California State University, Chico Academic Program Review Guidelines: Undergraduate Degree Programs

Academic Program Review Guidelines:
Undergraduate Degree Programs

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INTRODUCTION

The New Framework for Academic Program Review

Traditionally in program reviews, the self-study author(s) used data to describe the degree program rather than explain   what the program *does* and illustrate *how well it does* relative to its goals and standards of performance. The new academic program review process refocuses programs toward becoming more systematic and intentional about gathering data about the *right things* –performance and effectiveness—and on *using* the resulting information to continuously improve what the degree program does.

The specific elements of this new framework align under the vision, mission and strategic priorities of the CSU and CSU, Chico and the core commitments to institutional capacity and educational effectiveness that are embodied   in the current WASC accreditation standards. The new Academic Program Review process is designed to make program review more than a periodic event. It is intended to encourage significant levels of on-going engagement by internal and external stakeholders in issues of program capacity and effectiveness.

Accordingly, the self-study should:

- ▪ Provide the degree program's mission, goals and outcomes, including the processes used to establish these.

- ▪ Provide evidence of progress toward accomplishing the mission, goals and outcomes defined for the program.

- ▪ Demonstrate that indicators of performance are regularly developed and data collected to inform program   decision making, planning and improvement.

Overall, the new review process embraces an organizational learning approach in which the program regularly and   systematically assesses its own performance and uses the assessment information to foster collective learning and   thereby increase the program's capacity for educational effectiveness.

SELF-STUDY REVIEW PROCESS

Self-Study Report

The Self-Study Report provides an opportunity for a degree program to describe its mission, goals and desired outcomes and progress towards accomplishing these, as well as the processes for the delivery and continuous improvement of its educational efforts. Thus, the Self-Study Report summarizes a program's evaluation of itself in accordance with its defined mission and the criteria for review specified in the Guidelines for the Undergraduate Degree Academic Program Review. The five-year review process is to confirm achievement of program mission as well as the effectiveness of continuous improvement processes consistent with the criteria for review.

No single format for presentation of results of the self-study is prescribed. Because the Self-Study Report serves as the basis for the entire review process, however, the needs of the different reviewers (External Reviewer and members of the Review Team) should be considered in the preparation of the document.

The contents of the Self-Study Report should be organized as follows:

1. Cover Page

2. Certification Page

3. Quick Facts

4. Executive Summary

5. Table of Contents

6. List of Exhibits

7. Self-Study: Criterion-by-Criterion Reports

8. Appendices

    - Required Data Elements
    - Other (s)

CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM REVIEW

CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM REVIEW

Format of the Academic Program Review Guidelines

The Academic Program Review is framed around issues of program capacity and effectiveness. It emphasizes   our commitment to quality and integrity of the degree offered, a commitment that the review process reviews and validates.

Each element of the Academic Program Review is constructed with the following three interrelated elements elements:

Content Area
The Academic Program Review includes three main content areas: ― "*Articulating a Collective Vision,*" "*Organizing for   Learning*" and "*Becoming a Learning Organization.*" Each of these content areas, while addressed individually, is intended to be an integrated topic, framed to emphasize overall program effectiveness and accountability. Each content   area is expressed as the characteristic of a quality education program in positive, descriptive, and general terms. The   stated conditions and attributes are intended to serve as guides and indicators to encourage thoughtful approaches to analyzing and presenting program effectiveness and program accountability, and to develop action plans where   warranted.

Criteria for Review

Within each content area are criteria for review which are intended to identify key areas for review. These criteria for   review are meant to support basic decisions about five-year reviews and thus enable the Provost, the College Dean and the department faculty to render an effective judgment of the performance of a program   and to form an appropriate perspective for its future direction.

Guidelines for Documentation

Suggested methods of demonstrating performance related to content areas are provided to assist with further interpretations of the content area and/or criteria for review.

CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

Articulating a Collective Vision

This content area centers on the degree to which the program sets goals and obtains results in student learning at both the program and course levels that are: a) clearly stated and widely understood by students, faculty, and other stakeholders; b) appropriate for the type and level of program offered; c) adequately assessed; and, d) continuously improved based on assessment results.

1. **Mission and Program Goals**

The program articulates its mission and its goals as a guide to its future, planned evolution, infrastructure and use of resources. The program has a clear and conscious sense of its essential values and character, its distinctive elements, its place in the campus community, and its relationship to society at large. The program uses effectiveness and performance indicators beyond inputs and resources as the organizing basis for defining, evaluating, and reflecting on program quality and program effectiveness.

Criteria for Review	**Guidelines for Documentation and Reflection**
1.1. The program has a clear published mission statement.	• Provide your program's mission statement. • Describe the process whereby the mission statement was developed and disseminated. (See Academic Program Portfolios)
1.2. The program mission is appropriate for higher education and consonant with the mission, values and strategic priorities of the department, college and university.	• Describe and illustrate how your program is distinctive from other programs on campus, in the CSU system, and other benchmark institutions. • Describe and illustrate how the program mission is aligned with the mission, vision, values and strategic priorities of the department, college and university.

