Saint Louis University

Academic Program Review Process
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Purpose for University Academic Program Review

Saint Louis University is committed to academic excellence in higher education and strives to provide high quality programs to its constituencies through periodic and ongoing evaluation of those programs. Academic program reviews ensure continuous quality improvement (i.e., enhancement of classroom and program-level practices) of all programs, including those that are reviewed through an external accreditation process. Thorough, systematic review of academic programs demonstrates that they are in alignment with University mission and strategic initiatives, and identifies program strengths and areas that are in need of improvement. The program review process should be congruent with established academic unit and university assessment efforts, and should support long-term academic unit planning and strategic initiatives. Additionally, program reviews demonstrate the quality of academic programs and assessment efforts to key constituencies, including: current and prospective students; current and prospective faculty and staff; the University’s Board of Trustees; program- and University-level accrediting organizations; related academic units at other universities; state and federal departments of education; donors; alumni; and others.

In summary, academic program review is a process through which faculty, staff, and administrators collaborate to promote academic excellence, viability and accountability through:

- Identifying and prioritizing specific recommendations/actions needed for program improvement
- Identifying opportunities and rationales for program growth
- Identifying interdisciplinary collaborative opportunities
- Assessment of program strengths and weaknesses in the context of program-defined, discipline or professional standards of quality, as well as alignment with goals and outcomes as defined by the respective academic unit and the University

The outcomes of program reviews should greatly inform strategic at the program, academic unit, and University levels.

Academic Programs for Review

The unit of direct review in all SLU academic program reviews will be the academic program; indirectly, critical elements of the administrative unit in which a program is housed (typically the department) will be reviewed, as well. All undergraduate- and post-baccalaureate-level academic programs at Saint Louis University are subject to the same program review requirement and process, regardless of campus or location at which the programs are offered, and regardless of the “delivery method” (campus-based, online, cohort model, etc.) including:

- Bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degree programs
- Concentrations, certificates and majors within degree programs
- Interdisciplinary majors and minors
- All co-curricular activities associated with an educational or degree program
While there may well be similarities between a given program’s disciplinary/specialized accreditation requirements and those of the University-directed program review, expectations of SLU’s program review will typically be more comprehensive, and more contextually-specific. **Programs subject to external accreditation are encouraged to apply any reports, data, and disciplinary standards from the accreditation process toward the requirements of this process, as appropriate.**

**Administration of Academic Program Review Process**

The Office of the Provost supports and insures a consistent and effective academic program review process. The program review process ensures that all programs -- including those subject to external accreditation -- engage in reviews that incorporate, but do not duplicate, recent and concurrent assessment efforts. The process also respects disciplinary and programmatic distinctions throughout a relatively standardized process to ensure procedural equity.

Programs should involve faculty and students in the review process, particularly during the data gathering and self-study stage. As appropriate, the Program Review Council (PRC) may make use of the expertise of standing committees such as undergraduate and graduate curriculum committees, assessment committees, teaching and research committees as well as department chairs and program directors.

The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (APAA) is responsible for convening the academic program review process according to a pre-established time table. In addition, the APAA will coordinate the PRC process, the Annual Developmental Workshop, Initial Stakeholder Meeting, coordinate and distribute materials to the PRC and prepare materials for the Action Implementation Plan Meeting.

The Program Review protocol consists of the following components:

- **Annual Developmental Workshop**
  The Office of the Provost will annually provide a developmental workshop on the program review process and self-study guidelines for all chairs/directors, associate deans, and center directors/deans. Additional stakeholders may be invited.

- **Initial Stakeholder Meeting**
  Prior to the start of the academic program review process (Appendix A), the Provost will host an individual Provost stakeholder meeting with the dean, department chair/program director/center director of the academic unit(s) scheduled for academic review the following year and the APAA to discuss the process, the academic program’s strategic initiatives, and alignment with University strategic plan.

- **Program Self-Study**
  The self-study will be a constituent-conducted, (faculty self-study team), data-informed analysis guided by an agreed-upon set of questions, disciplinary standards and evaluation method identified during the Initial Stakeholder Meeting. The self-study is designed to result in recommendations for improvement in program quality and viability. The evaluation is led by the department chair and/or program director and conducted against
program/academic unit defined educational and operational outcomes, as well as against academic unit expectations for program quality. The departmental faculty self-study team includes the department chair or their designee and one or more senior faculty members of the department. The team is selected or elected according to the established governance process of the department or program. Once the department has selected or elected its committee, the dean must approve the proposed membership. In addition, the unit’s liaison librarian will be responsible for the response to Section 13.D., which will be developed in consultation with the department chair and/or program director and other pertinent faculty. The department chair and/or program director will inform the liaison librarian of the unit’s self-study timeline immediately following the Initial Stakeholder meeting. See Appendix B Self-Study Topical Outline.

