



Handbook of Operating Procedures

Section: 6.10.1
Originally Approved: 03/20/01
Last Amended: 11/6/2013
Last Reviewed: 11/6/2013
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ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

A. Purpose

All academic programs will be reviewed regularly to evaluate their quality and effectiveness in supporting the mission of The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA). This policy describes the review process.

B. Persons Affected

This policy applies to all academic programs at the University (both academic programs and departments), faculty, deans, and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (hereafter Provost/VPAA).

C. Policy

UTPA values regular academic program review to ensure ongoing academic quality and improvement through review by faculty peers. All academic programs at UTPA shall be regularly reviewed by specialists in the respective fields.

D. Definitions

1. An “academic program” may include a department or any academically coherent, distinctively functioning subdivision thereof, including degree programs.
2. An “action plan” is a response to the review panel’s recommendations that includes strategies and timelines for implementing the program review panel’s recommendations.
3. “Chair/director” means the director or coordinator of an academic program or, in the case of departments, the chair of the department.

E. Responsibility

The Provost/VPAA is responsible for approving the action plan arising out of the program’s/department’s response to the review panel’s report. The appropriate dean is responsible for working with the program/department to review the recommendations of the program review panel and collaborating with the program/department to develop an action plan, if necessary.



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F. Procedures

1. Frequency

Academic programs shall be reviewed at least every seven years according to the cycle established by the Provost/VPAA or his/her designee, in consultation with the deans and chairs/directors. Factors considered in the scheduling of academic programs for review include:

- a. Graduate academic degree programs will be reviewed under the schedule approved by THECB.
- b. Undergraduate academic degree programs in the same discipline as graduate degree programs will be reviewed simultaneously with the graduate programs.
- c. Established cycles for external program accreditation evaluations.

Academic programs may be reviewed more frequently if the Provost/VPAA, in consultation with the appropriate dean, determines the circumstances of a particular academic program require a more frequent review.

2. Program Review Procedures

- a. The program faculty under review shall prepare a detailed self-study report. A detailed self-study report should include a summary of the program's goals and objectives and how these are measured, a summary of the program's activities since the last review, student and faculty success measures, the organizational structure and budget, and a self-analysis of the program's strengths, weaknesses and plans for future growth.
- b. An academic program review panel will be appointed by the Provost/VPAA or his/her designee. The panel must be composed of at least two specialists in the field from outside the State of Texas for graduate programs and from outside of the University for undergraduate programs without a corresponding graduate programs. All review panels must also include an internal member from a different college within the university who will be provided a copy of the self-study report and provide institutional context for the external reviewers in an ex-officio capacity. The internal member will be appointed by the Provost/VPAA after consultation with the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.



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- c. The external reviewers will review the self-study report and conduct a site visit. The review panel will then prepare a report addressing the strengths and weaknesses identified during the review process, provide an assessment of where the academic program should strive to be over the next seven years and suggest ways to strengthen the academic program so it can move to the next level. Copies of the review panel's report are to be provided to the Chair/Director, Dean in whose college the academic program is housed, the Vice Provost responsible for the academic program, and the Provost/VPAA.
- d. The department/program will respond to the review panel report and generate an action plan, if needed, in consultation with the Dean. An action plan must include strategies and timelines for implementing any review panel's recommendations. If an action plan rejects or modifies recommendations made by the academic program review panel, an explanation/justification must be provided.
- e. Graduate programs must submit the summary of the self-study, review panel report and the department/program's response to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under the established schedule.
- f. Annually, the Dean, Vice-Provost, and Provost will examine any improvements implemented as a result of the academic program review.
- g. The detailed procedure of the academic program review process is outlined in the "External Academic Program Review Guidelines."

G. Review

The Divisional Head for this policy is the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. This policy shall be reviewed every five years, or sooner if necessary, by the following Stakeholders:

1. Vice Provost for Graduate Programs – Senior Reviewer
2. Academic Affairs Executive Team
3. Council of Chairs
4. Faculty Senate