

OFFICIAL

Policy and Procedure Statement 2.13
Review Cycle: Aug. 1, ONY
Review Date: August 1, 2017
Reviewer: Associate Vice President for
Institutional Effectiveness

Academic Program Review
(32 paragraphs)
[Attachment A](#)
[Attachment B](#)
[Attachment C](#)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Texas State is committed to maintaining an effective and efficient process for conducting regular reviews of its academic programs. This PPS summarizes the key elements of Texas State's Academic Program Review (APR). It also provides guidance for conducting APRs and for utilizing the results of these APRs for continuous improvement of the university's academic programs.
2. The primary purpose of the APR process is to maintain and strengthen the quality of Texas State's academic programs by auditing the quality, productivity, and effectiveness of existing degree programs and developing strategies for ongoing improvement. Reviews are intended to be helpful and supportive in (a) recognizing strengths and achievements, (b) promoting goal setting and planning, and (c) identifying areas in need of attention. Reviews should primarily provide perspectives useful to the academic unit whose programs are under review and to their respective college deans. They should also give those outside the academic unit an informed overview of the strengths, challenges, and needs of academic units.
3. The APR process has a direct relationship to other assessment processes. Program accreditation and APR reports and reviews will be combined as much as possible to create a unified process. When completed, the APR of graduate programs will fulfill the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) requirement for Periodic Review of Graduate Programs (Section 5.52).
4. The associate vice president for Institutional Effectiveness (AVPIE) will provide guidance and training for academic units engaged in the program review process. The dean of The Graduate College may also be consulted by the programs undergoing review.

DEFINITIONS

5. For the purposes of this PPS, "academic unit" will refer to the following:
 - a. A department residing within a college,
 - b. A school residing within a college, and
 - c. A degree program having a program director who reports to the college dean.

6. Academic programs are defined as those that lead to a credential recognized by THECB and SACSCOC and in procedures for initiating or modifying academic programs are described in [PPS 2.05](#), Academic Programs: Additions, Changes and Deletions and PPS 2.22 Academic Certificates. Broadly defined, academic programs include:
 - a. A **major or degree program**, and
 - b. A **certificate program**.
7. The primary focus of the APRs described in this PPS is on **majors or degree programs** as typically identified by the first four digits of the program CIP code at each level of instruction (undergraduate, master's, and doctoral) offered by separate academic units. However, during each APR, relevant questions may also be asked about any minors or specializations offered in the academic unit, and about any significant service course commitments of the unit.
8. A Texas State APR includes the following elements:
 - a. A self-review culminating in a academic unit self-review report including a review of the academic unit and each degree program,
 - b. A site visit by a program review team culminating in the program review team report(s), and
 - c. A follow-up response and action plan from the academic unit for each degree program developed in consultation with the college dean and provost and vice president for Academic Affairs (provost).

APR SELF-REVIEW PROCESS

9. Each August, the AVPIE, in consultation with the college deans and chairs/directors, will review the APR long-term calendar. Any department/school not able to fulfill the requirements of the APR process as scheduled will prepare a formal request for delay with clear justification. The college dean will submit the request to the AVPIE who will confer with provost. The provost will subsequently forward acceptable requests to the THECB. [Attachment A](#), the APR calendar identifies the seven-year APR cycle. Insofar as possible, an academic unit's APR is scheduled in coordination with its periodic program accreditation review(s).
10. For convenience, APRs are generally conducted on an academic unit basis, i.e., **all academic programs** offered by an academic unit are reviewed in a single year. Each academic unit normally conducts an APR for all of its programs every seven years.
11. After receiving the reminder regarding the APR calendar from the AVPIE, the college dean will notify the academic units identified in a given year to begin the APR process with the self-review. At this time academic units are encouraged to

appoint a chair for their self-review process. Academic units will forward the name of the chair of the self-review process to their dean and the AVPIE.

