Policy AA-PRS-PO1

Academic Program Review Policy

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I. Section 6-1251 Introduction

The University of Texas System requires that all academic programs be reviewed regularly to evaluate their quality and their effectiveness in supporting the University's mission. As described by the following policy, The University of Texas at Arlington has established a standing committee, the Program Review Committee (PRC), to oversee the review process. The PRC is composed of members of The University of Texas at Arlington faculty and administration. The PRC reports to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, under whose auspices the academic program reviews are conducted and supported.

II. Section 6-1252 Program Review Committee (PRC)

The PRC maintains general oversight of the review process to assure its efficacy and consistency from program to program. During each program review, one member of the PRC who is not affiliated with the program under review serves as an ex-officio member of the review team. The PRC representative advises the review team on policies and practices for program review, assists the team in assuring consistency of process and standards, and serves as a liaison between the PRC and the review team. The PRC periodically examines the progress of the program reviews that are underway through the reports of its members on the review teams.

The PRC reviews annually the process of academic program review and provides a summary report of its recommendations to the Provost. Copies of this report are also provided to the Faculty Senate, Graduate Assembly, and Undergraduate Assembly. The report recommends any modifications of policy or procedure considered desirable by the PRC. The PRC also consults with and advises the Provost on other aspects of reviews as requested.

The PRC consists of four faculty members and three administrators. Two of the faculty members of the committee are chosen by the Faculty Senate. The third faculty member is chosen by the Undergraduate Assembly as their representative. And the fourth faculty member is chosen by the Graduate Assembly as their representative.
Administrators are chosen by the Provost. The chair of the PRC shall be elected by the committee from among the four faculty members of the committee. Members serve three-year, staggered terms to provide for replacement of the nominally one-third of the members each year. Members may be reappointed through the same process.

III. Section 6-1253 Definition of Academic Program

For purposes of this policy, an academic program is defined by the combined undergraduate and graduate educational programs of a discipline and the associated scholarly and service activities of its academic unit(s). The latter includes any organized research centers operating under the oversight of the academic unit(s). In order to be separately reviewable under this policy, a unit must have tenured to tenure-track faculty members officially affiliated with it and must offer instruction leading to the award of academic degrees.

IV. Section 6-1254 Frequency of Reviews

Academic programs are reviewed at nominally seven-year intervals, or more frequently if in the judgment of the Provost or the PRC circumstances in a program warrant an earlier date. If an academic unit is subject to a regular rigorous external accreditation review, e.g., the reviews on six-year intervals that are conducted by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology of undergraduate Engineering programs, that academic unit is exempt from the UTA academic program review process.

V. Section 6-1255 Criteria for Selection of Program for Review

Selection of the units to be reviewed in a given year are made by the Provost after reviewing any recommendations from the PRC and after consultations with the responsible Deans. Possible factors to be considered (not necessarily in priority order) in the selection of units for review include:

A. Planned program changes;
B. Time since last major review of budget, staff and academic programs;
C. University, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, program accreditation, or other review cycles;
D. Significant changes in student demand; and
E. Overlap or shared responsibilities with other programs being reviewed.
F. Rigorous external review

VI. Section 6-1256 Program Review Team (PRT)

Program evaluation will be carried out by an ad hoc team appointed and charged by the Provost. The team's composition will vary from program to program, but will incorporate both internal and external members. At least two individuals from other institutions that have programs similar to those of the unit under review will be appointed by the Provost from a list of five prepared by the affected unit administrators.
At least three individuals from the UTA faculty and academic administration, the majority of whom shall be faculty, will be appointed to the PRT who are not affiliated with the program to be reviewed. The selections will be made by the PRC after consultation with the Provost. One of the UTA members will be designated Chair of the PRT by the PRC. The _ex officio_ PRC representative on the PRT will also be designated by the PRC at the time of team formation. The Provost may add other non-voting members to teams where appropriate, e.g., as in the case of a professional program where issues of licensure, preparation for practice, etc. may prompt including a team member with particular credentials.

