

# UNC Program Review Policy

Program review at the University of Northern Colorado is intended to support, develop, and maintain high quality programs. It is a collaborative process involving faculty, administrators, and students that respects the diversity of program 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.

## UNC Program Review Guidelines for Non-Degree Granting Programs

The primary process through which program review is conducted at UNC is the comprehensive self study. The self study provides program faculty, administrators, staff, 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 personnel working in consultation with the assistant vice president/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 divisions may expand on these requirements as recommended by the division's personnel.

### *Definition of a Program*

A non-degree granting program is defined as a co-curricular organizational and budgetary unit that is responsible for delivering services, specialized programs, and/or courses not leading to a degree. For purposes of program review, personnel within each division, working collaboratively with the assistant vice president/dean, identify what programs exist within their respective division. This collaborative process provides flexibility to organize the review process so that it produces meaningful contributions to budget and strategic planning decisions.

### *Timeline*

Each program should complete a comprehensive review every five years. Division personnel and the assistant vice president/dean should prepare a review schedule for each ten year period between regional accreditation. For professionally accredited programs the schedule should align UNC program review to accreditation timelines wherever possible.

### *CAS Standards*

UNC has selected the CAS Standards to serve as the framework upon which programs will be reviewed. The CAS Standards consist of fourteen components identified by the national Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) that together comprise essential characteristics of high quality programs. These standards are:

- Mission
- Program
- Leadership
- Human Resources
- Ethics
- Legal Responsibilities
- Equity and Access
- Diversity
- Organization & Management
- Campus & External Relations
- Financial Resources
- Technology
- Facilities & Equipment
- Assessment & Evaluation

Programs should use the guidelines and rating scale developed by CAS to assess program strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. Documentary evidence to support the evaluation of services and demonstrate program efficacy should be provided in a binder or electronic portfolio as an addendum to the self study report.

Programs that are professionally accredited or those that operate under other nationally recognized standards may substitute those standards for the CAS Standards. Non-accredited programs must use the CAS Standards as the basis for their self study evaluation.

#### *Substitution of Professional Accreditation Report*

Programs subject to professional accreditation may elect to substitute the accreditation report for the self-study report. Programs selecting this option should provide an executive summary and outline directing reviewers to the appropriate sections of the accreditation report that address UNC's program review requirements. In the event that the accreditation report does not address all of the required elements for UNC's comprehensive program review, programs should attach an appendix providing any missing information.

#### *External Review*

External review of programs is expected and may be fulfilled through any of the following options:

- External accreditation site visit/review;
- Program-area expert external to the University;
- Individual or review team comprised of industry experts and/or employers;
- Review team comprised of faculty and staff external to the program but internal to UNC.

Programs should consult with the assistant vice president/dean to determine the appropriate option for conducting the external review. An internal review should only be considered as a last resort when other options are not available. After selecting a review option and reviewer(s), programs should provide the assistant vice president/dean with a list of the proposed reviewers, including the reviewers' current affiliation(s), qualifications for conducting the review, and estimated costs. It is the responsibility of all involved to avoid conflicts of interest that would prevent an objective review of the program. The assistant vice president/dean will review the list to identify any budget limitations or conflict of interest issues. Upon approval of the list, programs should contract with a reviewer using the University's Independent Contractor Procedures.

Reviewers should provide the program with a written evaluation of the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement, and threats within 30 days of completion of the review.

#### *Peer Review*

The University's Student Engagement Council (SEC) serves as the peer review body for programs' comprehensive reviews. The peer review process is intended as a mechanism for providing feedback on program strengths and weaknesses, identifying instances where duplication of services may be occurring, uncovering opportunities for future collaboration and resource sharing, and providing

recommendations for program improvements. In addition to these functions, peer review also provides an opportunity for programs to receive feedback regarding any issues within the self student report which may require additional clarification prior to submitting the final document to the Provost.

### *Annual Progress Report*

The annual progress report supports the comprehensive review process by documenting progress toward program goals, alignment to the CAS Standards, and resource needs. Programs should use the same criteria as required by the comprehensive review when preparing their reports. The annual progress report provides an explanation for any significant changes that have occurred within the program, a concise summary of the actions taken during the previous year in support of program goals, and a discussion of any resource needs or issues relevant to the program's ability to maintain progress toward its goals.

The timeframe for the annual progress report is based on the previous academic year (summer, fall, spring), and the deadline for submission will be December 31. Programs should provide a copy of the annual progress report to the assistant vice president/dean. Program personnel and the assistant vice president/dean should meet to identify any resource needs, assess progress toward the goals established in the most recent comprehensive review, and use the results reported in the annual progress reports to develop the annual budget.

### *TracDat*

UNC has selected a web-based assessment management system, TracDat, to support the program review process. In addition to supporting program review, TracDat also offers a systematic process for documenting the results of the university's assessment activities and, as such, supports regional and professional accreditation. Programs seeking to opt out of using TracDat may do so under the following conditions:

1. The decision to opt out is supported by the assistant vice president/dean.
2. The program can demonstrate that it has a comparable alternative system for electronically documenting its assessment activities.
3. The program can demonstrate that opting out of TracDat will not negatively impact other programs or units within the University.

In the event that a program does opt out of using TracDat, the program will be responsible for assuming all costs (including technical support) associated with any alternate assessment software adopted by the program to document its assessment activities.

