Policy Charge

Academic Program Review PRC

Policy Statement

Degree programs, as defined by the Classification of Instructional Program Code, are reviewed regularly to evaluate their quality and their effectiveness in supporting the university’s mission. As described by this policy, the Program Review Committee, a standing committee composed of members of The University of Texas at Dallas faculty and academic administration, oversees the review process. The Committee functions in cooperation with the Provost, under whose auspices Academic Program Reviews are conducted.

Program Review Committee (PRC)

This university committee maintains general oversight of the review process to assure its efficacy and uniformity. During each program review, one member of the Program Review Committee, designated the Program Review Committee Monitor, participates directly in the process. The entire Program Review Committee evaluates the operation of the review process on a continuing basis and makes an annual report to the Provost and Academic Senate. In this report, it recommends any modifications of policies or procedures regarding reviews it considers advisable. In addition, it consults with and advises the Provost on other aspects of reviews as requested.

The membership of the Program Review Committee is comprised of six faculty members and four deans who are appointed by the President to two-year renewable terms. Members from the faculty are recommended by the Academic Senate after consultation with the Committee on Committees; deans are recommended by the Provost. Faculty should be drawn from the schools in which reviews will be conducted during the year of their service, or from the library if the library is to be reviewed.

The Responsible University Official is the Chief Academic Officer.

Frequency of Review and Criteria for Selection

In accord with Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter C, Section 5.52, degree programs shall be reviewed in intervals not to exceed seven years. Reviews may occur more frequently if the Provost, in consultation with the appropriate dean, finds that the circumstances of a particular program warrant an earlier date. However, a program may not need to be reviewed under the procedures of this policy if mandated external accreditation reviews occur regularly and substantially meet the criteria outlined under The Review Procedure below. According to Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter C, Section 5.52 (c)(11) and (d)(11), institutions may submit reviews performed for programmatic licensure or accreditation in satisfaction of the states review and reporting requirements.

Master’s programs classified with the same 6-digit Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) as doctoral programs are reviewed simultaneously with their related doctoral programs. UT Dallas reviews bachelors programs in the same discipline as masters and doctoral programs simultaneously with those programs.

Selection of programs to be reviewed in a given year will be made by the Provost after consultation with the Program Review Committee and the appropriate dean(s). The review schedule will be submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) staff. The factors (not in priority order) to be considered when creating the
review schedule include:

1. Planned program changes;
2. Elapsed time since last major review of budget, staff and degree programs;
3. University or program accreditation cycles;
4. Significant changes in student demand; and
5. Overlap or shared responsibilities with other programs being reviewed.

The Review Team

The Program Review Committee oversees the evaluation conducted by a Review Team that is appointed and charged by the Provost. The Provost consults with the degree program undergoing review and/or the Program Review Committee, as appropriate, regarding selection of Review Team members. The Review Team's composition may vary from program to program, but will incorporate both internal and external members. Typically, it will include:

1. At least two members from the UT Dallas faculty and academic administration who are not affiliated with the program to be reviewed, appointed by the Provost after soliciting recommendations from the Program Review Committee.
2. One member of the Program Review Committee, appointed by the Provost after consultation with the Program Review Committee, to act as the Program Review Committee Monitor. In addition to responsibilities as a regular member of the Review Team, the Program Review Committee Monitor will have the duty of conferring with and reporting to the Program Review Committee and, on the basis of knowledge acquired as a member of the Program Review Committee, of helping each Review Team ensure consistency of its individual review within the overall review process. This individual will not be affiliated with the program under review.
3. For doctoral programs, at least two external reviewers with subject-matter expertise who are employed by institutions outside of Texas will be appointed by the Provost after consultation with the unit under review and brought to campus for an on-site review. The reviewers must affirm that they have no conflict of interest and must be part of programs that are nationally recognized for excellence in the discipline.
4. For masters programs, at least one external reviewer with subject-matter expertise who is employed by an institution outside of Texas will be appointed by the Provost after consultation with the unit under review and will be provided the self-study materials. UT Dallas can invite the reviewer(s) to campus or request that they conduct a remote desk review. Each reviewer must affirm that he or she has no conflict of interest and must be part of a program that is nationally recognized for excellence in the discipline.

