

**Guidelines for
Academic Program Review**

**University Academic Program Review Committee
Christopher Newport University**

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I. Introduction

A. Description

At CNU, program review is but one of the interrelated processes in place to ensure institutional effectiveness. All departments offering academic instruction to CNU students are reviewed under these Program Review Guidelines. All appropriate programs of instruction, research and service within the department will be reviewed concurrently.

The Academic Program Review process is a systemic evaluation of each academic program every six years. The process is comprehensive and covers all aspects of the department being studied; it focuses on self-assessment and provides opportunities for the department to engage feedback from peers, colleagues, and administrators. The review should incorporate and build upon related, ongoing processes and requirements such as annual reporting, periodic reviews, institutional effectiveness, learning outcomes, assessment, accreditation, strategic planning, and ongoing plans and goals found in the University strategic plan and those articulated in SCHEV's 6-year plan. In some instances, the program review process may be conducted in concert with professional accreditations. In those instances, the PRC will work with the department to customize these Guidelines and interface with accreditation processes and requirements.

Program review involves the preparation of a program self-study, a visit and report by an external reviewer(s), an evaluation of the department's self study process and the materials prepared by the department and by the Program Review Committee, and a plan outlining actions to be taken as a result of the review. The actions should be reported upon in the annual departmental report. The program review process is intended to ensure the quality of academic programs, identify areas for improvement, and serve as a valuable means for communication within the department and with senior administration. It entails a significant commitment of time and hard work from all involved. This combination of self-study and review by University faculty/staff/students and external field experts has contributed to significant and positive organizational outcomes at CNU and many other institutions of higher education.

Administration of the program review process is a partnership between the faculty, the Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee, the academic Deans, and the Provost. The department associated with the program under review is responsible for engaging in a thorough, reflective self assessment resulting in a program review report; the guidelines of which are included herein. Faculty will examine core issues like curriculum, alignment with institutional mission, faculty productivity, and the teaching/learning environment in a manner reflective of the culture of the department.

The product of the program review process is a report. The report will consider the historical and disciplinary context of the department, present an accurate picture of the department and its programs, frame the issues most relevant to the continued success of the department and include appendices of data and analyses to help the Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the department.

B. Purposes of Program Review

The program review process provides a systematic means of assuring the continuous improvement of CNU's academic, research and service programs. It also presents an opportunity for the department to showcase outstanding accomplishments, successes, and efforts; set goals; discuss effects and outcomes; and present well-formulated justifications for needed resources. Additionally, program review efforts aid in the following:

1. **Accountability.** The program review process helps ensure the program has met its articulated goals and identifies key areas to strengthen the program. The process provides the means by which the department can be held accountable to all constituent groups (students, Commonwealth, alumni, faculty, University, etc.).
2. **Planning.** Program review is an integral part of the University's academic planning process. Results of the program review process include a comprehensive evaluation of an entire academic program including all elements contributing to the quality of the degree program. Program review provides a foundation for planning and promotes improvement through informed decision making.
3. **Comprehensive Understanding of the Unit.** Analysis is an integral part of the program review process, resulting in an academic profile of the department or program. A significant amount of relevant data will be provided by the Provost. The department will analyze these data to present its strengths, weaknesses, and needs.
4. **Quality assessment and assurance.** Program review provides a mechanism for identifying and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the degree programs. Clear agreement on program goals provides decision makers with strong evidence for academic priorities and budget decisions.
5. **External validation.** The Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee mandates the use of an external reviewer(s). Experienced faculty and discipline- and content-specific professionals are employed to help assess the quality and effectiveness of the program. External reviews, including professional accreditations, can also help provide the broad academic judgments and recommendations related to University, college, and departmental missions.

C. Process

1. **Parties to the Process.**

The Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee consists of eight faculty members appointed by the Provost, and both the Director of Institutional Analysis, Research, and Reports, and the Director of Assessment and Evaluation as *ex officio* and nonvoting members. The Provost will decide upon the external reviewer(s) after recommendation from the respective Dean.
2. **Launching the Program Review Process.**

The Provost sets the program review schedule and launches the program review process for all academic programs. The Provost's charge will include (a) the Guidelines, which outline the conduct, expectations, timeline, and product of the program review; and (b) relevant data from the office of Institutional Research, Analysis and Reports to aid the department in studying itself, evaluating trends and conducting analyses. Data have been standardized as much as possible to help ensure that all departments are being evaluated similarly and to help ensure that energies are spent studying and analyzing the department rather than gathering data. It is, however, incumbent upon the department to be certain that it understands the information and seeks additional data or help interpreting the data, if needed.

