UNC Program Review Policy

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.

UNC Program Review Guidelines

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 role and outcomes of the program, evaluate 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 processes through which programs conduct the self-study are left to the discretion of the program faculty working in consultation with the unit leader[1] 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 and budgetary unit that is responsible for delivering an approved plan of study leading to completion of any one or more of the following: undergraduate minor, undergraduate degree, graduate degree, and/or licensure or certification. For purposes of program review, faculty within each college, working collaboratively with department chairs, school directors, and the Dean, identify what programs exist within their respective colleges. 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 accreditation visits. The Director of Assessment works with faculty, department chairs, school directors, and the Dean to prepare a review schedule for each ten-year period that aligns UNC program review to disciplinary and professional accreditation timelines.

Substitution of External Accreditation Report
Programs subject to external accreditation may elect to substitute the accreditation report for the self-study report. Programs selecting this option should review the Program Review Guidelines for Accredited Programs, available on the [Assessment website](#).

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[1] Unit leader refers to Department Chair or School Director

Program Review Team
Each College should appoint a Program Review Team comprised of faculty from across the College. The chair of the Program Review Team will be selected by the members of the team. The Program Review Team 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 and may be fulfilled through any of the following options:

- External accreditation site visit/review;
- Discipline/content expert external to the University; or
- Individual or review team comprised of industry experts and/or employers.

Programs should consult with the Dean to determine the appropriate option for conducting the external review. After selecting a review option and reviewer(s), programs should provide the 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 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, opportunities for improvement, and recommendations within 30 days of completion of the review.

Annual Progress Report
The annual progress report supports the comprehensive review process by documenting actions taken and progress made since the last program review. Annual reports are due November 1 each year. Programs conducting their comprehensive program review self-study may be exempt from completing the annual report at the discretion of the Dean.

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 25-30 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 [Strategic Framework and Nine Core Plans]
3. Outcomes for the goals identified in the prior comprehensive review
4. Program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats based on an analysis and synthesis of the following factors:
   a. Evidence of student learning outcomes
   b. Program-defined measures of quality
   c. Performance on institutionally-defined program review data
   d. External review
5. Additional indicators of quality for graduate programs – programs offering graduate degrees should include a section that explicitly addressed the following questions:
   a. What aspects of the program make it unique when compared to similar programs at other institutions?

b. How do the program's required coursework, experiential activities, and mentorship support students on their career paths?
c. What steps are being taken to evaluate and maintain or improve the quality of the program?
d. How do you students demonstrate professionalism through participation in professional activities and/or professional organizations/societies?
6. Future goals identified through analysis of the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
7. Resources necessary to support future goals and program improvement

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

1. External reviewer report
2. College's Program Review Team recommendations
3. Dean's recommendations and those of School Director for programs housed within a school
4. Graduate Council's recommendations (for graduate programs only)
5. Data tables for any data collected by the program

Program Review Data
The Provost and Deans identified essential program review data related to program quality that are included in the annual and comprehensive review processes. Program review data will be provided by the Office of Institutional Reports and Analysis Services and the Office of Assessment. Programs should review and analyze data for each academic year since the last comprehensive review.

Program review data to be analyzed include the following:

Data Provided to Programs
- Student credit hours taught by the program (upper and lower division undergraduate and graduate)
- Average class size
- Demographic diversity of students
- Number of majors (undergraduate, master's and doctoral)
- Graduation rates
- Number and type of degrees awarded
- Number and percent of students entering graduate school
- Student satisfaction
- Alumni satisfaction
- Student placement one year following graduation

Data Collected and Maintained by the Program
- Number of full-time, part-time, and total faculty by rank and tenure
- Faculty academic credentials – number and percent with doctorate, terminal degree, master's, etc.
- Number of books, creative works, juried publications, and professional presentations (faculty and students)
- Awards for excellence (student, faculty, and staff)
- Practical, experiential, and/or clinical placement
- Internal and external grants and contracts

Recommended Data
Although not required, programs may want to consider analyzing the following data and how it supports the quality and/or uniqueness of an individual program:
- Average entering ACT/SAT scores
- Acceptance ratios for undergraduate and graduate programs with selective admission
- Performance on licensure/certification exams
- Professional accreditation(s)
- Student involvement in service learning, civic engagement, undergraduate research, and/or study abroad
- Average GPA
- Students' perceptions of the program
- Efforts to increase diversity among students and program faculty
- Graduate student funding

Comprehensive Program Review Process

The annual progress reports compiled by programs should be used to document actions taken and progress made since the last comprehensive review. These annual reports should assist programs in their preparation of the comprehensive program review self-study. The comprehensive review process involves review by the following individuals and bodies: (1) School Director (for programs housed within a school); (2) College Dean; (3) College Program Review Team; (4) Director of Assessment; (5) Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education and/or Associate Provost for Graduate Education; and (6) Provost. Graduate programs are also reviewed by the Graduate Council.

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

Step 1. Initial meeting with program faculty, unit leader, College Dean, and Director of Assessment. 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 fall semester of the academic year prior to the year in which the comprehensive program review is due).

Step 2. Select and schedule the external reviewer(s). Limited funding for external review is available from the Office of Assessment. Funds will be made available July 1 each year.

Step 3. Complete first draft of the self-study document. The unit leader is responsible for electronically distributing the self-study draft to the following individuals: the College Dean, the chair of the College's Program Review Team, and, for graduate programs, the Chair of the Graduate Council. Hard copies of any supporting documents not available electronically should be provided to the unit leader, who will distribute these materials to the aforementioned individuals.

Step 4. Review of the self-study document. The self-study document will be reviewed by the School Director for programs housed in a school (unless the Director is the author), the College's Program Review Team, and the College Dean. The Graduate Council will also review the self-study document for graduate programs. Reviewers will provide written feedback to the College Dean and to the program with recommendations for improvement and commendations for program strengths.

Step 5. Meeting with program faculty, unit leader, Program Review Team Chair, and Dean. Prior to completing the final comprehensive program review report, program faculty and the unit leader will meet with the Program Review Team Chair and Dean to discuss the recommendations from the reviewers, agree

upon goals for the next review period, and identify any resources needed to improve and/or maintain program quality. The Dean should provide written feedback 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 an electronic copy of the comprehensive program review (including any supplemental materials) to the Office of Assessment no later than February 28.

Step 7: Meeting with the Provost. The Assessment Director, Associate Provost(s), and Provost will review the comprehensive program review report and meet with the Dean, unit leader, and faculty representative(s) from the program to discuss the comprehensive review. Following the meeting, the Director of Assessment will prepare a memorandum from the Provost that delineates 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 June 30.

Step 8. Using the results. Deans, unit leaders, and program faculty 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.

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