

Program Review Guidelines for Departments

University of Minnesota Crookston

Program reviews are a best practice that inform continuous improvement in higher education. They provide an opportunity for both *reflective assessment* regarding current and past performance and *evidence-based planning* for the future. They are also required by the Higher Learning Commission and valued at the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMN Crookston). While the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs (VCASA) maintains administrative authority over the program review process, the goal is for program reviews to be driven by faculty and informed by various internal stakeholders, most notably students, and external stakeholders.

Highlights of the Academic Program Review Process

Purpose:

- To ensure curriculum relevance
- To examine curricular efficiency
- To ensure equitable achievement of student goals for enrollment, learning, and overall success
- To ensure that program goals for learning are achieved
- To evaluate course and program learning outcomes and assessment practices
- To evaluate how program learning outcomes align with UMN Crookston's conceptual framework (also referred to as core competencies: communication, working with others, critical thinking) for learning addressing communication, working with others, and critical thinking
- To recognize program strengths and yield recommendations for program improvements, changes, expansion, focus, and (in some cases) discontinuation
- To assist in meeting standards and requirements of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents and the Higher Learning Commission

Key Features:

- Six-year cycle
- Two-semester review process as specified in the timeline
- Use of external program accreditation in lieu of an internal program review
- Annual updates including (a) responses addressing concerns from previous program reviews; (b) basic enrollment, retention, and graduation data, and (c) summary of assessment activities
- Cooperative effort by department faculty and appropriate academic administrators with input and data from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE)
- Comprehensive final self-study report including recommendations
- Required external review of the self-study report by the Program Improvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) and/or an external review by faculty from (a) similar program(s)
- Final review by department faculty, Unit Head, and the VCASA

Roles and Responsibilities, Documents, Resources, and Timeline

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibilities summarized in this section are typical activities for each of the key roles. They are not all-inclusive and may shift or expand, depending on the program under review.

Program Faculty. Program faculty responsibilities include (a) conducting the program review self-study, (b) disseminating to the academic administrator immediately responsible for their area (e.g. Unit Head), the program PIAC and, if so elected, external reviews for feedback, (c) responding to feedback, and (d) calling for a final meeting with the VCASA, Unit Head, and faculty to review the final results of the program review process. Following the completion of the program review, faculty are responsible for implementing changes, subject to availability of necessary resources.

Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness oversees UMN Crookston's program review process. Specific responsibilities include (a) tracking the program review cycle for all programs, (b) providing program faculty with data necessary to complete the program review, and (c) advising faculty as appropriate regarding interpretation of program data. This process typically involves coordination with various campus offices (e.g. Enrollment Management, Student Success, and Alumni and University Relations) as well as accessing data from system-wide and national datasets.

Unit Head. The Unit Head¹ is responsible for working with program faculty to ensure that the program review is conducted according to schedule and to help implement changes following the formal review process. If a program elects to conduct an external review by faculty from similar programs at other campuses, the Unit Head assists in coordinating the services of said external reviewers.

PIAC. PIACs consist of external stakeholders such as program alumni, businesses that have hired program graduates, and industry leaders who work in fields related to the discipline. PIACs may serve as the source of external review for self-studies as well as for ongoing feedback regarding program quality and continuous improvement. When possible, PIACs should include academic colleagues from similar or related programs.

Program Review Committee. The Program Review Committee reviews completed program reviews, provides campus-wide perspective on the findings and recommendations of the program review, and advises the VCASA on actions (e.g., maintain six-year cycle with no interim report, approve conditionally based on response to concerns, suggestions for improvements) to be taken in response to completed program reviews and on the program review process.

VCASA. The VCASA assists the Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with the program review cycle and process. The VCASA reviews and responds to completed program reviews. The VCASA has the authority to grant requests for release from teaching or summer stipends to assist with the completion of self-studies and program review processes.

¹ For the purpose of program review, this shall be the academic administrator most closely connected to academic programs who carries formal supervisory responsibilities for the program. This does not refer to individuals in roles that are solely facilitative in responsibility.

Documents

The VCASA, working with the Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, will maintain program review documents.

Programs that secure external accreditation may substitute their accreditation materials for program review self-study and external review so long as they meet the requirements outlined in this document. The VCASA will maintain copies of accreditation documents with program review documents.

Resources

Conducting the six-year review is a substantial body of work for program faculty members. In recognition of the time required to complete the work, up to three credits of release time or an equivalent summer stipend may be granted per program review for the time period in which the majority of the program review work is being done. Release time and summer stipend may be combined for a maximum of three credits per program review.

Faculty with non-paid program leads or co-leads may request release time for fall or spring semesters. Faculty leads or co-leads on a 9- or 10-month contract who are doing the majority of the program review work during the summer may request a stipend. Stipends for leads or co-leads will not be considered for fall and spring semester work.

In instances when a program's director receives formal compensation for their leadership role, additional release units or stipends will not be allocated for the program. Note that program director compensation is typically reserved for programs that require external accreditation.

See Appendix A for the form to request release or a summer stipend.

Timeline

The typical timeline for program review process is as follows:

1. Overview meeting by March 31 of the academic year prior to the program review year
2. Request for course release or summer stipend due to the Unit Head by April 30
3. Standard program review data set provided by the OIE by May 15
4. Self-study written by January 1
5. External PIAC review (or optional external review) by February 15
6. Response to the external review by March 1
7. Meeting of the Program Review Committee, the Unit Head, VCASA, and Director of the OIE by April 15
8. Final written response by the VCASA by May 30

The timeline can be modified by mutual agreement of the program faculty, the Unit Head, and the VCASA.

Program Review Outline and Section Guidelines

I. Executive Summary

This is typically no longer than one page in length and may utilize bulleted or numbered lists for efficiency. The focus of the summary is on (a) the most significant findings of the self-study and (b) recommendations for the future including any budgetary requests.

II. Program Overview

a. Current Program Overview Narrative (required)

Short narrative summarizing (a) the formal content of the program (major, minor, emphases), (b) distinctive aspects of the program, and (c) internal or external trends and opportunities that may affect the program.

b. History (optional)

c. Mission Statement (optional)

III. Program Curriculum

a. Curriculum Narrative

Provide a short narrative describing the organization of the program, major, minor, emphases.

b. Program-Level Outcomes (required)

List program-level learning outcomes for the program (typically 3-5); provide short narrative descriptions only as necessary. This section should include a comparison of the program's current sample study plan with the recommended study plan generated by the Curriculum Analysis Dashboard.

c. Curriculum Tables (required)

i. Table 1. Map Program-Level Learning Outcomes to UMN Conceptual Framework (See Example in Appendix B)

ii. Table 2. Map Courses to Program-Level Learning Outcomes (See Example in Appendix B)

iii. Figures. Charts and figures from the University of Minnesota Curriculum Analysis Dashboard will be provided to faculty by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and inserted here

iv. Include syllabi for all courses as an appendix

d. Curricular Revisions and/or Innovations (optional)

Based on the review of curricular maps, faculty may recommend revising, adding, or deleting courses in order to ensure that all program-level outcomes are addressed. Curricular revisions listed here may anticipate data that will be previewed in the following sections (e.g. if there faculty identify gateway courses with low pass rates in Section V, recommended curricular changes that address those concerns may be listed here).

IV. Program Faculty

a. Program Faculty Narrative (required)

Provide a brief narrative regarding the composition of the faculty that addresses proportions of tenure-track/tenured faculty, full-time P&A instructors, adjunct instructors, and other aspects of faculty diversity (gender, race, first-generation status, etc.). Conclude this section with reference to an appendix that includes current CVs for all program faculty and instructors.

b. Summary of Scholarly Productivity (optional)

c. Summary of Program, University, Community, and Professional Service (optional)

d. Summary of Professional Development (optional)

e. Summary of Program Awards and Recognition (optional)

V. Program Enrollment and Student Success Outcomes

a. Student Enrollment and Success Data (required; tables and figures provided by OIE)

i. Student Enrollment and Success Narrative

Provide a narrative discussing observations, strengths, and limitations as well as differences for disaggregated student populations as presented in the following four tables. These tables and this narrative serve as the primary cornerstone for the work of this section. Faculty should propose targets for program enrollment as well as potential enrollment capacity limits. The narrative must address evidence of assessment data related to the program-level learning outcomes identified in Section III.b. The narrative should also address student engagement initiatives such as advising, outreach, and community engagement as appropriate for the program.

ii. Table 3. Student Enrollment Data (See Example in Appendix B)

iii. Table 4. Student Retention Data

iv. Table 5. 4-Year Graduation Rates

v. Table 6. 6-Year Graduation Rates

vi. Figures. Additional charts and figures from University of Minnesota dashboards will be provided by OIE and inserted here.

vii. Programs may request additional data from OIE that are relevant to their program (e.g. breakdowns for CIHS, PSEO, transfer, etc.)

b. Additional Assessment of Student Learning (optional)

i. If additional assessments of student learning are administered and tracked, they can be discussed here. Potential examples include: (a) data from liberal education program reviews regarding gateway courses and pass rates that impact the program, (b) surveys or interviews conducted with students during the program, and (c) data drawn from campus-wide surveys administered by OIE.

c. Additional Measures (strongly recommended when possible)

i. Narrative Addressing Additional Measures

ii. Cocurricular Student Engagement (strongly recommended when possible)

iii. Graduate Survey/Interview Results (strongly recommended when possible)

iv. Employer Survey/Interview Feedback (strongly recommended when possible)

VI. Resources

a. Operating Efficiency (required)

A primary focus of this section will be average or typical class size within the program (data should be presented as the number of students per credit for courses). Faculty may additionally wish to speak to the number and size of overloads carried by full-time faculty, the availability of adjunct instructors, and succession planning in instances when full-time faculty or instructional staff retirements are anticipated within the upcoming review cycle.

b. Analysis of Current Resources (required)

Provide narrative (supported by data, tables, etc. when possible) addressing facilities, equipment, technology, personnel, and other key resources needed by the program. Faculty should discuss how current resources affect enrollment, student success, and other aspects of program quality.

