METRO STATE UNIVERSITY

Academic Program Review

University Procedure 255

Section 1. Purpose

1   A.   The purpose of an Academic Program Review is to engage program faculty members in
2   reflective evaluation of an academic program to support planning, improvements, and alignment
3   with Metro State University's mission and strategic goals for relevant, student-centered education
4   in an inclusive, anti-racist, and supportive learning environment.

5   B.   The Academic Program Review process (herein referred to as "Academic Program Review")
6   aligns with the University's commitment to continuous improvement, Higher Learning Commission
7   expectations for maintaining institutional accreditation, and expectations from other accrediting
8   bodies. Academic Programs shall view this procedure as informing the development of goals and
9   objectives for continuous improvement of student learning and student outcomes; the procedure
10   also informs a programs' evaluation of its program health and sustainability in eight categories:
11   Mission Alignment and Reputation; Strength of the Program Structure/Foundation; Program
12   Outcomes and Achievements; Student Outcomes; Size; Revenue and Expenses; Opportunities;
13   and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes.

Section 2. Definitions

14 • **Academic Award**: A certificate, diploma, or degree (Minnesota State System Policy 3.36)

15 • **Academic Program**: a cohesive arrangement of college-level curricular requirements leading to an
16   academic award (Minnesota State System Policy 3.36)

17 • **Academic Program Review Plan**: This document delineates the program elements and activities
18   that shall be included in an upcoming Academic Program Review. The plan lists all award(s) (if
19   applicable), courses, and any other activities covered by that review.

20 • **Academic Program Review**: a process focused on evaluating program effectiveness and alignment
21   with institutional priorities, goals, and outcomes

22 • **Academic Program Review Rubric**: The Academic Program Review Rubric identifies eight criteria
23   by which academic programs evaluate program sustainability and health: Mission Alignment and
24   Reputation; Strength of the Program Structure/Foundation; Program Outcomes and Achievements;
25   Student Outcomes; Size; Revenue and Expenses; Opportunities; and Assessment of Student
26   Learning Outcomes.

27 • **Annual Assessment Report**: The Annual Assessment Report identifies the Program Learning
28   Outcomes assessed in the prior academic year, the methods by which those outcomes were
29   assessed, the results of the assessment, and a narrative interpretation of the results. The Annual
30   Assessment Report also specifies a program's plans to modify its curriculum, pedagogical
31   approaches, or assessment measures based on the results. This report is prepared simultaneously
32   with the Program Annual Reflection each semester.

33 • **Assessment**: a systematic and iterative process of collecting and analyzing data related to a
34   particular learning outcome and using the results for continuous improvement of student learning

35 • **Curriculum Map**: a diagram used to show alignment and connection between distinct
36   levels/groupings of outcomes

37   • **Program Action Plan**: a document created during the final stage of Academic Program Review that
38   guides the program's continuous improvement and program-level assessment of student learning
39   outcomes over the next five-year cycle

40   • **Program Annual Reflection (PAR)**: a document which reflects on a program's prior academic year
41   institutional trends; program health and sustainability; and assessment of program-level learning
42   outcomes

43   • **Program Annual Reflection Rubric**: The Program Annual Reflection Rubric identifies eight criteria
44   by which academic programs reflectively evaluate program sustainability and health: Mission
45   Alignment and Reputation; Strength of the Program Structure/Foundation; Program Outcomes and
46   Achievements; Student Outcomes; Size; Revenue and Expenses; Opportunities; and Assessment of
47   Student Learning Outcomes.

48   • **Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)**: The skills and/or competencies students should be able to
49   articulate or utilize after the completion of a credential (academic award).

Section 3. Procedure

50   A. **Review Schedule.** The Provost's Office shall determine and maintain the Academic Program
51   Review schedule and communicate deadlines through Operating Guidelines. In addition, forms
52   and rubrics that are part of Academic Program Review will be regularly updated and maintained
53   by The Provost's Office. Deans and department chairs (or equivalent); program directors (or
54   equivalent); or individuals whom program faculty designate responsibility are responsible for
55   ensuring completion of scheduled Academic Program Reviews.

56   B. **Schedule for Academic Programs with external accreditation or review requirements.** An
57   Academic Program with external accreditation or review requirements shall be scheduled for its
58   Academic Program Review on a cycle that matches the external accreditation or review process
59   (preferably the Academic Program Review begins immediately after the accreditation review, but
60   not less than every 5 years). Additionally, if approved by the Provost/Provost's Designee, an
61   Academic Program with external accreditation or review requirements may substitute reports to
62   their external bodies for their Program Annual Reflections and Annual Assessment Reports,
63   although some augmentation may be required to cover topics specified in this procedure or in the
64   approved Academic Program Review Plan, but not contained in their external report.

65   C. **Two Phases of Academic Program Review.** The Academic Program Review process includes
66   Program Annual Reflections, Annual Assessment Reports, and Academic Program Review. The
67   process has two phases within the 5-year cycle. Phase 1 occurs in years 1—4 of the cycle with
68   ongoing review through Program Annual Reflections and Annual Assessment Reports. Phase 2
69   occurs in year 4—5 with Academic Program Review preparation, completion, and submission.