## **Comprehensive Program Review Documentation**

The final Comprehensive Program Review self-study report consists of a narrative report, data tables, and supporting documentation. The narrative report should be no more than 25 pages and is comprised of the following sections:

1. Program's role, mission, and relationship to the University's mission
2. Program's alignment to the goals identified in the University's [Academic Plan](#)
3. Outcomes for the goals identified in the prior comprehensive review
4. Program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on the CAS Standards (or professional accreditation standards)
5. Future goals identified through analysis of the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

6. Resources necessary to support future goals and program improvement

In addition to the narrative report and data tables, programs should provide the following supporting documents:

1. Documentary evidence to support conclusions in the report (binder or electronic portfolio)
2. External reviewer report
3. Assistant vice president's/dean's recommendations

*Program Review Data*

The provost has identified essential program review data related to program quality that are included in the annual and comprehensive review processes. These data will form the basis of the data tables to be included in the self-study report. Program review data derived from institutional datasets will be provided by the Office of Budgets and Institutional Analysis and the Office of Assessment by October 1 of each year. Programs should report data for each academic year since the last comprehensive review.

Program review data to be reported include the following:

**Required for all programs**

- Number of students, UNC employees, and/or external constituents served by program
- Number of full-time classified, exempt, and/or faculty employees
- Number of part-time classified, exempt, and/or faculty employees
- Number of student hourly/salaried employees, graduate/research assistants, and/or teaching assistants
- Number of full- and part-time employees by sex, ethnicity, and national origin
- Number of student employees by sex, ethnicity, and national origin
- Service activity (university and/or external)
- In-service professional development activities provided to staff

Required if applicable

- Number of activities and sponsored events provided by the program
- Number of faculty/staff research publications and/or juried presentations
- Number of faculty/staff non-juried publications and/or presentations
- Number of trainings/workshops provided by the program
- Number and amount of extramural awards
- Number of employees with professional certifications/licensure
- Number of employees who attended conferences (local through international)

**Required for programs that deliver credit-bearing courses**

- Student credit hour production by lower (100-200), upper (300-400), and graduate level
- Average class size by course level (100-600/700)

**Required for programs that serve defined cohorts or groups of students (e.g., CHE, PLP, Honors, etc.)**

- Number of undergraduate and/or graduate students served by sex, ethnicity, and national origin
- Retention and graduation rates of students served by program

**All programs should also provide the following budget information broken out by funding source (base, one-time, grant, fee for service, etc.):**

- Personnel costs by employee classification (including student employees)

- OCE
- Travel
- Indirect cost recovery
- Revenue from student fees<sup>1</sup> (if applicable)
- Other revenue generated (if applicable)

## Comprehensive Program Review Process

The annual progress reports compiled by programs should be used to document progress toward program goals, compliance with CAS Standards, and resource needs. These annual reports should assist programs in their preparation of the comprehensive program review self-study report. The comprehensive review process involves review by the following individuals and bodies: (1) Assistant vice president/dean; (2) Program director/supervisor (if not self-study report author); (3) External reviewer(s); (4) Student Services Advisory Council; and (5) Provost.

The steps for completing the comprehensive review process are as follows:

Step 1. Initial meeting with program executive director/director and personnel, assistant vice president/dean, director of Assessment, and director of the Office of Budgets and Institutional Analysis. The purpose of this meeting is to clarify the process and establish a schedule for completing the remaining activities associated with the comprehensive review (this meeting should be held during the academic year prior to the year in which the comprehensive program review is due).

Step 2. Select and schedule the external reviewer(s). Programs should include any associated costs for external review in the annual budget request for the year in which the review will occur.

Step 3. Complete first draft of the self-study document. The program director/coordinator is responsible for electronically distributing the self-study draft to the assistant vice president/dean and the chair of the Student Services Advisory Council. If the program director does not report directly to the assistant vice president/dean, a copy of the report should also be provided to the program director's supervisor. Hard copies of any supporting documents not available electronically should be provided to these individuals.

Step 4. Review of the self-study document. The self-study document will be reviewed by the assistant vice president/dean, the executive director/director (if not the report's author), and the Student Services Advisory Council. The assistant vice president/dean and executive director/director will provide written feedback with recommendations for improvement and commendations for program strengths no later than one week prior to the meeting described in Step 6 below.

Step 5. SEC Presentation. Programs will prepare a brief presentation on the results of their self study to be presented at an SEC meeting during the spring semester in which their self study is due. SEC will provide verbal feedback to the program at the time of the presentation.

Step 5. Meeting with the assistant vice president/dean and executive director/director. Prior to completing the final comprehensive program review report, program personnel will meet with the assistant vice president/dean and executive director/director to discuss the recommendations from the reviewers, agree upon goals for the next review period, and identify any resources needed to improve

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to direct fees charged to students such as the library fee rather than funds allocated through the SRC student fee process.

and/or maintain program quality. The assistant vice president/dean should provide a meeting agenda to the program no later than one week prior to this meeting.

Step 6. Submission of comprehensive program review report to the Office of Assessment. Programs should submit a hard copy of the comprehensive program review (including supporting documents) to the Office of Assessment no later than May 30.

Step 7: Meeting with the Provost. The provost will review the comprehensive program review report and meet with the assistant vice president/dean, executive director/director, program director/coordinator, and the director of Assessment to discuss the comprehensive review. The director of Assessment will provide a summary agenda to all meeting participants no later than one week prior to this meeting. Following the meeting, the provost will prepare a memorandum of understanding that will delineate the specific actions the program will take as a result of the program review and establish a timeline for completion. This meeting will occur by November 1.

Step 8. Using the results. The assistant vice president/dean, executive director/director, and program personnel are expected to use the results of the comprehensive review to guide program planning, decision making, and requests for resources. During the fall of the year following the comprehensive review, the program should meet with the Office of Assessment to update the program's assessment plan. The Office of Assessment will provide the results of the program review to the Office of Budgets and Institutional Analysis by December 31 each year to assist with data collection and reporting.

Approved January 6, 2010  
Abe Harraf, Provost

Revised October 27, 2010 to reflect name change of the Student Engagement Council (previously the Student Success Advisory Council)