- **External Academic Program Review and Site Visit**
  A review will be conducted by a team of expert faculty colleagues (typically 3 members) external to the University incorporating multiple perspectives from key campus stakeholders into the program review. The external reviewer(s) can identify and contextualize national and international environmental trends and future directions for the discipline (see Appendix C for Guiding Questions for External Reviewer) which may extend beyond an external accreditation criteria or standards. The external reviewer(s) will prepare a summary report, to be submitted within 30 calendar days of the visit, addressing program strengths and areas for improvements derived from site visit. The department/program under review nominates at least three to five external consultants, which may be based on discipline or professional standards or professional association recommendations, for the dean’s selection in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs. The external reviewer(s) will be selected in consultation with the Department Chair/Program Director, Dean, and Provost.

- **Program Director/Chair/Faculty Review of Program Self-Study and External Review Summary Report**
  The completed internal self-study and external reviewer(s) summary report are submitted to the academic program director/chair and program faculty for review and comment prior to review by the Dean. Once the review is complete, the Chair forwards the self-study, external reports, any department responses, and her/his own response and recommendations to the Dean.

- **Dean Review of Program Self-Study and External Review Summary Report**
  The completed internal self-study and external summary report are submitted to the dean of the academic unit for review and comment prior to review by the PRC. Once the dean’s review is complete, it may be returned to the Chair for additional comments in consultation with the program faculty. When complete, the dean forwards the self-study, external reports, any department responses, and his/her own response and recommendations to the co-chairs of the PRC.

- **Program Review Council Summary Report**
The PRC, which reports to the Provost, has the responsibility of reviewing all internal and external materials pertinent to the program review and making recommendations to the Provost. The PRC is made up of the APAA as chair of the committee, the University Assessment Director, the Assistant Provost for Administration, and six faculty members recommended by the Faculty Senate and appointed by the Provost, serving staggered three-year terms with the option for re-appointment. The Provost, in consultation with the academic unit leadership, makes all final decisions regarding recommendations and subsequent actions. Additional faculty members, department chairs, and members of university leadership with a specific expertise or experience may be asked to assist with the review process for a specific unit.

PRC reviews will include the internal self-study, external reviewers’ summary report, external accreditation documents (when applicable), feedback received from Dean, Program Director/Chair and program faculty and the academic program’s strategic initiatives outlined in the initial stakeholder meeting. Based on the information provided, the PRC will prepare an overall academic program review summary report. This summary report will be sent to the Dean to distribute to the Chair/Program Director, and program faculty for feedback. The summary report and feedback is then submitted to the Provost and will be the focus of the Provost Review (see below).

- **Provost Review**
The Provost will review each PRC Summary Report and meet with the respective dean, department chair/program director/center director and APAA. Their collective focus will be developing consensus on action plans, prioritizing chosen actions, and establishing a schedule for reviewing progress toward their accomplishment. The final PRC report and the summary of the Provost Review meeting are returned to the Dean and Program for review and implementation. The academic program review reports are considered confidential and are not to be distributed in paper or electronically outside of the academic program or current or potential interdisciplinary partners, Dean’s Office and the Office of Academic Affairs.

- **Action Plan Implementation**
The action plan based on the internal program self-study and comments from all review groups will be discussed among the dean, department chair/program director, center directors/dean, the APAA and the Provost. Subsequently, on a schedule determined by the stakeholder group (deans, chairs, program directors, and/or center directors of the academic unit(s)) it will be the responsibility of the chair and respective dean to implement the action plan. On an annual basis, progress on the action plan will be reported to GAAC and/or UAAC as an informational item, by the academic unit UAAC/GAAC representative, as some of the action items may involve curricular programming changes subject to GAAC/UAAC recommendations. Formal review of program accomplishments will be through the submission of one-and three-year action plan follow-up reports to the dean and Provost as well as the next full program review or at any point in the interim as determined by the Provost.