70   D. **Phase 1: Program Annual Reflections and Annual Assessment Reports**

71   1. **Program Annual Reflections and Annual Assessment Reports**. These brief reports are
72   completed between Academic Program Reviews and reflect improvements based on
73   assessment data and progress against the goals specified in the program's most recent
74   Academic Program Review and Program Action Plan.

75   2. **Program Annual Reflection details.** The Program Annual Reflection (PAR) is designed as a
76   building block for the 5-year Academic Program Review cycle. The PAR is also designed as
77   a means for program faculty to appraise the program's health and sustainability relative to
78   mission alignment and reputation; strength of program structure and foundation; outcomes
79   and achievements; size; revenues and expenses; and opportunities. Individual programs
80   review prior academic year data (enrollment, retention, completion); activities; challenges;
81   and immediate resource needs as well as progress against the agreed-upon goals for the
82   Academic Program Review. Program faculty complete the PAR form and submit it to the
83   Provost on dates set by the Provost on an annual basis. Each PAR submission is reviewed
84   by Academic Innovation, Planning, and Quality Improvement Council (AIPQIC) members; the
85   Dean; the Provost and a Provost's Designee. Written feedback on each PAR is provided by

AIPQIC Council members using the PAR rubric as a guide. The Dean and the Provost collaboratively write a response using the PAR rubric as a guide. The first seven criteria on the PAR Rubric guide the AIPQIC, Dean, and Provost's feedback (Mission Alignment and Reputation; Strength of Program Structure and Foundation; Program Outcomes and Achievements; Size; Student Outcomes; Revenue and Expenses; and Opportunities).

3. **Annual Assessment Report details.** Annual Assessment Report (AAR) is also designed as a building block for the 5-year Academic Program Review cycle. The Annual Assessment Report identifies the Program Learning Outcomes assessed in the prior academic year, the methods by which those outcomes were assessed, the results of the assessment, and a brief narrative interpretation of the results. The Annual Assessment Report also specifies a program's plans to modify its curriculum, program learning outcomes, pedagogical approaches, or assessment measures based on the results. Assessment Committee members review and provide written feedback on each AAR; criterion 8 (Assessment of Student Learning) of the Program Annual Reflection Rubric guides the Committee members' written feedback. Program faculty complete AAR form and submit to the Provost/Provost's Designee by October 1. Assessment Committee members will provide written feedback on the Annual Assessment Report using the eighth criterion of the PAR Rubric, which is focused on Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes, as a guide.

E. **Phase 2: Academic Program Review Preparation, Completion, and Submission**

1. **Stage 1: Academic Program Review Plan**

   a. **Purpose:** Stage 1's purpose is to develop and document the academic program's planned activities for conducting the Academic Program Review. The plan delineates the data and topics that shall be covered in the final Academic Program Review (see Stages 2 and 3).

   b. **Timing:** Stage 1 occurs in the spring semester of the academic year preceding the actual Academic Program Review.

   c. **Responsible party**: Department Chair (or equivalent), Program Director (or equivalent), or individual whom program faculty designate responsibility. The responsible party shall be specified during Stage 1.

   d. **Audience(s)**: Dean and Provost/Provost's Designee

   e. **Deliverable**: the completed Academic Program Review Plan form shall include assignment of Academic Program Review work and an agreement to complete the work by established deadlines. The Academic Program Review Plan template (and examples) is available from the Provost's Office.

   f. **Developmental Process**: The preparation of an Academic Program Review Plan shall follow an iterative draft/respond/revise cycle prior to submission of the final Plan to the Provost/Provost's Designee.

      ▪ The author(s) shall prepare and submit a first-round draft to the Dean. Then Dean shall review the draft and provide written, formative feedback based on the Academic Program Review Rubric for revision purposes and to ensure that the document includes requisite content and is formatted for accessibility. (Metro State University Procedure 101.5).

      ▪ The Program Review Plan author(s) shall amend the commented-upon draft for content and accessibility and resubmit for Dean's review and approval.

      ▪ The Dean shall review, approve and submit the Academic Program Review Plan to the Provost/Provost's Designee, who in turn shall review and approve the final plan. The Provost/Provost's Designee shall also notify the Department Chair (or equivalent), Program Director (or equivalent), the individual whom program faculty have designated responsibility, and Dean of the approval.

Academic Programs have flexibility to determine the specific dates in which to complete the draft/review/revise/resubmit/review and approve/submit to Provost/Provost's Designee cycle during spring semester. Refer to Procedure 255 Operating Guidelines for suggested timelines for Stage 1 (Program Action Plan).