12. Each October, the AVPIE will conduct an orientation to the APR process for all chairs/directors and appointed chairs of the self-review process in units scheduled for APR during the upcoming year. Guidelines (in [Attachment B](#)) and timelines (in [Attachment C](#)) will be reviewed in the orientation. The guidelines in [Attachment B](#) identify the information required to prepare and submit the self-review, and the statistical information that will be provided by Institutional Research, the AVPIE, and the University Library.
13. Academic units without program accreditation should follow the timeline provided in Attachment C. Academic units with program accreditation should use the timeline provided in Attachment C as a guide, propose a calendar for completion that coincides with their accreditation review process, and submit their timetable to the AVPIE in January of the year prior to the year in which the review will take place. Proposed calendars must allow sufficient time for the final PRT reports and academic unit action plans to be submitted to the THECB before the close of the scheduled academic year.
14. The academic unit chair/director will appoint faculty, staff, and, as desired, student members in addition to the chair of the self-review committee, subject to approval of the college dean. In preparing the self-review report, members of the committee shall engage in discussions of program strengths, weaknesses, and goals, organizing the discussions however the self-review committee prefers or program accreditation guidelines suggest.
15. The self-review report shall be a concise electronic document (typically 50 pages or less) following the guidelines in Attachment B with supporting materials organized in attachments. After consideration by the faculty, the academic unit chair/director will submit the report to the college dean no later than May 1. The college dean will review the report and provide feedback to the chair. The chair will make any necessary corrections to the report prior to June 1.
16. By June 1, the unit will forward an electronic copy of the self-review report and related attachments to the AVPIE. Also, by June 1, the college dean will provide written notification to the AVPIE, of his or her approval of the report and note any major issues addressed in the report. The AVPIE will review the report and return it to the chair/director for any necessary corrections. After the self-review report is approved by the AVPIE, the academic unit may begin planning the review team visit.

THE PROGRAM REVIEW TEAM

17. Following the approval of the self-review report, an appointed program review team (PRT) conducts an on-site visit to add their insight to the APR process.

18. Each year, the provost identifies funds for travel expenses and set rates for honorariums for the external (non-Texas State) PRT members. The AVPIE notifies academic units under review of the established rates. Internal PRT members are not provided remuneration. Rare exceptions to the established honorariums must be negotiated between the college dean and provost. The academic unit will be reimbursed in a single transfer after all APR expenses have been paid by the academic unit and the final PRT Reports have been received.
19. A PRT will ordinarily consist of three members including one Texas State faculty member residing outside the college. Academic units must adhere to the following criteria when selecting PRT members.

Doctoral Degree Programs. Academic units with doctoral programs must include two extramural scholars with subject-matter expertise who are employed by institutions of higher education outside of Texas. External reviewers must be part of a program that is nationally recognized for excellence in the discipline and must affirm that they have no conflict of interest related to the program under review. The reviewers must be brought to campus for an on-site review.

Master's Degree Programs. Academic units with a master's degree as their highest offerings must include one extramural scholar with subject-matter expertise who is employed by an institution of higher education outside of Texas, while a second reviewer may be employed by an institution of higher education in or outside of Texas. External reviewers must be part of a program that is nationally recognized for excellence in the discipline and must affirm that they have no conflict of interest related to the program under review. The reviewers may be brought to campus for an on-site review or may be asked to conduct a remote desk review as in the case of an accredited program.

Bachelor's Degree Programs. Academic units with the bachelor's degree as their highest offerings must have one extramural scholar with subject-matter expertise who are employed by institutions of higher education and who can affirm they have no conflict of interest related to the program under review.

Programs undergoing accreditation review in conjunction with APR. If reviewers from accrediting bodies do not meet the aforementioned criteria, additional reviewer(s) must be added to the review team to address required review team criteria for APR.

Nominations of PRT members meeting the previously stated criteria will be solicited by the college dean from the academic unit chair/director following consultation with program faculty. The appointments of the PRT and the chair of the PRT are the prerogative of the college dean and are made after consultation with the academic unit chair/director. The chair of the PRT will be selected from

the external reviewers. PRT nominees, along with their contact information and qualifications, will be submitted to the AVPIE from the college dean no later than August 1.