D. Timeline

Program reviews are conducted on a 6-year rotation or more frequently if mandated by special circumstances. The Provost develops and distributes the master rotation schedule for all academic programs. This is posted on the web. Attempts are made to coordinate program review processes with regularly scheduled accreditation reviews and other external reviews. The process follows 9-month timelines in parallel with the academic year.

Once notified of the forthcoming program review, the academic department conducts the program self-study and prepares the Self Study Report in the format outlined herein. Once prepared, the report is submitted to the respective Dean and once reviewed and approved by the respective Dean, it is submitted to the PRC and the Provost. The PRC's comprehensive evaluation nearly one year later is submitted to the Department, the Dean and the Provost. Details follow:

Year			Deadline	Who and What
1	2	3		
YEAR 1				
			Jan 1st	Provost launches the PRC process by sending the Program Review Guidelines to Deans.
			Feb 1st	Deans send Program Review Guidelines and memo outlining Self Study Review due dates to Department Chair(s) and copies Provost and PRC Chair.
			Feb	PRC representative meets with unit under review to help guide process.
			Spring	Unit under review begins year-long self study gathering data, analyzing and writing report.
YEAR 2				
			April 1st	Department Chair submits unit self study to Dean.
			May 1st	Dean submits unit self study to PRC and the Provost.
			Sept	PRC Reviews self study report, prepares list of questions for the department.
			Fall	Within two weeks of receipt of questions, Department Chair answers questions posed by PRC and submits responses to PRC.
			Fall & Spring	As needed, Department Chair meets with PRC to discuss questions, responses and other matters.
			Fall & Spring	PRC prepares final report.
			May 1st	PRC submits final report to the Dean, Provost, and respective units.
			Summer	Dean prepares list of action agenda items based on department self study and PRC report, and submits it to Department Chair with copies to Provost and PRC.
YEAR 3				
			May	As part of the annual reporting and institutional effectiveness processes, the Dean annually reviews department's progress/status on all action agenda items including those related to the PRC. Reports are submitted to the Provost by the Dean.

E. Responsibilities of Unit Under Review.

The department under review has several responsibilities related to the conduct of the program review process.

- Submit for approval by Department Chair, Dean, Provost and PRC, a list of nominated external reviewers with justifications;
- Strongly encourage full participation of full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty, staff and students;
- Ensure the Chair has executed the release stating no conflict of interest for nominated reviewers;
- Publicize Program Review Report within the department and make it available to faculty and staff prior to submission to PRC;
- Work with the PRC to schedule interviews with faculty, staff and students, if needed; and,
- Work with PRC to respond to questions and data needs.

II. Guidelines for Program Review and Self-Study

A. Requirements for Production of the Final Program Review Report

1. 35-page maximum, placed in a one-inch, loose leaf, view binder.
2. Minimum 10-pt font; pagination and a Table of Contents required.
3. Minimal, relevant, clear and understandable attachments.
4. Tables and figures which accurately and clearly portray the intended perspective.

Also, recognizing the value of disciplinary expertise, it is strongly encouraged, but not required, that you consider comparing your department with peer departments and institutions especially as related to resource utilization, student placement, student profile, quality of degree program, degree program goals, and faculty goals. The external reviewer may provide significant resources and/or insight to you in this area.

B. Outline of Program Review Report

The Program Review Report is the core document of the program review and self-study process. Emphasis is placed on efficiency and brevity of presentation. However, data should be clearly cited enabling the reviewers to easily find source documentation if needed. The requirements of the Program Review Report are included in six major sections:

1. Executive Summary (2-3 pages)
2. Introduction (1 page)
3. Unit Overview and Program Description (7-9 pages)
4. Analyses and Interpretation (12-16)
5. Conclusions (4-6)
6. Appendices to the Program Review Report (no limit)

C. Section Requirements

1. Executive Summary

Presents a brief summary of the self-study findings including an evaluation of the department's success in implementing (a) University goals and initiatives, (b) the Dean's action agenda, (c) recommendations of previous PRC reports, and (d) an overview of the major recommendations of your program review and self-study effort (drawn from the Conclusion) with suggested actions by category as presented below.

2. Introduction

Identify the departmental review team, the timeframe, discuss your process and include the number of faculty participating in the process compared to the number of possible participants. Identify and justify the external reviewer.