1.3. The program has developed and widely disseminated its program goals.	• Provide your program's goals.
	• Describe the process whereby the program goals were developed and disseminated. Include:
	  o knowledge, skills and values that faculty expect graduating students to achieve.
	  o type of students and other constituents served by the program.

1.4. The program has developed and begun to use key indicators and sources of evidence to ascertain the level of achievement of its mission and goals.	• Present an evidentiary set of exhibits that demonstrates overall achievement of program mission and goals. (For example, present data on graduation rates, placement in graduate programs, students' willingness to recommend the program and/or employer satisfaction with graduates).
1.5 Consistent with its purpose and character, the program demonstrates an appropriate response to the increasing diversity of society and the student body in its curriculum, co-curriculum and hiring.	• Present evidence of how diversity is represented in curriculum and hiring.

Organizing for Learning

This content area centers on the alignment of program assets and characteristics with the goal of producing high levels of student learning. This requires a review of curriculum, pedagogy, mode of delivery, faculty recruitment and development, scholarship in support of improved teaching and learning, information resources, student services and co- curricular activities, and resources and facilities.

2.   Organizing for Learning: Curriculum, Pedagogy and Learning Outcomes

The program achieves its mission and attains its goals through the active management of teaching and learning and demonstrates that these functions are performed effectively.

Criteria for Review

2.1.   The program has specified its expected learning outcomes and they have been widely shared among its members, including faculty, students, staff, and – where appropriate – external stakeholders.

2.2.   The program's curriculum content and standards address program goals and student learning outcomes.

2.3.   The program has established processes for assessing student learning outcomes, has established benchmarks for student performance, documented levels of student learning and provides examples of the use of assessment results for program improvement.

2.4   The program actively supports faculty development aimed at strengthening pedagogical practice and innovation.

2.5   The program actively involves students in learning and provides them with appropriate feedback about their performance and how it can be improved.

Guidelines for Documentation and Reflection

- Provide an exhibit of the student learning outcome statements of the program; describe and/or illustrate how learning outcomes were developed; and illustrate how and where they are published.

- Provide your program's Curriculum Alignment Matrix. Describe how the objectives for significant categories of curriculum activity connect to the program's goals and learning outcomes.

- Present the learning outcomes assessment plan, assessment results including levels of student performance on specific outcomes and program changes enacted as a result of assessment findings.

- Present data on number of faculty participating in CELT workshops, Academy eLearning, Civic Learning Institute, CSU system-wide course redesign, other professional development activities focused on effective, innovative pedagogy.

- Number of courses redesigned using peer mentors, supplemental instruction, inquiry-based learning, digital instructional materials or other pedagogical innovations.

- Illustrate how teaching and learning in the program apply *The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education.*

- Present data on student evaluations of teaching; on student engagement; and on service learning activities within the program.

3. Organizing for Learning: Faculty Resources

CSU, Chico recognizes that the quality of educational program efforts is inextricably linked to the quality of faculty and support staff. Faculty, collectively and individually, are responsible for the creation and delivery of effective instruction, the evaluation of instructional effectiveness and student achievement, and continued improvement and innovation in program offerings and instructional processes. Faculty scholarship, research and creative activity are essential components of the CSU, Chico mission. The program has policies and practices that encourage and support scholarship and creative activity linked to the mission and improvements in teaching and learning.

Criteria for Review

Guidelines for Documentation and Reflection

3.1. The program maintains faculty sufficient to provide stability and integrity of the curriculum and on-going quality improvement for program offerings. Faculty workload is aligned with program mission.

- Present information based on total program FTES, Total FTEF and Teaching FTEF and translated into appropriate student-faculty ratios.
- Reflect on whether tenure track / tenured faculty is sufficient to fulfill the functions of on-going curriculum design, course development, course delivery and assessment of learning.

3.2. The deployment of faculty resources reflects the mission and program goals. Students in the program and/or its subunits have the opportunity to receive instruction from appropriately qualified faculty.

- Demonstrate that tenure-track faculty teach at least 60 percent of the student credit hours required in the program; disaggregated by class level.
- Demonstrate that all faculty are either academically or professionally qualified (or both) for the courses they teach in the program.
- Demonstrate that qualified faculty are distributed across program options and tracks consistent with the mission and students' needs.

3.3. The program maintains appropriate and sufficiently supported faculty development activities designed to improve teaching and learning consistent with program mission and goals.