20. The college dean or his or her designee will invite the selected PRT members to participate in the program review. Prior to the site visit, the college dean may identify issues for the PRT that are important to the review, including issues raised in any previous reviews. The AVPIE will send the PRT members an introductory letter, copy of this PPS, and review forms approximately one month before the scheduled visit.
21. Prior to the site visit, the academic unit chair/director will provide PRT members with the self-review report with attachments, contact information for all team members, and any additional comments from the college dean.
22. When determining the timing of the PRT visit, the academic unit chair/director will consult with the AVPIE who will coordinate scheduling on the calendars of the provost, associate provost, and associate vice president for Academic Affairs (curriculum), and as appropriate, the associate vice president for Research and Federal Relations and the dean of The Graduate College. The academic unit chair/director in consultation with the college dean and AVPIE will establish the basic structure of the site visit. The review team may propose changes to the schedule, as appropriate, during the site visit.
23. Ordinarily, a PRT site visit will last two days. The PRT may conduct some of its work as a group, although members may work individually at certain times. A copy of the final schedule of the PRT visit must be presented to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at least two weeks prior to the visit. The academic unit chair/director (unless otherwise noted) shall include the following elements as a part of each site visit:
 - a. private meetings with the academic unit chair/director and the college dean,
 - b. individual or group meetings with a representative sample of faculty in each program under review,
 - c. individual or group meetings with representative samples of students in each program under review,
 - d. open time for faculty and students to sign up for individual or group meeting (as they choose),
 - e. private time each day for the review team to discuss its work,
 - f. unscheduled time in the latter part of the site visit when the review team may meet with whomever it wishes,
 - g. a meeting with the associate vice president or assistant vice president for Research and Federal Relations,
 - h. a meeting with the dean or associate dean of The Graduate College (if applicable),
 - i. a meeting with the provost, associate provost, associate vice president for Academic Affairs, and the AVPIE (scheduled by the AVPIE), and

- j. an exit interview with the academic unit summarizing the on-campus visit.
24. The PRT will submit an evaluation of the academic unit and a separate evaluation report for each program in the unit. The chair of the PRT is responsible for the draft PRT reports (composite reports based upon the recommendations of the PRT members). The draft reports are due to the AVPIE four weeks after the site visit. Each PRT report is completed on a form provided by the AVPIE. The draft report will integrate PRT member perspectives into a single report and set of conclusions and recommendations for the academic unit and each program. The PRT should specifically address the following in their reports.
- a. The appropriateness and strength of the academic unit including:
 - 1) the academic unit description and strategic plan
 - 2) faculty qualifications, contributions, and workload, and
 - 3) resources
 - b. Recommended improvement to strengthen the academic unit
 - c. The appropriateness and strength of each academic program including:
 - 1) the program curriculum, and
 - 2) the students and graduates characteristics and accomplishments
 - d. Recommended improvement to strengthen each academic program
 - e. Any other points requested by the college dean and/or academic unit chair/director
25. The AVPIE will forward the PRT report(s) to the dean. After preliminary review by the college dean, the draft PRT reports will be sent to the unit chair/director. The unit chair/director will review the PRT reports for errors of fact and respond to the college dean within two working weeks. Factual corrections will be sent to the chair of the PRT for inclusion in the final PRT reports which will be returned to the AVPIE within two working weeks, at which time each should be forwarded to the dean and chair/director.

RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN

26. After receiving the final PRT report, the chair/director, in consultation with the college dean (for all programs) and the dean of The Graduate College (for graduate programs), will develop a Response and Action Plan for the academic unit and for each program to include descriptions of actions planned and actions already taken in response to the review. The Response and Action Plan should address each PRT recommendation for improvement and should include a suggested timeline for each action step. The Response and Action Plans should be considered and discussed with the academic unit's faculty.

27. The completed Response and Action Plans are submitted to the college dean by the chair/director. Within four weeks of receiving the final PRT reports, the college dean will forward copies of the Response and Action Plans to the AVPIE who will in turn provide a copy to the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. The provost will solicit input from the associate provost, associate vice president for Academic Affairs (curriculum), AVPIE, and the dean of The Graduate College
28. The college dean, in consultation with the provost, will review the Response and Action Plans and send a written response to the academic unit as well as the AVPIE within four weeks.

CONCLUSION OF THE APR CYCLE

29. After the conclusion of the APR cycle, the college dean will ensure that copies of the final self-review report, the PRT reports, and the Response and Action Plans are provided to the AVPIE.
30. The provost and vice president for Academic Affairs will forward a summary of the Self-Study Report, the PRT report, and Response and Action Plan for each graduate program offered by the academic unit to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board within 90 days of the receipt of the PRT report and before the close of the academic year.
31. The Action Plans should be integrated into the academic unit's strategic plan in accordance with the strategic planning calendar. Progress on the Action Plans will be monitored as part of the regular strategic plan review process.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

32. This PPS has been approved by the reviewer listed below and represents Texas State's Division of Academic Affairs policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Review Cycle: _____ Review Date: _____
 Reviewer: _____ Date: _____
 Approved: _____ Date: _____

Gene Bourgeois
 Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs