

UNC Program Review: Accredited Programs

Program review at the University of Northern Colorado is intended to support, develop, and maintain high quality academic programs. It is a collaborative process involving faculty, administrators, and students that respects the diversity of disciplinary missions and cultures while also recognizing the primacy of institutional mission. The program review process involves collecting and synthesizing program information to evaluate quality, identify opportunities, and make recommendations on actions and resources necessary to realize desired levels of excellence. Program review outcomes are used by faculty and administrators to promote campus goals and objectives, support strategic planning and decision-making, and inform budget and resource allocation.

The primary process through which program review is conducted at UNC is the comprehensive self-study. The self-study provides program faculty, college administrators, and the provost an opportunity to reflect on the historical role and outcomes of the program, evaluate the current program strengths and weaknesses, and strategically plan for the future of the program. These guidelines are intended to provide a consistent framework for conducting the self-study and presenting the findings. While the process through which programs conduct the self-study are left to the discretion of the program faculty working in consultation with the unit leader¹ and Dean, programs should address each of the topics identified within the guidelines following the report format described herein. These guidelines represent the institutional requirements for program review. Individual colleges may expand on these requirements as recommended by the college's faculty.

Definition of a Program

A program is an organizational unit that is responsible for delivering an approved plan of study leading to completion of any one or more of the following: undergraduate degree, graduate degree, and/or licensure or certification. An academic unit is an organizational and budgetary unit comprised of one or more programs. For purposes of program review, faculty within each college, working collaboratively with unit leaders and the Dean, determine whether comprehensive program review will be conducted at the program or academic unit level. This collaborative process provides flexibility for faculty and college administrators to organize the review process so that it produces meaningful contributions to budget and strategic planning decisions.

Timeline

Each program should be reviewed at least once between ten-year regional (HLC) accreditation visits. Faculty, unit leaders, and the dean should prepare a review schedule for each ten-year period that aligns UNC program review to disciplinary and professional accreditation timelines. Program review for accredited programs should be completed within six (6) months following the accreditation body's final decision.

Substitution of External Accreditation Report

Programs subject to external accreditation may elect to substitute the accreditation self-study report. Programs selecting this option should prepare a supplemental summary document addressing specific criteria relevant to UNC's internal program review requirements (see Program Review Supplemental Report and Documentation on page 2 of this document).

Program Review Committee

Colleges may appoint a Program Review Committee comprised of faculty from across the College. The

¹ Department chairs, school directors, or program coordinators
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committee is responsible for reviewing the initial draft of the comprehensive review self-study and providing written feedback to the College Dean and to the program.

External Review

External review of programs is expected for all UNC programs. For professionally accredited programs, the site-team visit meets this requirement. The team's report and findings should be included in the final documents submitted to the Provost.

Program Review Supplemental Report and Documentation

The Comprehensive Program Review self-study report for professionally accredited programs consists of the following sections:

Supplemental Report

1. Program description (mission, degree programs offered, number and rank of faculty, unique program features, significant changes since the last program review)
2. Outcomes for the goals/action plan identified in the last program review
3. An action plan for next review cycle that addresses the following:
 - a. Future actions the program will pursue within the resource structure at UNC and external funding opportunities;
 - b. Strategies for supporting [Rowing, Not Drifting 2030](#), specifically in the areas of new and transfer student enrollment, retention, completion, and closing equity gaps;
 - c. Curriculum revisions/enhancements and pedagogical strategies to improve learning and student success; and
 - d. Goals for ongoing faculty and staff professional development and scholarly activity.

Documentation

1. The accreditation self-study report (narrative report only)
2. Accreditation site-team report and action letter
3. Faculty evaluation criteria²
4. College's Program Review Committee recommendations (if applicable)
5. Dean's recommendations
6. Program's assessment plan, curriculum map, and assessment results from the review period (if not included in the accreditation self-study report)

Program Review Data

Institutional data for program review are provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE). Programs should review and analyze data trends for the previous five years. UNC has developed a program review report in Insight that is updated annually (ACD002 Departmental Data Report). Programs may access the report on their college-view tab. The report includes data that is useful for understanding enrollment, retention, and completion trends, student demographics, contributions to student credit hour generation, and other information. UNC also provides a variety of reports and dashboards online at www.unco.edu/data. Anyone having issues accessing the dashboards can contact the Technical Support Center for assistance.

² See Board Policy 2-3-801 (3)(a)

Program Review Process for Accredited Programs

Program review for accredited programs occurs in two phases. During phase one, the program completes its accreditation process. Phase two begins once the program and university have received the action letter from the accrediting body regarding the accreditation decision. The steps outlined below comprise the phase two process.

The steps for completing the program review phase two process are as follows:

Step 1. Initial meeting with academic unit leader, Associate Dean, and Assistant Provost. The purpose of this meeting is to clarify the process and establish a schedule for completing the remaining activities associated with the comprehensive review.

Step 2. Preparation of supplemental summary report. The program prepares a brief supplemental report as described on the previous page. Programs should use information from the accreditation self-study, the site-team's report, and program review data to develop an action plan for the next review period.

Step 3. Internal review of the program review documents. The program review report should be submitted to the College Dean. The Dean will meet with the program and provide written feedback, including any actions to be completed over the next review period.

Step 4. Submission of comprehensive program review report to Academic Effectiveness. Programs should submit a copy of the comprehensive program review report to Academic Effectiveness by the agreed-upon deadline (6 months following receipt of the accreditation body's decision).

Step 5: Meeting with the Provost. The Assistant Provost, Associate Provost and/or AVP for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, and Provost will review the report and meet with the Dean, the program's unit leader, and faculty to discuss the program review. Following the meeting, the Assistant Provost will prepare a memorandum that documents the outcomes of this meeting. This meeting will occur within 30 workdays upon receipt of the report or as soon as possible.

Step 6. Using the results. Deans, unit leaders, and program faculty are expected to implement the action plan developed through the program review self-study process and report on results at the end of the next review cycle.

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