- Provide copy of or web address for faculty development policy
- Present data on the assignment of AWTUs for purposes of scholarship and creative activity for the previous five-year period. (Include number and percent of tenure-track faculty who received AWTUs; average number of AWTUs; total AWTUs by category; and internally versus externally funded AWTUs; for each year of the review period.)
- Present data on the awarding of sabbatical, difference-in-pay, and absence-without-pay leaves.
- Present data for faculty participation in campus-, college- and program faculty development programs for the previous five-year period.

3.4. Faculty members make scholarly/creative contributions and service to the community on a continuing basis appropriate to the program's mission.

- Present a summary of the faculty's scholarly, creative and professional activities for the previous five-year period.
- Present data on faculty involvement in community service.
- Present data on the total dollar amount of awards received from external grants and contracts proposals by faculty and describe the funded activities.
- Describe the effectiveness of faculty's scholarly and creative activities in accomplishing program mission and goals and in achieving quality and continuous improvement.

3.5. Faculty size, composition, qualifications, and development activities result from a comprehensive faculty planning process.

- Describe and highlight the major components of the program's faculty resources management plan (e.g. address current and anticipated faculty personnel, including retirements and growth, in relation to program goals).
- Illustrate how hiring practices address diversity goals and present data on diversity goal accomplishment. See CFR 1.5.

4. Organizing for Learning: Students as Partners in Learning

Students are the focus of the academic enterprise.‖ Students are expected to be active partners with faculty in the learning process and the program is to provide opportunities for active learning throughout its offerings.

Criteria for Review	**Guidelines for Documentation and Reflection**
4.1. The program recruits, enrolls, supports and graduates a diverse and high-quality student population.	• Describe characteristics of your students and how they address quality and diversity goals. Provide the demographics of your student population (e.g. numbers, gender, ethnicity, GPAs). • Provide data on student retention and graduation disaggregated by gender and ethnicity. (see CFR 1.5.)
4.2. Students understand the requirements of the program and receive timely, useful and regular information and advising about program requirements.	• Describe and/or illustrate methods whereby students are informed of and advised about program requirements. • Reflect on the effectiveness of the program's Major Academic Plan(s) MAPs or Student Success MAPs. • Present data on students' evaluation of program and career advising.
4.3. Retention policies for the students are consistent with the objective of producing high quality graduates.	• Describe and/or illustrate the processes the program has articulated to evaluate student progress towards degree completion, provide early identification of retention issues, intervention with support (where appropriate), and separate students from the program • Provide data on the number of students identified with retention issues, the interventions undertaken and the number of students separated from the program by status and ethnicity for the past five years.
4.4. The program engages students directly in scholarship/creative activity and service to the community, consonant with program purpose and character.	• Present a summary of the students' scholarly, creative and professional activities for the previous five-year period. • Present a summary of student involvement in community service.
4.5 The program's extra-curricular activities are appropriate in content and standards to the mission/goals of the program.	• Describe the content and structure of the program's extra-curricular activities and demonstrate their appropriateness as perceived by internal and external stakeholders; reflect on how the objectives for significant categories of extra-curricular activity connect to mission and goal statements.

5. **Organizing for Learning: Other Learning-Enabling Resources**

The program sustains its operations and supports the achievement of its mission and goals through its investment in fiscal, human, information and physical resources. These key resources enable the creation and maintenance of a high quality learning environment.

Criteria for Review	**Guidelines for Documentation and Reflection**
5.1. Fiscal resources are effectively aligned with the mission and objectives, are appropriately diversified, and are sufficiently developed to support and maintain the level and kind of program offerings both now and in the foreseeable future.	• Relative to the mission, describe the resource adequacy in terms of: ▪ General fund allocation; faculty, non-faculty, and operating expenses ▪ Lottery and work-study funding to the program ▪ Non-general fund resources including grants, contracts and advancement
5.2. The program employs staff personnel sufficient in number and professional qualifications to maintain its operations and to support its mission and program goals.	• Submit previous five-year data on FTE Staff per FTES. • Describe and highlight the program's plan for staff • resources. Describe how staff hiring practices address diversity goals and present data on diversity goal accomplishment. • Present data or information on the level of investment in staff development activities. • Describe staff career management activities.
5.3. The program's student support services resources are sufficiently coordinated and supported to fulfill its mission and educational purposes.	*Present data on the current resources and reflect on future needs in the following areas relative to the program's mission and goals:*
5.4. The program holds, or provides access to, information resources sufficient in scope, quality, currency, and kind to support its academic offerings and the scholarship of its members.	▪ Student advising and career placement ▪ Learning materials – information resources ▪ Academic technology support / Learning management resources
5.5. The program's academic technology resources are sufficiently coordinated and supported to fulfill its educational purposes and provide key academic and administrative functions.	▪ Basic infrastructure space and equipment.