VII. Conclusion, Interpretation, and Recommendations for Practice

a. Summary and Interpretations of Major Findings (required)

The summary should be short and focused on the 3-5 most significant findings from the self-study.

b. Recommendations for Future Practice (required)

Faculty should keep this section focused and concise with a limit of 3-5 recommendations. At least half of the recommendations should be budget neutral. For recommendations that involve requests of new resources, faculty should describe program impact if the requests are not funded.

c. Questions for External Review (optional)

Faculty may list guiding questions for the PIAC review (or optional external reviewer), though that review may extend beyond the questions presented by faculty.

VIII. Summary of External Review (required)

This external review may consist of a presentation by faculty to its PIAC that highlights the various sections of the review. The full self-study should be made available to PIAC members. Following the meeting and discussion, a written summary of PIAC findings and recommendations should be signed by the PIAC chair and added to the final program review report.

If an external review is completed by an academic faculty member in a similar or related field, the external review report should be inserted here as a part of the final program review report.

IX. Letter from the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

Following the meeting of the Program Review Committee, the Unit Head, VCASA, and Director of the OIE, and in light of the recommendations of this group, a final letter from the VCASA will be added to the report. The addition of this letter will indicate the final completion of the program review process.

Appendix A: Request for Release or Summery Stipend

Requests for course release or summer stipend are due to the Unit Head by April 30 of the spring preceding the review year unless otherwise agreed upon by program faculty and the Unit Head.

Program: _____

Faculty Lead: _____

Co-Lead: _____

Request for: Release credits Stipend Combination

Rationale:

Requested by: _____
Signature of Lead

Date: _____

Requested by: _____
Signature of Co-Lead

Date: _____

Appendix B: Program Review Example Tables²

Table 1. Program-Level Learning Outcomes to UMN Crookston Conceptual Framework (developed by faculty)

Program-Level Outcome	Communication	Working With Others	Critical Thinking
1. Insert first program-level outcome here	X		
2. Insert second program-level outcome here		X	
3. Insert third program-level outcome here		X	
4. Insert fourth program-level outcome here			X

Note. Xs are examples only.

Table 2. Course Requirements to Program-Level Outcomes (developed by faculty)

Course	Program-Level Outcome 1	Program-Level Outcome 2	Program-Level Outcome 3	Program-Level Outcome 4
Liberal Education				
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name				
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name				
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name				
Major/Core				
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name		X		
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name			X	
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name				
Emphasis				
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name	X			
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name			X	
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name				X
Minor				
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name		X		
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name	X			
PREF ####: Abbreviated Name				X

Notes. (a) Xs are examples only; (b) table format may need to be adjusted to fit the number of program-level learning outcomes; (c) all 10 Goal Areas do not need to be listed—only specified liberal education courses should be listed but they do not need to be mapped

² The tables presented in this appendix are illustrative. Rows and columns from the tables may be added or deleted as appropriate for the program.

Table 3. Enrollment Data (provided by OIE)

	20xx	20xx	20xx	20xx	20xx
On-Campus					
NHS					
NAS					
Total					
Online					
NHS					
NAS					
Total					
On-Campus and Online					
NHS					
NAS					
Total					

Table 4. Student Retention Data (20xx-20xx) (provided by OIE)

	Total New Students	Students Retained to the Second Year (N)	Students Retained to the Second Year (%)
All New Students (20xx-20xx)	##	##	##.##%
First-Generation College Students	##	##	##.##%
Pell-Eligible Students	##	##	##.##%
Greater Minnesota Students	##	##	##.##%
Students of Color	##	##	##.##%
Online Students	##	##	##.##%

Note. Data presented are composite for the five-year period of 20xx-20xx

Table 5. 4-Year Graduation Rates (20xx-20xx) (provided by OIE)

	Entering Cohort N	Graduated in 4 Years (N)	Graduated in 4 Years (%)
All New Students (20xx-20xx)	##	##	##.##%
First-Generation College Students	##	##	##.##%
Pell-Eligible Students	##	##	##.##%
Greater Minnesota Students	##	##	##.##%
Students of Color	##	##	##.##%
Online Students	##	##	##.##%

Note. Data presented are composite for the five-year period of 20xx-20xx

Table 6. 6-Year Graduation Rates (20xx-20xx) (provided by OIE)

	Entering Cohort N	Graduated in 6 Years (N)	Graduated in 6 Years (%)
All New Students (20xx-20xx)	##	##	##.##%
First-Generation College Students	##	##	##.##%
Pell-Eligible Students	##	##	##.##%
Greater Minnesota Students	##	##	##.##%
Students of Color	##	##	##.##%
Online Students	##	##	##.##%

Note. Data presented are composite for the five-year period of 20xx-20xx