*Updated September 25, 2019*
Review Cycle

All academic programs shall undergo formal academic program review on a typical 7-year cycle. Additionally:

- The initial formal review of new programs will occur in the third year of operation, and every seven years thereafter.
- Newer programs that began operation within five years of the date of the adoption of this process and have not yet engaged in formal program review will be the first programs scheduled for review.
- “Related” undergraduate- and post-baccalaureate-level programs – for example, an undergraduate major in English, an M.A. in English, and a Ph.D. in English – are to undergo review simultaneously unless accreditation or other circumstances dictate otherwise. Review may also include clusters of major concentrations or academic programs across academic units when interdisciplinary in nature.

The Office of Academic Affairs will work with each academic unit to develop and publish a rolling, academic program review schedule. Whenever possible the academic program review cycle shall be coordinated with any external accreditation review requirements that occur in fewer than or more than seven year intervals (subsequent reviews may be aligned with external accreditation cycles but should not occur at time intervals longer than the 7-year institutional cycle); upon approval of the Office of Academic Affairs, review terms may be moved up or delayed to best facilitate coordination with external program accreditation activity.

Academic Program Review Oversight

Although most elements of the academic program review process are to be faculty-and program-driven, there is a real need to dedicate administrative, fiscal, and human resources in support of the reviews. Accordingly, the Office of Academic Affairs has the responsibility for supporting the academic program review process and will therefore:

- Fund external reviewer(s) honoraria and travel expenses
- Oversee and coordinate the academic program review process (including establishing the scheduling of academic program reviews, communicating with departments/programs about the review, providing orientation to the process, maintaining files/records of self-studies and related program review reports, etc.)
- Provide compensation for faculty serving on the faculty self-study team when appropriate
- Ensure that the Office of the Provost (including the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Assistant Provost of Administration), Office of Institutional Research, Office of Enrollment Management, and University Assessment Coordinator provide all necessary data and guidance to support programs undergoing review.

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Appendix A
Academic Program Review Process

Developmental Workshop → Initial Stakeholder Meeting → Program Self Study → External Review and Site Visit → Chair, Program Director, and Faculty Response → Dean Approval → Program Review Council → Provost Review → Action Plan Implementation (Initial, 1 & 3 year follow-up)

- Provost
- Dean
- Chair
- Program/Center Director
- APAA

Program Director/Chair Review of Self Study → Dean Review of Self-Study → Faculty and Self Study Team

- Assessment Coordinator
- PRC Report
- 6 Faculty Senate Reps
- AP Administration
- APAA

- Action Plan Determined
  Provost, Dean, Chair, APAA, Faculty and Self-Study Team
- Implementation Schedule Created
  Dean, Chair, Program/Center Director
- Implementation Responsibility
  Dean, Chair, Program/Center Director

Updated September 25, 2019
Appendix B

Self-Study Topical Outline

The following list provides the arrangement of data and prompts that will guide you in the preparation of your self-study. Please be aware that these prompts are arranged in such a way to compel a formative self-assessment. Please also be aware that these prompts were developed in a manner that will allow us to gain insight into all your programs at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Given this circumstance you may find that some of the questions do not apply very well to your own program undergoing the review process. In these instances, we ask you to simply skip over the non-relevant materials and/or questions.

In the preparation of your self-study, the prompts are arranged into three broad categories, which are more fully explained in the Table of Contents below:

I. This is our program
II. This is who we are
III. This is what we think of our program

Responses to the first two categories could be written by a smaller sub-set of faculty. Responses to the third category of questions (a SWOT analysis) should be compiled after an orderly faculty retreat or workshop in which there is full participation by the entire faculty and the responses to the prompts are reflective of all faculty attitudes as uncovered by the workshop process. To facilitate this process, we recommend that the first two sections be completed and that responses to these sections are distributed to all faculty at least one week prior to retreat.

Table of Contents

I. This is our program
   1 Cover Page: Use the standard SLU logo on your cover page available at the following website: http://www.slu.edu/marcom/slu-brand-identity/university-logos.
   2 Executive Summary
      a. Identify the program(s) within the agreed-upon curricular scope of this APR (associated GR degrees, UG majors and minors, and GR/UG certificates)
      b. Summary of the self-study document (one page)
      c. List of persons who were responsible for the preparation of the document
   3 Brief History of the Department or Program (one paragraph)
      Address aspects of the program’s history or character that provide key context for interpreting this self-study.
   4 Mission Statement of the Department; Departmental Goals; Program Goals (Note: You may cut and paste from the catalog or Department Web Page.)
      Reflection Question to Prompt Development of Narrative: Do Department mission and department goals shape and give direction to the program?
   5 Program Description (repeat for multiple programs, i.e. UG major, M.A., Ph.D., etc)
      a. Enrollments: Declared majors and graduates; class sizes (and impact on program delivery and quality). Data: # Majors, average class size, #grads/year over the past five years.
      Reflection Question to Prompt Development of Narrative: Are your enrollments adequate to justify continuation of the program?

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b. Program requirements: common courses, concentrations, and electives. This would include road maps.

*Reflection Question to Prompt Development of Narrative:* Are the curricular offerings adequate to justify the number of options within the programs in the department? Are the program requirements appropriate? Is there evidence of periodic curricular review, introduction of new courses, course syllabi?

c. Discuss if/how the program or courses from the program are offered in Madrid. Address the nature of the relationship/collaborations between Madrid faculty and St. Louis faculty.

d. External accreditation, rankings and awards (Provide Bulleted List)

Summarize the program’s current disciplinary accreditation status. Attach any related documentation (self-studies, accreditation team reports, status letters, etc.) as appendices.

e. Peer and aspirant benchmark programs: Identify the programs at other institutions you have designated as benchmarks that inform your program improvement efforts. Describe key program characteristics or measures of performance that you “benchmark” against.

6 Assessment and Curriculum

a. Attach the program’s current Assessment Plan (including rubrics, where applicable), plus the related Assessment Reports for the past *three* years. Include all related feedback reports the program has received from the University Assessment Committee.

b. Address any facet of your program’s assessment efforts that you feel provides needed context for or explanation of the data requested above

c. How does the curriculum help support the achievement of the program learning outcomes?

d. Describe how ongoing assessment has improved the curriculum in the program?

e. To what extent have your program faculty come to understand and value assessment work?

II. This is who we are

7 Student Information

a. Student success in program (retention and graduation rates, time-to-degree, number of students on extensions and length of time, etc.).

b. Summarize Department’s recruitment and retention efforts. Make a special effort to discuss any efforts that target enhancing student diversity within the program.

c. Identify any academic/professional awards or other accomplishments that current students or alumni have won in the past 7 years. Note any ways in which SLU resources (human/financial/programmatic) contributed to the accomplishment

d. Post-graduate success (employment, graduate school enrollment, year of service, military, etc.). (Bulleted list or narrative summary)

*Reflection Question to Prompt Development of Narrative:* How do the number of majors and minors within the program affect overall program quality?

8 Faculty

a. Faculty Expectations and Quality (teaching, research, clinical work, etc.)

1. Summarize notable professional honors and awards (List Faculty and Honor/Award)

Note any ways in which SLU resources (human/financial/programmatic) contributed to these awards.

2. Research expectations for faculty (include workload document)

3. Clinical expectations for faculty (include workload document)

4. Teaching expectations for faculty (include workload document)

c. Faculty size, composition (Rank of Tenure Track/NTT/adjunct/grad assistant, etc.), and distribution of responsibilities
Reflection Question to Prompt Development of Narrative: Provide a narrative summary of faculty quality relative to expectation in each area that is applicable to your program.

d. Faculty service to Department, College/School, University, community and profession.
   Summarize into a list or a narrative description the major service activities of faculty within your program.
   1. Summarize notable professional honors and awards (List Faculty and Honor/Award)
   2. Number of theses and/or dissertations directed per graduate faculty member
   3. Number of mentees/advisees per undergraduate faculty member
   4. Number of mentees/advisees per graduate faculty member

9 Administrative Personnel
   How – and how well -- are administrative responsibilities distributed among staff? What needs are not currently being met, and why? Attach an organizational chart showing all program staff (including student workers)

10 Response to the Recommendations from Previous Reviews
   a. Summarize the recommendations from the last program review and any actions taken by the Department in response to this review.

