

Program Review University of Oklahoma

Overview

Program review is a form of institutional self-study mandated for every degree-granting unit at the University of Oklahoma by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education in 1985. At the University of Oklahoma other appropriate academic units also undergo program review. The first cycle of program review at OU began in 1986-87 and was completed in 1991-1992. The second started in 1993-94 and concluded in 1998-1999. We are currently in the third cycle (For background, see OSRHE Policies & Procedures II-2-17 (1999) and OU Faculty Handbook § 5.37.)

The reviews are under the auspices of the Provosts' office and are handled by the program review coordinator. The reviews are characterized by several themes:¹

- 1) The reviews are meant to be collegial and are based on peer review.
- 2) The reviews should be forward-looking and directed toward improvement of the program.
- 3) The reviews should be scholarly, evaluative, and based on academic criteria. They should seek to define questions that will help increase the understanding of the unit.
- 4) Every attempt should be made to make the review an objective process.
- 5) The reviews are meant to be comprehensive in that they view the programs in terms of how they are connected to the university and to the intellectual discipline at large.
- 6) The reviews should be focused on how to improve the unit without additional resources.
- 7) The reviews should be dynamic and should lead to improvements in programs.

Objectives

The purpose of program review is to improve the quality of education at the University of Oklahoma. Academic programs require regular review and self-examination to improve and program review is a crucial part of this process.

The process should provide a useful academic review to the unit, Budget Dean, and Provost. From the administrative point of view, the review can be important for long range planning by providing data on the overall health of a unit, faculty resources, student demand, facilities, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of unit. For the unit, the review can provide a mechanism for improvement and change. The faculty should participate in the process and the review is important for faculty governance. Externally, the reviews provide the opportunity for the university to be accountable to the students, taxpayers, donors, funding agencies, accreditation organizations (GLCA), and state government (e.g., State Regents).

¹Parts of several sections modified from Academic Review of Graduate Programs – A Policy Statement, Council of Graduate Schools, Washington D.C., 1990. 26pp.

Questions that are commonly addressed during program review include the following:

- Is the teaching in the unit effective and useful?
- Is the curriculum appropriate, given the numbers and qualifications of the faculty?
- Are department resources sufficient to meet the student demand?
- Are the faculty's publication record and/or other indicators of creative activity indicative of high quality?
- Is this a unit that is recognized within its professional community for the quality of its contributions?
- What is the opinion of experts from outside the university?
- Does the unit have a forward-looking strategic plan?
- Is the unit successfully meeting its' own mission as well as the mission of the university?
- Does the unit have a plan to incorporate service leaning into the curriculum?

| PROGRAM REVIEW CYCLE 3 | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
| Architecture | Aerospace & Mechanical Engineering | Accounting | Botany/Microbiology |
| Construction Science | Civil Engr & Environmental Science | Finance | Mathematics |
| Interior Design | Chemical Engineering | Management | Physics & Astronomy |
| Landscape Architecture | Computer Science | Management Information Systems | Zoology |
| Regional and City Planning | Electrical and Computer Engineering | Marketing | Geography |
| Health & Exercise Science | Industrial Engineering | Aviation | Geology & Geophysics |
| Human Relations | Petroleum & Geological Engineering | Art | Meteorology |
| Social Work | Library and Info Studies | Dance | Chemistry /Biochemistry |
| | BioEngineering | Drama | |
| | | Music | |
| | | Musical Theater | |
| | | Journalism and Mass Communication | |
| | | | |
| 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014-Cycle 5 |
| Educational Leadership & Policy Studies | Philosophy | Film and Video Studies | Architecture |
| Educational Psychology | Classics | Anthropology | Construction Science |
| Instructional Leadership & Academic Curriculum | Communication | Political Science | Interior Design |
| Liberal Studies | Economics | Psychology | Landscape Architecture |
| Law | English | Sociology | Regional and City Planning |
| International and Area Studies | History | African and African-American Studies | Health & Exercise Science |
| Native American Studies | History of Science | Honors College | Human Relations |
| Women's Studies | Religious Studies | Modern Languages, Literatures & Linguistics | Social Work |
| | | | Library and Info Studies |

Procedures

During the first year of the three year academic review process, academic units prepare a self-study document which is supplemented by university generated quantitative departmental profile information as well as results from an online survey of the faculty. See the self study guideline document for details.

During the second year, external reviewers, selected from the discipline of the unit under review, read all materials and address questions provided to them in a report of approximately 10 pages. The unit's self-study, supplementary materials, and the external reviewer's reports are then sent to an internal panel of faculty and deans (the Campus Departmental Review Panel, CDRP) for study and recommendations. The CDRP consists of a representative from the office of Dean of the Graduate College, representatives from two dean's offices of colleges whose units are not under review, and faculty selected by the Faculty Senate. It is coordinated by an individual in the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost. The CDRP prepares an analysis of the academic unit and makes recommendations to the unit and the budget dean. It shares a preliminary draft of its report in a meeting with the unit, the budget dean, and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

During the third year of the review process, the budget dean, using the CDRP report as an important source of data, prepares an action plan for the unit. A draft version of this action plan is shared with the academic unit at a meeting of the unit with the budget dean, the Coordinator of the CDRP, and the Senior Vice President and Provost. After this meeting, a final version of the budget dean's action plan is shared with the unit.