3. Unit Overview and Program description

The Program Review Report begins with a Unit Overview (7-9 pages) which is the result of inclusive faculty reflection. The beginning of this section provides a broad understanding of the Department and is followed by increasing detail of its operations. Address changes made since the previous program review. Topics you **must** discuss in the Unit Overview include:

- Historical background
- Mission, goals and objectives
- Unit-level strategic plans
- Immediate and long range goals
- Structure/organization of department
- Reputation of department (e.g., discipline, faculty, professional accreditation)

- Academic Programs and focus within the discipline
- Curriculum (majors, degree programs, certificates offered)
- Students
- Faculty and Staff
- Academic Support (e.g., adjuncts, library resources, graduate students, professional development)
- Facilities/Technology
- Research and Service

4. Analysis and Interpretation

You **must discuss and evaluate** each of the nine topics (A) through (I) below including the bullets within each of the nine topics in your self study.

The University Strategic Plan (Vision 2010) permeates operations at CNU and should be equally visible in the analysis of your operations. As you address the following topics in the conduct of your program review and self-study, you **must** reference the specific priority, goal and strategy at the end of the relevant sentence or paragraph [e.g., Priority II, Goal E]. For each topic area below, it might be beneficial for you to analyze operations and efforts of peer institutions to better understand and inform the success of your department.

Additionally, we recognize and applaud the fact that several programs have achieved national accreditation. The PRC recognizes that there are both benefits and boundaries associated with such accreditation. Therefore, where appropriate, please reference accreditation in your discussions below.

(A) Relevance and Role.

- Relevance of the unit to the college mission and intended outcomes as identified by policies external to the university.
- The unit's role in and contribution to University and College goals in the University's Strategic Plan, supporting Liberal Learning Core requirements, supporting other University initiatives and core values, and supporting SCHEV core competencies [written and oral communications, quantitative reasoning, scientific literacy, critical thinking, and technology].
- Role of the unit in supporting other University initiatives like internationalization, learning communities, and residential liberal arts and sciences universities.
- Fit with processes, descriptions and contents in the University Handbook.

(B) Unit Organization.

- Administrative support of the unit's programs.
- Reporting lines.
- Distribution of administrative duties.
- Staff duties and their distribution.
- Evaluation of staff.
- Staff rewards.
- Strategies to recruit and retain diverse faculty of high quality.

(C) Teaching Effectiveness of Faculty*.

- Goals and expectations for teaching effectiveness and documentation for achievement of those goals.
- How the number and expertise of the unit faculty contribute to unit's ability to fulfill mission and goals.
- The unit's initiatives to support and improve teaching performance.
- Communication and application of the Promotion and Tenure processes and information.
- Professional development resources that specifically support teaching.
- Distribution of teaching assignments (LHE data).
- Distribution of advising assignments among faculty.
- How unit mentors and advises its students.
- Efforts to support development of junior faculty.
- Evaluation and reward of faculty performance.
- Selection, use, costs, support and evaluation of adjunct faculty.

(D) Faculty Research*.

- Expectations for research and scholarship and the extent to which the goals were met.
- Expectations for gifts and grants.
- Research mission.
- How research is supported and funded and how that has changed over time.
- How faculty are rewarded for research activities.
- How unit research has affected the profession.
- Awarded grants/contracts and the need/concern addressed.

(E) Faculty Service*.

- How unit academic and professional expertise is extended to the public and community.
- How unit research has affected industry, the Commonwealth, the region, the nation and other constituents.
- How students are involved in research activities and how relationships are formed and evaluated.
- Type of service-based instruction, applied research, technical assistance and program activities in which the unit engages and that are tied to the unit mission and that also meet community needs.
- How service activities contribute to specific University goals.

(F) Curricula.

- Measures of program quality and educational value added.
- How courses in curricula interrelate and support program goals.
- How program curricula are designed and updated to meet program goals.
- How teaching strategies and educational methods support program goals.
- The relevance, effectiveness, and currency of teaching strategies and educational methods.
- Steps taken to maintain program rigor.
- Appropriate graduate school preparation.
- Demand for degree program.
- Job market conditions for graduates.

**We recognize that there may be, and in fact probably should be, some overlap in your discussions related to teaching, research, and service.*

(G) Students.

- Summary and interpretation of findings of UAEC Reviews of Assessment records.
- Goals and expectations for student learning and achievement of the goals.
- Other student outcomes (e.g., licensure pass rates, capstone experiences, alumni feedback).
- Comparisons with peers.

(H) Admission and Progression.

