Guidelines for
Academic Program Review

Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment

DRAFT
1-22-2019
*Amended from the USF Tampa Program Review Guidelines
BOG Requirements and Process Overview

Background

The Florida Board of Governors (BOG) Regulation 8.015 Academic Program Review requires state universities to review all academic degree programs by CIP at least once every seven years. The results of program reviews are expected to inform strategic planning, program development, and budgeting decisions at the university level and, when appropriate, at the state level.

Programs holding specialized accreditation may request to use documentation from this review to satisfy the BOG program review requirements. In all cases, requirements stated in the BOG regulation must be met.

BOG Requirements
Academic Program Reviews must include the following:

1. A review of the mission(s) and purpose(s) of the program within the context of the university mission and the Board of Governors’ Strategic Plan
2. The establishment of teaching, research, service, and other program goals and objectives, including expected outcomes, particularly in the area of student learning
3. An assessment of:
   a. how well program goals/objectives are being met;
   b. how well students are achieving expected learning outcomes
   c. how the results of these assessments are used for continuous program improvement; and
   d. the sufficiency of resources and support services to achieve the program goals/objectives.
4. For baccalaureate programs, a review of lower level prerequisite courses to ensure that the program is in compliance with State-approved common prerequisites and (if appropriate) a review of the limited access status of the program to determine if such status is still warranted
5. A description of major changes made to the program since the previous review
6. An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the program
7. Recommendations and/or proposed action plans developed as a result of the review
**Review Process**

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (IEA) at USFSP coordinates the program review and specialized accreditation processes for USFSP academic programs. This office also coordinates with the USF Tampa Office of Institutional Effectiveness in the Office of Decision Support, which maintains the official review cycle listing for program and specialized accreditation reviews in the USF System. Requests to alter the academic program review schedule must be submitted to the USFSP Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment who will consult with the USF Tampa Office of the Provost for approval.

IEA maintains guidelines for the program-review process. These guidelines reflect institutional and state priorities during the seven-year cycle and as such may change accordingly. IEA is also the official document repository for all program-review and specialized accreditation material, such as self-studies, accreditation reports, and final reports including summaries of reviews submitted to the BOG. Documents will be housed in the USFSP Q: drive as well as the Nuventive software.

Program reviews are conducted either online or by an on-site review via external consultant(s). The college dean, in consultation with the Office of the Regional Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, determines the mode of review. The determination is based on the following criteria:

- The program’s operation and maintenance of physical facilities such as laboratories not easily reviewed in an online format.
- The interdisciplinary nature of programs that produce sufficient complexity to warrant an on-site visit.
- Other compelling arguments in favor of an on-site review

**Required Documents**

The program-review process includes the following documents:

1. A self-study of the academic program defined by the CIP code and degree level.
2. A self-study of the department in which the program is located.
3. A Dean’s report prepared by the Dean of the College that houses the academic program.
4. A report from two or more external reviewers selected by the college’s Dean’s Office and approved by the Office of the Regional Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs.
5. A report in response to the external reviewers’ recommendations that must include proposed action plans made as a result of the review.
6. An executive summary report of the program review using the form provided by the USFSP Office of Institutional Effectiveness (via USF System). The summary will be submitted to the BOG (via USF System Institutional Effectiveness Office) in accordance with Regulation 8.015, prior to the December 15 deadline.
7. A one-year follow-up report detailing progress made on proposed action plans for the program submitted to the dean of the college that houses the academic program. Additional annual follow-up reports may be required.

**Document Storage**

Documents related to program review including the self-study reports, dean’s report, and the external reviewer report will be collected by the USFSP Office of Institutional Effectiveness and stored in the USFSP online Institutional Effectiveness software system – Nuventive. A copy of the program review will also be maintained on the USFSP Q: drive.

### Selection of External Consultants

The external consultants are identified and selected by the program’s faculty and administration, with the support of the college Dean. The department/faculty should submit three to five names and vitae of potential reviewers who meet the qualifications listed below to the Dean of the College. Program reviews should include a minimum of two external reviewers.

Department chairs/coordinators should ensure that there are no conflicts of interest with the candidates for external review. Conflict of interests for program reviews include but are not limited to the following:

- Prior working history with key members of the department
- Prior work with current students
- Serving as an informal grant reviewer for members of the department
- Joint publishing and/or research work with members of the department

The Dean in consultation with the Chair of the Department will review the suggested reviewers and present the final list to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The selection of the external consultants is finalized by the Office of the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

External consultant nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Have no conflict of interest with USFSP or with the department housing the program(s) being reviewed
- Have a respected record of scholarly activity in the discipline
- Are currently active in the discipline
- Have department or related administrative university experience
- Hold the rank of Professor in a Carnegie-designated “medium master’s” university or higher, or is from an institution that is regarded as an aspirational peer for the department.*
• Have experience in a publicly supported university or college.

*Exceptions to this requirement may be granted upon written request to the IE Office. A detailed explanation for the request must be included.

External Consultants Report

The purpose of the external review is to provide an objective analysis and discipline-based review of the academic program. To help fulfill this purpose, multiple external reviewers are required for all program reviews. The reviewers may be brought on-site to conduct their review or the review may take place on-line. This decision is made by the Office of the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs in consultation with the dean of the college and chair/director of the academic program under review. Reviewers should be aware that consultant reports are public documents in accordance with Florida’s Sunshine laws.

At a minimum, the report should contain the following sections:

Section I: Executive Summary

Please provide a brief overview of the following:
1. Review process including when the visit occurred (or when reviewed on-line) and the documents used in the review. Note any special meetings with stakeholders, students, administrators and/or alumni.
2. Quality of material provided to inform the academic program review.
4. Quality of outcomes assessment of the academic program.

Section II: Evaluation of Program Quality

For each academic program under review, please provide an assessment of the following:
1. Curriculum
2. Faculty
3. Research directions
4. Students
5. Administration
6. Resources and facilities
7. Student learning outcomes assessment. Include comments on the following:
   a. Appropriateness of the defined student learning outcomes
   b. Quality and appropriateness of measures used to assess student learning outcomes and student growth in learning
c. How well students are achieving expected learning outcomes and demonstrating growth in learning
d. How the results of the assessment of student learning outcomes have been used to implement program improvements focused on improving student performance

Section III: Program Strengths and Weaknesses
1. List specific program strengths
2. List specific program weaknesses

Section VI: Recommendations
Please provide recommendations to contribute to continuous quality improvement in the academic program and/or department:
1. Academic program enhancement
   • Those not requiring new resources
   • Those requiring new resources
2. Departmental enhancement
   • Those not requiring new resources.
   • Those requiring new resources.

Section V: Response to Department and Dean Questions
In this section, please respond to specific questions from the department chair, faculty, and the Dean.