion of their programs on a regular cycle, and is explicitly designed to be collaborative in nature, and inclusive of student, faculty, community, and administrative input as well as external evaluation, as determined by the dean. The overall goal of program review is to assist academic units in:

- articulating their goals and objectives in relation to the University's priorities, and initiatives,
- instituting a regular process of internal and external review of qualitative and quantitative information about program activities and impact,
- demonstrating progress toward achievement of department goals,
- using outcomes for program improvement and goal-setting,
- providing deans and the provost with more thorough and reflective evidence of program progress.

The academic program review process is accomplished through a recurring minimum 7 year cycle of goal setting, data gathering and analysis, and reporting. Through the college's planning process, the academic department:

- establishes its goals and objectives related to teaching, scholarship and service for its respective programs;
- provides analysis of data received and/or collected to demonstrate progress toward the stated goals and objectives;
- reports on its progress toward meeting its goals and objectives within the unit's and the University's mission.

Academic units may consult the **Criteria for Program Review** for program review questions.

Ⅲ. Applicability

This policy applies to all academic units, programs (undergraduate and graduate), schools and colleges under the purview of the Office of Academic Affairs.

Ⅳ. Definitions

Academic Program. Academic units offering academic courses under the direct supervision of a Dean or Vice Provost.

Action Plan. A document outlining the Academic Program's and dean's strategies for addressing issues found during the Academic Review.

Review Schedule. An annual timeline for program review listing all academic programs designating the academic year in which the academic program will go through the Academic Program Review process. The Review Schedule is recommended by the deans of the schools and colleges in cooperation with department chairs and/or divisional directors and approved by the Office of Academic Affairs which will also maintain and publish the review schedule.

Self-Study. A systematic and thorough examination of all of an academic program's components in light of its state mission.

Ⅴ. Policy / Procedure

1. Review Schedule

1.1. An annual timeline for program review and a master schedule of departmental rotation will be published on the OAA website.

1.2. Deans, with approval of OAA, are responsible for setting review schedules for their units on a 7 year cycle (unless otherwise influenced by the specialized accreditation agency).

2. Preparation

2.1. At the beginning of each academic year, the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) sends a reminder to the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP) and to the deans listing the programs or departments he or she has indicated will be subject to review during the academic year.

2.2. Reviews will begin in Fall term and must be concluded by the end of Spring term.

2.3. The dean meets with the programs or departments to develop a process for the reviews and to finalize any decisions about information that will be required beyond what is typically provided by OIRP.

2.4. The program or department prepares review materials according to the **Academic Program Review Guidelines** (see link below), using the **Criteria for Program Review** in the Guidelines and any additional materials as required by the dean.

2.5. Core data elements will be available through **Cognos reports,** or directly from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. (Those departments subject to specialized accreditation should also use these data, but may prepare other materials as required by their accrediting agencies.)

3. Review Process

3.1. The dean is responsible for initiating the process for a review of the program or department, including coordinating external reviews, and where relevant, community members input.

3.2. Department/program creates a self-study using the established standards/criteria listed below,

3.3. Self-study and list of potential external reviewers submitted to the dean for review and comment,

3.4. Self-study and program materials submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies, when applicable, for review and comment.

3.5. Self-study and dean's response submitted to external reviewers, Depending on the program and at the discretion of the dean the review by external reviewers can either be through a site visit or done virtually,

3.6. External reviewers prepare a team report and submit it to the department chair or the review committee,

3.7. The dean and/or the department chair prepares a final report and action plan for the department/program based on the self-study and the external reviewers' report,

3.8. The department/program prepares a response to the final report and action plan,

3.9. Departments/programs with institutes and centers will simultaneously initiate a review of those centers and institutes following the "Guidelines for Center/Institute Review at Portland State University",

3.10. The complete review packet (self-study, dean's response, external review report, final report and action plan, and department/program response) submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs.

4. Implementation

4.1. Following the review of the self-study report, the dean's response, the external review report, the final report and the action plan, the Office of Academic Affairs will meet with the college/school dean and the department chair or divisional director to discuss the recommendations made in the program's Action Plan.

4.2. This Action Plan must be agreed upon by the Office of Academic Affairs, the college dean, and the departmental administrator. It becomes a part of the review record and should be used to guide any follow-up activities.

5. Follow-Up

5.1. The Office of Academic Affairs will call a meeting with OAA, the dean and department chair or director three years following the initial meeting to review the progress that has been made (or not made) with regard to the implementation of the Action Plan.

6. External Reviewers

6.1. Academic programs undergoing program review are expected to include 2-3 external reviewers in the process.

6.2. The selection of external reviewers shall be determined by the deans, in consultation with the program chairs/directors, from a list of candidates provided by the departments/programs.

6.3. Two to three external reviewers should receive and review the self-study written by the department, as well as the dean's response to the report in advance of their visit to campus.

6.4. Deans may determine whether one or more reviewers make a site visit, or if a virtual visit is adequate for review purposes.

6.5. Deans or departments are expected to cover expenses related to these site visits.

7. Specialized Accreditation and Academic Review

7.1. To the extent possible, attempts will be made to coordinate the APR so that it occurs at a time most convenient to the accreditation cycle, as requested by the school/college undergoing specialized accreditation review.

7.2. Reviews of programs with specialized accreditation will be scheduled, whenever possible, to coincide with their accrediting agencies' visit.

7.3. In addition, to minimize the duplication of effort and maximize the value of all review processes, documentation prepared as part of the department/programs accreditation and/or external review processes may be submitted or included in the materials submitted for APR.

7.4. These reports will be reviewed for completeness and alignment with the university's APR guidelines. Requests for additional information will be made if necessary.

8. Guidelines for Selection of External Reviewers

8.1. External Reviewers should be scholars/teachers/practitioners in the field.

8.2. It is desirable for external reviewers to hold a terminal degree in the appropriate discipline.

8.3. It is desirable for external reviewers to have experience with program administration and/or significant leadership role in higher education.

8.4. It is desirable for external reviewers to have experience with student learning assessment, regional accreditation, and/or professional accreditation.

8.5. It is desirable for external reviewers to have prior experience conducting reviews or are or have been officers in related professional organizations.

8.6. It is desirable for external reviewers to be currently employed at a peer institution with a similar degree program.

8.7. External Reviewers must have no conflict of interest such as recent employment or consultation with Portland State University.

VI. Links To Related Forms

APR "Action Plan" template

APR Guidelines

VII. Links To Related Policies, Procedures and Information

APR process webpage

"Principles for Effective Assessment of Student Achievement"

VIII. Contacts

Questions regarding this Policy should be directed to the Office of Academic Affairs at (503) 725-5252 or can be e-mailed to bsandlin@pdx.edu.

IX. Policy Adoption

Policy adoption follows "recommended" signature by Faculty Senate Presiding Officer and "approved" signature by Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

X. History/Revision Dates

Adoption Date: March 3, 2014