- Trends in number of student majors in degree program, average class sizes by program and by level.
- Achievement of targets and goals related to student admissions and progression and retention.
- Results of evaluation affecting progression and retention.

(I) Resource Utilization and Requirements.

- Adequacy of faculty and staff to meet unit needs.
- Adequacy of program resources and efficiency of resource use (human, technological, facilities, and funding) to fulfill current mission and offer current programs.
- How size, type and quality of current physical space affects unit's ability to fulfill current mission and current programs.
- How trends in growth will affect resources.
- Significant changes in unit facilities or technical infrastructure since last review.
- Fiscal health, direct and indirect program related revenues and costs to the college.
- Revenues and costs per student, cost of adjuncts, grants, partnerships, etc. and compare each with University average.
- Adequacy of library resources to fulfill current mission and current program offerings.
- Availability and quality of technology, equipment, labs and space, technology support, and possible improvements.

5. Conclusion

Use this section to discuss how the unit is doing overall. Use the results of analyses from Section II and synthesize all information into a succinct report on performance relative to the department, to the University vision and mission, and if relevant to peer institutions. Your conclusion **must**:

- (A)** Identify and discuss program strengths.
- (B)** Identify and discuss program weaknesses.
- (C)** Identify and discuss program opportunities.
- (D)** Identify and discuss program threats.
- (E)** Lay a foundation for future recommendations using the results in (a) – (d), above
- (F)** Identify and recommend actions to improve or maintain quality of program.

6. Appendices

(A) Required:

- Unit 5-year plan
- UAEC Annual Assessment records from previous 2-3 years
- Annual reports
- Most recent previous Executive Program Review Report
- Faculty evaluations (summary of annual reviews)
- Evidence of qualitative success of research/service/outreach
- Faculty CVs
- Space allocations/floor plans

(B) Preferred:

- External evidence of program quality
- Student feedback
- Alumni feedback

III. External Review Process

An external reviewer is a widely accepted contribution to any program review process; indeed, one of the primary strengths of the program review process is the involvement of an eminently qualified individual to serve as reviewer. External reviewers, selected because of their expertise in the field, are asked to provide a professional review of the department as well as insight and feedback on issues and trends specific to the department and/or the field.

A. Allocations for External Reviewer

No later than March 1 of each year, the PRC will notify the Provost of the number of external reviewers who should be retained and compensated in the next fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), the departmental review in which each will participate and the expected cost to the University of each. The Provost will then allocate, on the following July 1, some or all of these requested funds to the PRC – depending upon availability. In the event that not all departmental reviews for that fiscal year can be supported by an external reviewer, the PRC will determine the reviews for which the external reviewers will be retained and at what cost, consistent with its budget allocation for such activity.

B. Criteria for Selecting External Reviewers

The faculty will nominate up to six individuals to serve as external reviewer. Only one or two will be selected. These nominations are forwarded to the Department Chair, who will review and approve the nominations. The Chair will submit his or her recommendations to the Dean who will also review and approve. The Dean will submit his or her recommendations to the Provost, and the Provost will inform the Dean of the approved external reviewers. Once approved, the Dean will contact the external reviewers and negotiate availability. Funding will come from the Provost through the Dean. The Dean will be responsible for working out the logistics of travel and lodging, as well as maintaining contact with the External Reviewer.

Nominated reviewers must not present or give the impression of a conflict of interest. Therefore, nominated reviewers must not be a former student, a current or former employee, or a relative of a current or former employee of CNU. Department chairs will be required to execute a form certifying that all nominated reviewers meet the following criteria:

1. Hold the terminal degree appropriate to the program under review;
2. Possess outstanding scholarly and/or experiential record;
3. Hold membership in professional societies related to the program under review;
4. Have close familiarity with the type of program and type of institution in which the review will be conducted; and,
5. Possess no conflict of interest.

C. Role of External Reviewer

The external reviewer is in a good position to help the PRC understand how department operations compare to operations at similar institutions and how similar departments operate efficiently and effectively. Departments involved in a program review surely will recognize the utility of capitalizing on the credence the external reviewer brings to the process.

The PRC will ask the external reviewer(s) to address topics in Section II of the Guidelines for Academic Program Review or answer specific questions the PRC has designed, and then prepare a report of findings. The external reviewer will be required to prepare a brief presentation of findings before departing campus. The written report (approximately ten pages) will be due within two weeks of departure. This report will be shared with the department within 3 months of receipt of the report by the PRC.

