

# Shawnee State University

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| POLICY TITLE:           | ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW |
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| APPROVED BY:            | BOARD OF TRUSTEES       |

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An effective academic program review process is essential for the health of Shawnee State University's academic programs. The academic program review process strives to ensure the quality and academic integrity of all programs through continuous program improvement. At its most basic, the program review process is simply a review of the good works, processes, procedures, and measured learning outcome results that programs develop as they strive for continuous improvement.
- 1.2 Program review is a best practice in American higher education that involves stakeholders in the continuous improvement process. Such a review includes an assessment of past and current performance that is used to inform future directions and decision-making. Those charged with overseeing and coordinating program review activities should be engaged in some aspect of assessment and program review year-round.
- 1.3 The academic program review process provides an opportunity for program faculty and administration to evaluate the goals and effectiveness of a program and make appropriate changes that will lead to improvement in the quality of instruction and curricular requirements, improved career and life preparation for students, and effective and efficient use of University resources.

## 2.0 PURPOSE

- 2.1 Assist programs in the identification, evaluation and assessment of their mission and goals and the development of short and long-term strategic plans.
- 2.2 Assist programs in the determination of their relationship to the Mission of the University, College, and department.
- 2.3 Assist programs in assessing the quality of instruction, instructional methodology, student learning, and the strengths and challenges in their curriculum.

- 2.4 Provide programs the opportunity to compare their curriculum, resources, and facilities with those at peer institutions.
- 2.5 Assist programs in the identification of existing resources and determination of the resources needed to carry out identified mission and goals.
- 2.6 Assist the University in the evaluation of the value, quality, effectiveness and efficient use of resources for the academic programs at Shawnee State University.
- 2.7 Provide direction and priorities for the University that can be used for needs assessment, resource allocation, and planning.
- 2.8 Provide structure, a plan of action, and information for continuous program improvement.

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Academic Program – refers to any and all coherent instructional activities of Shawnee State University and includes degree and certificate programs, concentrations, and other non-degree curricular entities, such as the Honors and General Education programs.
- 3.2 Degree Program – refers to any prescribed course of study which constitutes an area of specialization leading to a recognized degree. This is the same as the term “discipline specialty” used in reporting to the U.S. Department of Education’s Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS). In baccalaureate degrees or higher, the term “degree program” is the same as “major.”
  - 3.2.1 Degree Programs must be significantly distinct from one another. Where two proposed degree programs have sixty percent or more of their program course requirements in common, they may be classified as concentrations within a single degree program, rather than as separate degree programs. When deemed appropriate by their College Dean, programs with curricular links (for example, associate and baccalaureate programs in the same area or programs with concentrations, minors, or associated certificates) will be combined into a single review.
- 3.3 Preliminary Self-Study– refers to a structured reflection of a program’s faculty, staff, students, and alumni concerning the educational effectiveness of its academic program. It is not a description of the unit, but a data- and constituent-informed analysis that leads to the identification of key issues and recommendations of potential steps to address them.
- 3.4 On-Site Visits & External Reviewer Reports – On-site visits by external reviewers are not mandatory, but generally recommended, and ought to be considered a justifiable expense in conducting a proper program review.

- 3.5 Final Program Review Report – The end product of a program review shall take the form of a final report, which includes recommendations and a timeline for their implementation.
- 3.6 Interim Progress Report – The Provost, upon consideration of the final Program Review Report, can mandate a special review and Interim Progress Report. Such Interim Progress Report shall be conducted under the procedures approved for a regular program review.

#### 4.0 ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

##### 4.1 Organization

- 4.1.1 The cornerstone of a program review is the development of the academic program's Preliminary Self-Study. Following its submission, a review to clarify, verify, and amplify the Self-Study will be conducted by external reviewer(s) appointed by the respective Dean or the appropriate administrator within the Office of the Provost in consultation with the unit under review.
- 4.1.2 The Preliminary Self-Study becomes the core component of the final Program Review Report, which will be submitted to the respective College Dean. In the case of non-degree curricular entities, such as the Honors or General Education programs and similar non-departmental academic programs, final reports will be submitted to the appropriate administrator within the Office of the Provost.

##### 4.2 Timeline

- 4.2.1 Programs will be scheduled to undergo review on a recurring five-year cycle. Program Reviews shall be scheduled so that no department shall have to conduct more than one program review per academic year, except in cases when departments are home to more than five programs or when a previous review requires a more frequent program review. Reviews, when possible, should be spread out along the five-year cycle to evenly distribute a department's program review efforts.
- 4.2.2 Whenever possible, programs with outside accreditation will be put on a program review schedule that will allow those programs to complete review and analysis for the accreditation self-study with a timeline for submission that corresponds with the university's program review cycle.
- 4.2.3 Programs that are accredited by an outside body may submit their most recent self-study produced to satisfy accreditation in place of the Final Program Review Report. The Dean of the program's college may require a supplemental report, providing data or material required in the standard

review (as outlined in this guide) if such information is not sufficiently up-to-date or not found in their accreditation study.

#### 4.3 Annual Data

In addition to a periodic program review, this policy also stipulates each academic program submit quantitative data on degree programs to the Office of the Provost on an annual basis. These annual data will serve to track the development of academic programs over time and provide quantitative data for the program's next five-year review or interim progress report. The Office of the Provost shall issue guidelines that specify any supplemental data required in the annual report from each academic program.

#### 5.0 PROCEDURES

The President or his/her designee will ensure the establishment of procedures necessary to effectively implement this policy. These procedures will be revised and developed based upon the recommendations of the University Faculty Senate.

##### History

Effective: 07/30/90

Revised: 12/18/15, 03/13/95

Applicable Procedures: [2.08:1 Academic Program Review](#)