Becoming a Learning Organization

This content area centers on the degree to which the program has developed systems to assess its own performance and to use the information to improve student learning over time, These systems should reflect the input of stakeholders, identify key dimensions of performance, and are based on standards of evidence that prominently feature educational results. The general objective of this section of the Self-Study Report is to demonstrate that the program has clear, well-established policies and practices for gathering and analyzing information that leads to a culture of evidence and improvement.

6.   **Commitment to Learning and Strategic Improvement**

The program conducts sustained, evidence-based and participatory discussions about how effectively it is accomplishing its mission and goals. These activities inform both program planning and systematic evaluations of educational effectiveness. The results of program inquiry, research, and data collection are used to set program priorities and revise   program purposes, structures, and approaches to teaching, learning and scholarly/creative work.

In this section, reflect on the results of student learning outcome assessment, and other measures of program performance in the self-study, to project anticipated changes in mission, goals, student learning outcomes, pedagogy and curriculum aimed at enhancing program performance

Criteria for Review	**Guidelines for Documentation and Reflection**
6.1. Describe anticipated changes in mission statement and program goals.	• Describe and illustrate the process whereby the mission statement and program goals are periodically reviewed and revised.
6.2. The program employs a deliberate set of processes to assess program effectiveness, track results over time, and use the results of these assessments to revise and improve structures and processes, curricula and pedagogy. (see CFR 2.3.)	• Describe the program's collection of data on program performance and how this is shared with key stakeholders. • Demonstrate how the use of program performance indicators/ outcome measures has led to changes in curriculum, pedagogy or resource allocation in the program. • Discuss anticipated changes in curriculum, pedagogy or resource allocation to improve program effectiveness.
6.3. The program leadership is committed to improvement based on the results of processes of assessment, inquiry and evaluation.	• Illustrate the effectiveness of the program's leadership in promoting organizational learning through evidenced-based planning, evaluation and decision making.

External Reviewer Report

The Academic Review process is implemented through a review of the program's self-study, a visit by an external reviewer, the development of an improvement action plan and a final recommendation by the Review Team.

The external reviewer has the following responsibilities:

1. Understand thoroughly the mission and goals of the program under review;

2. Determine the facts on which the program review is based;

3. Analyze the program's achievement of each criterion for review based on his/her determination of facts;

4. Ascertain that the current structure and processes of the program to assure continuous development and improvement;

5. Determine how the program's fulfillment of its mission and goals affects achievement of overall high quality;

6. Make an overall recommendation to the Review Team;

7. Provide consultation to the program when requested.

Concluding Reflective Essay: Program Five-Year Improvement Action Plan

Following the completion of the self-study and an analysis of the external reviewer's insights and suggestions for improvement, the program, in consultation with the dean of the college and chair of the department, develops a five-year improvement plan that provides:

1. A summary of results of Student Learning Outcomes assessment, includes strengths and weaknesses identified in student learning;
2. A description of how information on student learning will shape efforts to improve program performance including curricular revisions and pedagogical innovations;
3. A discussion of changes in numbers and diversity of students served by the program during the review period and how this influences program planning moving forward, and;
4. A projection of faculty resources in light of the above and anticipated changes in the make-up of faculty in the next five years.
5. Any additional data or analyses that help shape the course of the program in the coming 5 years.

The information contained in the self-study, the external reviewer report and the dean-approved improvement action plan form the basis for the Review Team's recommendation to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Final Review and Approval of Improvement Action Plan

The Review Team -- consisting of an Office of the Provost Representative, College Dean and Department Chair and Program Director (where appropriate) – will make one of four recommendations to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. This recommendation will follow from the Team's review of the degree program's overall quality and processes for ensuring continuous improvement and the program's achievement of its mission and educational goals.   The recommendation should be based on the facts at the time of the Academic review, not on future plans.

The recommendation can take on one of the following four options:

- **Recommend Affirmation**: This recommendation implies that the program is fulfilling its mission, is maintaining overall high quality, and has processes in place that assure continuous improvement. In the spirit of continuous improvement, the External Reviewer should identify issues appropriate for further improvement prior to the next five-year review.

- **Recommend Reaffirmation, but with specific concerns for transmittal to the program**: The concerns cited may not be sufficient to preclude a favorable recommendation, but the report should reinforce the External Reviewer's recommendation that the program attend to these concerns in its Continuous Improvement Plan.

- **Recommend the program remain under Continuing Review:** The recommendation cites concerns the program must rectify before a recommendation for continuation can be contemplated. The External Reviewer's Report should provide specific information on (a) actions or outcomes required to address deficiencies, (b) seriousness of the deficiencies identified and the length of time anticipated to address them, and (c) nature and frequency of reports and reviews that will be required.

- **Recommend Suspension**: The External Reviewer's recommendation cites deficiencies that so seriously impair overall quality that the program is asked to show cause why it should not be terminated. This recommendation is reached only when the External Reviewer has concluded that the program cannot or will not rectify the cited deficiencies.