



Southern Methodist University

Academic Program Review: Program Self-Study Template

**(This template may be modified to suit the particular composition of a program).*

Mission Statement: *The purpose of Academic Program Review is to evaluate an academic program's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, to review its alignment with and contribution to SMU's Strategic goals and learning, and to support the program's efforts to practice responsible fiscal stewardship.*

Academic program reviews (APRs) are comprehensive reviews of an academic program that occur every seven to ten years. An academic program is defined as a credit-bearing credential, including certificates and degrees. The focus of the APR is the academic program, but for purposes of organization, the APR process works through the department or unit that delivers each academic program, and all academic programs delivered by a given department or unit will be reviewed at the same time. The APR involves both a self-study conducted by the faculty and staff of the department delivering the program, and an on-site review conducted by expert, external evaluators. The end result is a memo from the Provost to the Dean of the College or School in which the program is housed detailing the success and strengths of the program and outlining a discrete number of opportunities for improvement.

Both the self-study and the external review are supported by university-provided data about enrollments, time to graduation, employment outcomes for students, program learning outcomes, assessments of student learning, faculty productivity, and other measures relevant to the teaching and research activity of an academic program. A central component of the review process is the on-site review, during which external evaluators meet and speak with all faculty and staff in the academic program, as well as students in the program, and any other key stakeholders. The purpose of the APR is to present, to academic program, the Provost and the Dean, a clear picture of the mission, goals, and outcomes for a given academic program, as well as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that exist for that program.

For departments, the APR process offers an opportunity to reflect on the academic composition, goals, successes, and challenges of the program while evaluating the goals and the future direction of that program. It also provides an opportunity for getting expert advice on opportunities for improvements and finding efficiencies. The APR process also offers the opportunity to convey to senior Academic Leadership at SMU both the successes of a program and the challenges it faces. While resources are not allocated directly as the result of an APR, findings from the APR could be used as supporting evidence for resources through the SMU budget request process.

For the university, the APR is an opportunity for a detailed look at each academic program, its contributions to the overall university mission and strategic goals, its strengths, its challenges, and the opportunities to help the program continue to advance. It also offers an opportunity to review the student learning outcomes and assessments of student learning in the program.

During the APR process, external reviewers will read the program self-study, will review institutional data for the program, and will interview faculty, staff, and students from the program. The review team will then write a summary APR report that includes recommendations for improvements. The APR evaluators report will be provided to the Deans, Vice Presidents, and the Provost to assist them in strategic decision making. Upon receipt of the APR Evaluator's report, the Provost will draft a summary memo to the Dean of the school in which the program resides summarizing finds and detailing actions toward improvement. The memo will request action and follow-up by the program within a specific timeframe (typically one year).

Report of the Internal/External Review Committee — Committee members are asked to read the program's Self Study and Appendices; interview faculty, students and staff; and tour program facilities to evaluate the applicable sections detailed below.

Submission Date:

Department/Program:

Department/Program Chair:

Reviewers:

SECTION ONE: PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

MISSION & OVERVIEW

1. Is the program mission clearly stated and measurable? Is the mission reviewed periodically for alignment to the university mission and strategic plan?
2. Does the program show evidence of national and/or international recognition for excellence and and/or does it show that it has offerings that are distinct from or better than competitors?
This section may include a brief outline of strengths/distinctiveness in comparison to peer and aspirant departments/programs as well as a discussion of obstacles and opportunities for future direction of the program.
3. Does the program seek improvement and provide a plan for improvement, including a timeline and outcomes, that aligns with SMU's Strategic Plan? Is there evidence, in the annual program assessment reports, that the program seeks improvement on an ongoing basis?

SECTION TWO: CREDENTIALS OFFERED

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (*applicable sections only*)

1. **OUTCOMES:** Are there a sufficient number of student learning outcomes for each program? Are these outcomes clear, meaningful, appropriate to the program, descriptive of the levels of learning expected, and measurable?
2. **MAPPING:** Are learning outcomes clearly mapped to the curriculum? Do these outcomes reflect scaled or scaffolded learning opportunities within the program?
3. **ASSESSMENT:** Is there evidence of annual or cyclical assessment of student learning at the end of the program? Is there evidence of the use of meaningful, relevant measures (direct and indirect) in assessing student learning?
4. **ASSESSMENT-BASED IMPROVEMENT:** Is there evidence that assessment of student learning is used to review and improve curriculum design, delivery of academic content, pedagogy, or other aspects of the program?
5. **OTHER IMPROVEMENT:** Is there evidence of other types of improvement? If so, what motivates such improvements? What methods and measures are used to gauge success?
6. **ENROLLMENT:** Is there evidence that student enrollments are monitored and analyzed on a regular basis? Is there evidence that there is strategic planning for growth or reduction based on analysis of enrollments? If so, is such planning in line with stated goals for improvement?
7. **MAJORS/MINORS:** Does the program offer a distinctive educational experience for majors and minors? Is the major or minor clearly achievable in a reasonable amount of time?
8. **DEGREES/TIME TO DEGREE:** What is the four-year and 6-year graduation rate? Does it appear to be on the trajectory to SMU goals of 74% and 82% respectively?
9. **PLACEMENT:** What is the placement rate for jobs and graduate school admission? Is it comparable to the SMU average of 70% which indicates that at the time of graduation, 70% of SMU graduates have achieved their preferred path forward of either a job or graduate school placement?

GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS (*applicable sections only*)

1. **OUTCOMES:** Are there a sufficient number of student learning outcomes for each program? Are these outcomes clear, meaningful, appropriate to the program, descriptive of the levels of learning expected, and measurable?
2. **MAPPING:** Are learning outcomes clearly mapped to the curriculum? Do these outcomes reflect scaled or scaffolded learning opportunities within the program?
3. **ASSESSMENT:** Is there evidence of annual or cyclical assessment of student learning at the end of the program? Is there evidence of the use of meaningful, relevant measures (direct and indirect) in assessing student learning?
4. **ASSESSMENT-BASED IMPROVEMENT:** Is there evidence that assessment of student learning is used to review and improve curriculum design, delivery of academic content, pedagogy, or other aspects of the program?
5. **OTHER IMPROVEMENT:** Is there evidence of other types of improvement? If so, what motivates such improvements? What methods and measures are used to gauge success?
6. **REVENUE:** For graduate programs that are revenue streams, are budgets reasonable and managed appropriately? Do they provide additional funds for graduate student and adjunct faculty hires and/or other necessary program functions?
7. **GRADUATE ASSISTANTS:** (TA, GA, RA, GI positions) Is the number of graduate assistants and/or research assistants appropriate to the size of the graduate and undergraduate needs? Are graduate students assigned clear and meaningful work in line with program needs?
8. **GRADUATE ENROLLMENT:** Is there evidence that student enrollment is supported by strategic planning for growth or reduction? Are there clear plans for student recruitment? Is that planning in line with stated goals for improvement?
9. **ADMISSION QUALITY:** Are admission standards consistent with SMU standards of excellence and regularly reviewed against competitive peers?
10. **DEGREES/TIME TO DEGREE:** What is the graduation rate? Is it comparable to short and peer institutions?
11. **PLACEMENT:** What is the placement rate? How does that compare to the SMU placement rate at jobs and graduate programs at graduation? Is it comparable to the SMU average of 70% at time of graduation?

SECTION THREE: OVERALL PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT HEALTH

1. **LIBRARY HOLDINGS:** Do Library reports shows holdings at pace with aspirant institutions and is considered superior by program faculty?
2. **FACULTY SIZE & RANK:** Are the faculty to student ratio is on par with national norms for the discipline and on par with aspirant institutions?
3. **FACULTY HIRING DIVERSITY:** Is diversity representation in parity with aspirational institutions?

4. **FACULTY DEVELOPMENT:** Is there is a clear and strategic program for mentoring of junior faculty, continued growth for senior faculty. Are teaching and professional faculty, adjuncts and graduate students closely monitored and mentored for teaching excellence?
5. **SCHOLARSHIP:** Does the department provide multiple examples to demonstrate faculty excellence among all tenure track faculty at national and/or international levels?
6. **EXTERNAL FUNDING & RESEARCH EXPENDITURES:** Is the department bringing in appropriate levels of external funding in line with disciplinary expectations and with SMU's strategic goals?
7. **FACULTY WORKLOAD:** Is faculty workload carefully calibrated to allow TT faculty time for service and research while ensuring that all students have excellent exposure to both junior and senior TT faculty? Are teaching and professional faculty carrying teaching loads appropriate to their roles (which require and expect no research contribution? Is the use of adjunct faculty carefully monitored?
8. **TEACHING:** Does the program have a history of awards of excellence or teaching evaluations on par with SMU's record of excellence in teaching?
9. **SERVICE:** Does the program have longstanding and good evidence of service to the department, school, university and/or profession? Are program faculty recognized as exemplary university citizens?
10. **FACILITIES & TECHNICAL RESOURCES:** Does the department have the basic facilities and resources necessary to achieve stated goals for teaching and research/creative scholarship?
11. **GENERAL EDUCATION:** Does the program offer courses in the SMU General Education Curriculum? Is it primarily service courses or courses for majors?
12. **CONTINUING EDUCATION:** Does the department have a continuing education offering via CAPE? Is there revenue generated from that offering?
13. **BUDGET:** Is the budget is in line with similar programs within the school, managed appropriately, allow for faculty development, provide some flexibility for adjunct hiring?
14. **USE OF RESOURCES:** Is there evidence of strategic deployment of existing resources, including regular evaluation of resources relative to the program's mission and goals? Are regular efforts made to ensure optimal deployment of resources? When new needs arise, are efforts made to redeploy existing resources to meet these needs?
15. **FACULTY CREDENTIALS:** Do all faculty hold terminal degrees in the discipline in which they are teaching or are there clear records of their accumulated expertise that document they are credentialed to teach in the discipline and at the level of classes for which they are the Instructor of Record?

SECTION FOUR: FUTURE DIRECTION

1. **OVERVIEW:** Does each program have a 5-7 year plan that is achievable and that can be accomplished by the existing members of the department?
2. **PROCESS:** Is there a clear, well timed, and collaborative process for determining potential improvements and/or growth in the program? Is there a process for evaluating the viability and sustainability of the program? Is there a documented process for regularly informing and seeking advice from faculty in the program and SMU administration before changes and/or improvements are implemented? Is there a record that demonstrates this process is consistently followed?

3. GOALS: Are long-term goals for the program clear and tied to SMU strategic goals? Is there a clearly outlined strategy and implementation plan for achieving these goals?
4. TIMELINE: Is there a clear, precise timeline for achieving strategic goals that is achievable? Are responsibilities for achieving each goal clearly mapped out?

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS, CONCERNS &/OR RECOMMENDATIONS