The Provost may add additional members as appropriate. One member of the Review Team, usually a member not affiliated with UT Dallas, will be designated Chair of the Review Team by the Provost at the time the Team is constituted. The Review Team will evaluate the degree program as requested by a written charge prepared by the Provost after consultation with the Program Review Committee.

The Review Procedure

Reviews will be conducted as follows:

The degree program undergoing review will consult with the Provost regarding suitable dates for the Review Team's campus visit, and the detailed schedule of events during the visit. It will prepare a comprehensive self-study document (an internal planning document, not intended for general distribution) in accordance with guidelines and instructions issued by the Provost. These guidelines include criteria outlined in Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 5, Subchapter C, Section 5.52, Review of Existing Degree Programs. The Review Team also will collaborate with the Provost in ensuring that the Review Team's on-campus needs are met. The Provost will designate a Review Coordinator (the Dean, Head, Director, or suitable substitute) from the degree program under review to ensure that the duties assigned to the program in connection with the Review Team are carried out.
The Provost will provide the Review Team a written charge, along with the unit's self-study document. The Office of the Provost will issue the visit schedule, oversee the visit arrangements for the Review Team (transportation, housing, meals, reimbursement, etc.) and serve as liaison between the Review Team and the program being reviewed).

Before the campus visit, the Review Team will familiarize itself with the degree program's self-study, and with the Provost's charge. During the visit, it will consult with members of the degree program's faculty, students, and staff and inspect facilities. It may request additional information beyond that provided in the self-study. Adequate time will be allowed in the latter part of the visit for the Review Team to deliberate in private and reach its conclusions.

At the beginning of the visit, the Review Team will have an introductory meeting and orientation hosted by the Provost's Office. Before leaving the campus, the Review Team will hold two exit interviews. In the first, held with the Program Review Committee and the degree program's faculty and administration, the Review Team will provide its preliminary assessment of the goals, plans, staffing, resources, existing and potential strengths, etc., of the degree program, and those areas needing improvement. In the second, held with the Provost, and other appropriate central administrators, the Review Team will summarize its immediate impressions and provide a forecast of its eventual written report. Then, within one month of the campus visit, the Chair of the Review Team will provide a complete written report on the Review Team's conclusions to the Provost.

Along with addressing any unique aspects of its charge, the Review Team's report will assess the degree program's overall performance and its specific strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for any changes the Review Team thinks are advisable. The evaluation should refer to the program's self-study and note items of agreement and disagreement between the Review Team's assessments and those of the self-study. The Review Team will share its final report with the faculty and administration of the degree program. The program's chief administrative officer, in cooperation with faculty and staff, will provide a written response to the report to the Provost's Office within one month of receiving the report, giving specific actions planned in light of the Review Team's recommendations. Where the program disagrees with findings and/or recommendations of the Review Team, it will state its reasons for such disagreements. The program's faculty will have access to this document as well as to the Review Team's report. The Provost will discuss the Review Team's report and program's response with the program's administration and faculty. Finally, the Provost will prepare recommendations to the President. The university administration will submit a report of the outcomes of each review, including: the Executive Summary from the self-study, the Review Team's report and a summary of actions the institution has taken or will take to improve the program, to the THECB no later than 180 days after the Review Team has submitted its findings to the institution.

In the years between reviews of the degree program, this record of the Program Review will be pertinent to decisions on budget, staffing, curricular and degree changes, and allocation of special resources.

Policy History

- Editorial Amendments: 1998-02-02
- Editorial Amendments: 2000-09-01
- Revised: 2005-07-11
- Editorial Amendments: 2006-08-03
- Editorial Amendments: 2007-03-26
- Revised: 2012-06-01
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