D. Honorarium and Reimbursement

In addition to covering all travel, lodging and meal expenses, the external reviewer is provided an honorarium of between \$1000 and \$1200. The honorarium is disbursed once the external reviewer completes and submits his or her report to the PRC. External reviewers are also reimbursed for expenses associated with the review and must submit contact information and social security number along with receipts. It is helpful if this information is submitted as early as possible to expedite payments.

E. External Reviewer Report

The external reviewer will submit a report of approximately ten pages within two weeks of the site visit. This written report is to be submitted in electronic format directly to the PRC within fourteen days of the site visit. The External Reviewer Report will present a brief assessment of the department providing brief feedback on the nine topics of analysis; strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; recommendations regarding future improvements; and, responses to any questions the PRC specifically asked the external reviewer to address. The PRC uses this report as well as the department's Program Review Report and its own findings to prepare its report.

IV. Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee

A. Guiding Questions for PRC Evaluation

The program review process is intended to ensure the quality of academic programs, identify areas for improvement, and serve as a valuable means for communication within the department and with senior administration. The role of the Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee is to evaluate the unit's self study in a comprehensive fashion and provide feedback that will aid unit improvement. Guiding questions by topic area include:

1. Relevance and Role

How does this unit fit within the missions and initiatives of the institution and the college?

2. Organization

How is the unit organized? Does the organizational structure meet the needs of the unit? Are the organizational functions efficiently and effectively meeting the needs of the unit?

3. Teaching Effectiveness of Faculty

Are there sufficient faculty, in number and discipline, to meet institutional, college and unit teaching needs? Are resources and support services sufficient and appropriate to meet the teaching and learning goals of the unit? How are teaching, learning, and advising expectations for faculty communicated, achieved, and rewarded? How are teaching strategies evaluated and changes made if needed? How does unit ensure effectiveness, relevance and currency in teaching strategies?

4. Faculty Research

How does faculty research support, respond to, or address unit, college, institutional, regional and state missions? How is faculty research enabled? How are faculty research expectations communicated, achieved and rewarded?

5. Faculty Service

How does faculty service support, respond to, or address unit, college, institutional, regional and state missions? How is faculty service enabled? How are faculty service expectations communicated, achieved and rewarded?

6. Curricula

How does the unit ensure curricula are current and rigor is maintained? How does the unit ensure curricula are consistent with department, college and institutional mission?

7. Students

How are student learning goals being achieved? How are student outcomes assessed? What do the results of unit assessments inform and how are the results used?

8. Admission and Progression

How are students progressing? How are student progression goals determined and how are they being achieved?

9. Resource Utilization and Requirements

How do physical, financial, and program resources and support services meet current and future teaching, research and service needs?

B. PRC Report

The Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee completes its interviews and analyses and writes its report in the 9 to 12 months following the department's submission of its Program Review Report. The Undergraduate Academic Program Review Committee submits its report to the Provost and then to the Dean. The PRC's report will provide feedback, and relevant recommendations and commendations to each section of the Program Review Guidelines.

V. Appendix

A. Sampling of Data Provided to Units During Conduct of Program Review

Relevance and Role/Faculty Research and Service

Number of Partnerships and Grants
Accomplishments in Res./Service

Organization

Staff No.
Faculty No. & % of college and CNU totals by rank
No. Adjuncts available; FTE adjuncts used
Full-Time Percent tenured
Full-Time Percent with terminal degree
% Full-Time Retained since last program review
No. Junior faculty programs
Annual \$ provided to faculty for Prof Dev

Teaching, Research, Service

Sabbaticals
Rewards
Measures of Progression and Retention
Graduates + Percent of total CNU graduates
Program Transfer within CNU
Transfers from CC
Grade distribution by course
IDEA summaries

Admission and Progression

No. Sections by level
Avg & % class size Lower Level
Avg & % class size Upper
College & CNU averages
Credit hours generated by level
Total credit hours
Generated SCH to LHE
Ratio FTE gen. to FTE actual;
compare with CNU avg
HC enrollments fall
Degree productivity (annual since last review)
FTE by major and % CNU total
HC enrollments by level

Resource Utilization and Requirements

No. & % Student FTE Upper Level
No. & % Student FTE Lower Level
Total Faculty FTE used
Full time Faculty FTE used
Adjunct + Part time faculty FTE used
FTE Student FTE Faculty ratio by discipline
Cost per LHE
Space sq ft
Lab facilities Sq ft
Space utilization
Technical infrastructure

NOTE: This data will be provided you during the self study of your program.

You may acquire additional data through the office of Institutional Research, Analysis and Reports