Spring semester final faculty duty day (date varies): Deadline by which all faculty members teaching in the program(s) under review shall submit syllabi for all courses they teach in the program to the person coordinating the review.

g. **Approval**: The Dean and Provost/Provost's Designee shall approve the Academic Program Review Plan before Stage 2 begins.

h. **Additional Sections**: The Academic Program Review Plan shall document the additional sections needed (if any) to complete the Academic Program Review requirements.

i. **Data and topics**: The following are to be included in the Academic Review Plan:

   (1) Scope of Academic Program Review: all academic award(s), courses, and any other activities covered by the review

   (2) Categories and topics that shall be addressed, with at least one programmatic data point or relevant narrative, in the Academic Program Review document

   (3) Names of individuals who shall be involved in conducting the review, with each person's roles/responsibilities specified explicitly

   (4) Budget required to conduct and write the review, including faculty reassigned time or other necessary resources, such as focus groups

   (5) Schedule (with intermediate milestones) for completing the review

   (6) Data to be evaluated:
   - Student Success data
   - Program Annual Reflection data
   - Annual Assessment Report data
   - Equity data
   - Course syllabi for all course offerings in the program(s)
   - Other data collected from students/alumni
   - Market data/job projections
   - Curriculum Map
   - Program Learning Outcomes

2. **Stage 2: Data Collection**

   a. **Purpose:** Stage 2 of the process focuses on compiling and organizing the data to be analyzed for Academic Program Review purposes.

   b. **Timing:** Stage 2 occurs during Summer Semester.

   c. **Responsible Party:** The individual(s) designated responsibility during Stage 1.

   d. **Audience(s):** Program faculty

   e. **Deliverable:** The approved Academic Program Review Plan shall specify the data to be collected and analyzed during Stage 2. Data sources include: Institutional Effectiveness and Research; Program Annual Reflections (PARs) submitted since the last Academic Program Review; written feedback from prior applicable PARs; Annual Assessment Reports (AARs) submitted since the last Academic Program Review; written feedback from prior applicable AARs; program-level student learning outcomes (PLO) assessment data; and other data based on the methods described in the Academic Program Review Plan (e.g., through focus groups, advisory boards or surveys, external databases or other methods relevant for the specific Academic Program Review).

181   f.   **Data Milestones:**

182   (1) August 1: Data provided by Institutional Effectiveness and Research shall be
183   available on August 1.

184   (2) First day of Fall Semester (date varies): Milestone by which an academic program
185   shall have its internal data organized (annual reflections; annual assessment reports;
186   program learning outcome assessment data; written feedback on program annual
187   reflections and annual assessment reports).

188   3.   **Stage 3: Academic Program Review**

189   a.   **Purpose**: Program faculty shall analyze Stage 2 data to evaluate academic program's
190   relevance, effectiveness, and alignment with Metro State University's mission and
191   strategic goals.

192   b.   **Timing**: Stage 3 occurs during Fall Semester. Program faculty shall collectively analyze,
193   interpret, and discuss data to evaluate program effectiveness and alignment with
194   institutional priorities, goals, and outcomes.

195   c.   **Responsible Parties**: The individual(s) designated responsibility during Stage 1 and the
196   Dean

197   d.   **Audience(s)**: Program faculty and the Dean

198   e.   **Deliverables**: Initial draft of Academic Program Review; Dean's written feedback on
199   initial draft; amended (final) draft of Academic Program Review

200   f.   **Developmental Process and Suggested Milestones**. Milestone are established
201   annually in Operating Guidelines provided by the Provost's Office.

202   4.   **Stage 4: Program Action Plan**

203   a.   **Purpose**: The individual(s) designated responsibility during Stage 1 shall consult with the
204   with the Dean and Provost about the completed review. The goal: create a Program
205   Action Plan to guide the program's continuous improvement and assessment of program-
206   level learning outcomes over the next five-year cycle. The Program Action Plan serves
207   as input into the budgeting process for the fiscal year that starts one year later. Some
208   additional resources may be able to be deployed sooner.

209   b.   **Timing**: Spring Semester

210   c.   **Responsible Parties**: the individual(s) designated responsibility during Stage 1; the
211   Dean; and Program Faculty

212   d.   **Audience**: the Dean and Provost/Designee

213   e.   **Deliverables:** Program Action Plan. Content requirements shall include: Program-level
214   learning outcomes (PLOs); internal targets; additional program goals, such as
215   collaborations, enrollment, retention, etc.; Actions and expected completion dates
216   associated with the above goals; 5-year Assessment Plan for PLOs; and resourced
217   needed for the stated actions.

218   f.   **Developmental Process and Suggested Milestones.** Milestones are established
219   annually in Operating Guidelines provided by the Provost's Office.

Section 4. Authority

220 This policy is issued pursuant to authority granted under Minnesota State System Policy 3.36 and Higher
221 Learning Commission Assumed Practices, Policy Number CRRT.C.10.010 A

Section 5. Effective Date

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223 This university procedure shall become effective upon signature by the president and shall remain in effect until modified or expressly revoked.

Section 6. Responsibility

224 The Provost or Provost's designee is responsible for the implementation of this procedure.

Section 7. Review

225 This procedure shall be reviewed every five (5) years or as needed.

Section 8. Signature

Issued on: 01/01/2025.

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Virginia "Ginny" Arthur, JD

President

Amended: 01/13/2017; 01/01/2025

Date and Subject of Amendments:

> January 2017 procedure created a regular five-year cycle for reviews and action plans, as well as a specified table of contents for program reviews.

> January 2025 revision formalized annual program reflections, including specific data milestones, as part of a five-year review cycle.

Additional History and/or Revision Dates: n/a