**VII. Section 6-1257 Review Procedure**

The initial steps in the conduct of the review (following program notification and appointment of the PRT) involve the establishment of the visit schedule and the preparation of the unit self-study. The PRC will set the visit schedule after consultation with the Provost and the academic leadership of the unit to be reviewed. The visit will be two days in length. The program faculty members and academic leadership will prepare a comprehensive self-study in accordance with guidelines and instructions prepared by the PRC.

The UTA Office of Institutional Research and Planning has the responsibility of providing the statistical data that will be required by the academic unit in preparing its self-study, e.g., multi-year enrollment and credit hour trends, numbers of graduates, external funding, etc. These data will be provided following census date in the fall of the year in which the review is to occur.

The academic administration of the unit under review is responsible for distributing the unit self-study to the PRC and PRT, arrangements for the PRT including providing meeting space, scheduling meetings with faculty and administrators, and related matters. The Office of the Provost will oversee the arrangements for the external members of the PRT (transportation, housing, meals, reimbursements, etc.), support preparation of the PRT's report and its distribution, and other administrative matters associated with the PRT's activities.

The efforts of the PRT are divided into three principal phases: pre-visit, visit, and post-visit. Each of these is discussed below.

Prior to the visit by the PRT to the academic program, the PRT will have received the unit's self-study, the Provost's written charge to the team, the schedule of the visit, and such other administrative information as may be appropriate. After the PRT's initial review of these materials, the PRT members may direct queries to the PRT Chairperson for information that they will require either prior to or during the visit. The PRT Chairperson will assemble the requests and transmit them to the academic leadership of the unit under review, with a copy to the PRC Chairperson. The academic leadership is responsible for providing the requested information.

The PRT's visit will begin with an introductory meeting with the Provost. This will be followed by meetings with the academic leadership (Dean, Chair, etc.) of the unit being reviewed and its faculty, staff, and students. Major teaching and research facilities will be toured as a part of the visit where appropriate. Additional information may be requested by the PRT as a result of the visit. The academic leadership will be responsible for responding to such requests. Adequate time will be allowed in the latter part of the visit for the PRT to deliberate and reach its conclusions.
The PRT will provide two exit interviews. In the first, held with the PRC and the unit's faculty and administration (Dean, Chair, etc.), the PRT will provide its preliminary assessment of the goals, plans, staffing, resources, strengths, and weaknesses of the unit. In the second, held with the President, Provost, Dean, PRC Chairperson, and other appropriate senior administrators, the PRT will summarize its immediate impressions and provide a forecast of its eventual written report. Within three weeks of the campus visit, the Chairperson of the PRT will provide its formal written report on the PRT's conclusions to the Provost.

Along with addressing any unique aspects of its charge, the PRT's report will assess the unit's overall performance at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and its specific strengths and weaknesses. The report will make recommendations for any changes the PRT believes advisable. The evaluation will refer to the program's self-study and note items of agreement and disagreement between the team's assessments and those of the self-study. Typically, the team will consider the undergraduate and graduate curricula and programs of instruction; the student demand for these programs, the scholarly activity of the unit's faculty; the unit's facilities; the national stature and impact of the unit's undergraduate and graduate programs, where appropriate; the quality of its students; the market for its graduates; the level of support for the unit; the effectiveness of its leadership; and its effectiveness in furthering the University's Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity goals.

The faculty and administration of the unit will have access to the PRT's final report, and the unit's chief administrative officer will provide a written response, prepared in consultation with the unit's faculty members, giving specific actions planned in the light of the report's recommendations. Where the unit disagrees with findings or recommendations of the PRT, the basis for such disagreement will be given.

The Provost will discuss the PRT's report and unit's response with the unit's administration (Dean, Chair, etc.) and faculty. Finally, the Provost will prepare recommendations to the President to complete the review. These recommendations, together with the unit's self-study, the review team's report, and the unit's response, will constitute the official record of the program review.