11 Major Changes in Program (within the last five years and anticipated for the next five years)
   a. Discipline or field (Summarize change over past five years, provide a speculative summary of changes you anticipate in the discipline and how you plan to respond).
   b. Student demand (Summarize changes you have observed and answer the question “Are students now asking for something different than what you currently offer?”
   c. Occupational demand-For Professional Programs (Summarize change over past five years, provide a speculative summary of changes you anticipate in the occupation over the next five years and how you plan to respond)
   d. Societal need (Summarize change)

12 Current and future areas of concern for the department/program (one page summary of concerns moving forward).

13 Resources Currently Available (Past Five Years). Refer to sections 7, 8, and 9. Reflect on the resources that are currently available to you and whether they are adequate for you to achieve your programmatic goals.
   a. Personnel: Bulleted list of staff with brief description of duties. Bulleted list of GA lines with brief description of duties for each line. Include all faculty vitae.
   b. Facilities and major equipment (including start-up costs)
   c. General expense budget
   d. Adequacy and impact of library resources and services: research services, student referrals and consultations, library instruction services and course support.
   e. Other resources

14 Plans to Modify Resources Over the Next Three Years (differentiate desired and necessary resources and include a plan for procuring funds for resources)
   a. Personnel
   b. Facilities and equipment
   c. Other resources, such as, clinical practice
   d. Connection to departmental and program goals
   e. Anticipated sources of resources

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III. This is what we think of our program.

15 Current strengths that support the achievement of program goals
   a. List and describe

16 Current weaknesses that impede the achievement of program goals
   a. List and describe

17 Future opportunities to explore in the achievement of program goals
   a. Summarize any opportunities that remain unexplored in achievement of program goals.

18 Future threats to overcome in the achievement of program goals
   a. Summarize any areas of concern members of the faculty may have about a program.
Appendix C

Guiding Questions for On-Site External Reviewer

Programs and Curricula
1. Does the program have a well-defined mission and an appropriate corresponding statement of goals?
2. Do the mission and goals shape and give direction to the program?
3. Are the curricular offerings adequate to justify the number of options within the programs in the department?
4. Are the program requirements appropriate?
5. Is there evidence of periodic curricular review, introduction of new courses, course syllabi?
6. Is there evidence that the courses of the program serve other departments and schools of the university?
7. Is there other evidence of interdepartmental cooperation?
8. Are the program's plans and/or goals appropriate given the external and internal environment?
9. Highlight the strengths and areas of improvement for the program.

2. Faculty
1. What is the morale of the faculty?
2. Is there evidence of faculty productivity, of standing nationally, of initiative in seeking support for research opportunities and/or undertaking service to the community?
3. Is the program's experience in recruiting and retaining faculty appropriate or successful? Is the faculty workload attractive? Are teaching/research resources suitable?
4. Is there effective leadership in the program?

3. Students
1. Is the program successful in the advising and counseling of students?
2. Does the program appropriately monitor the progress of students and assist students in job placement?
3. Does the program have appropriate Student Learning Outcomes, assess these regularly, and use the results to make improvements?

4. Physical Facilities and Other Resources (library, institutional and research support)
   A. Are the computer facilities appropriate and adequate to faculty and student course usage and research?
   B. Is the level of institutional support and research support adequate for the programs of the Department?

5. Areas of Excellence: Are there areas of particular excellence or innovative program development?
6. To what extent have core library services (i.e., research services; student referrals and consultations; library instruction services; and course support) contributed to or been perceived to have contributed to the success of the program?

6. Areas of Concern
1. Are there areas of concern?
2. What recommendations are appropriate for the program at this time?

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Appendix D

Standard Data Set request for APR Process

1. From 5(a) we will need:
   a. Declared Majors – 5 years (1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd})
   b. Minor/Certificates
   c. Number of Graduates – 5 years (1\textsuperscript{st}, 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 3\textsuperscript{rd})
   d. Average Class Size, by level 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, Grad (over 5 years)

2. From 7(a):

**UG Cohort Retention, Persistence, and Graduation Rates/Time to Degree**

*NOTE:* These data should be interpreted with great caution. As SLU aims to foster educational and professional exploration in the undergraduate years, a “low” retention or graduation rate for a given UG major may not be problematic; rather, it may be a sign of natural student development and a sound advising/mentoring support system. For Graduate programs, list cohorts by year of entry into the program.

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<th>Cohort #</th>
<th>% Fall 2 Return</th>
<th>% Fall 3 Return</th>
<th>% Fall 4 Return</th>
<th>4-Yr Grad Rate</th>
<th>5-YR Grad Rate</th>
<th>6-YR Grad Rate</th>
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3. From 8(a)(4):
   a. Total Credits Taught by Faculty Member (5 years) by Rank
      i. Tenured Full
      ii. Tenured Associate
      iii. Tenure Track Assistant

*Updated September 25, 2019*
iv. Non-Tenure Track

v. Adjunct

vi. GTA, credit hours taught (Average/Line/Department)