

**Academic Program Review Guidelines
2010-2011**

Western Nevada College

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2010-11 ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW GUIDELINES WESTERN NEVADA COLLEGE

PURPOSE

Program review is a significant collaborative effort between all employees at the college because all academic and administrative programs take part. A systematic evaluation of programs can have a profound effect on college decision-making in areas such as: the setting of program and college priorities; hiring plans; budget and space allocations; curriculum development; and program offerings and sizing.

Program review is shaped not only by the larger institutional context, but also by the culture of the program being reviewed. Flexibility is built into the process, allowing each program to determine goals, outcomes, and measures that meet student outcomes assessment, institutional effectiveness, and accreditation requirements. It is expected that each program's review reflects information gathering, self-review, and continuous and on-going planning and decision-making based on the information gathered. During the program review process, five years of assessment data and reports are collected and submitted as part of the program review.

Ultimately, the benefit to a program undergoing review is directly related to the seriousness with which the process is approached. Program faculty who spend time clarifying the issues, developing their assessment plans and self-study, and focusing on implementing the resulting recommendations experience the most improvement and benefit.

What makes this investment of time and energy worthwhile? The ultimate answer is that the process can help program faculty identify and maintain a program's strengths and concentrate on weaknesses to the benefit of their students and the communities they serve. But there are other benefits as well. Program review:

- Aligns program mission with the college mission.
- Builds consensus around program goals and outcomes.
- Provides meaningful assessment data.
- Builds community and helps to set collective priorities.
- Evaluates progress.
- Tells a program's story.
- Informs recruitment and hiring.

Program review is a major undertaking that makes considerable demands on program faculty, staff, administrators, and others in the college; however, the self-study process has the potential to yield invaluable information that can be used to guide program improvements. Program reviews can foster more informed decision-making and more intentional allocation of resources. They can help program faculty do more of what they care about the most and do it better.

The purposes of program review and the expectations related to the process are outlined in [Policy 14-1-1: Assessment and Evaluation](#).

OVERVIEW

The Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents mandates a review of existing academic (degree- and certificate-granting) programs every ten years ([Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 4](#)). WNC's practice is to review academic programs every five years.

The program review cycle begins in May the year before the program review report is due. Each program review is the responsibility of an appointed Program Review Team (PRT), the division chair, and the dean of instruction with input from designated internal and external reviewers. Since the purpose of program review is to provide a thorough and reflective evaluation of a specific program, it is critical that teams be composed of knowledgeable people from within the program.

There are three phases to the review:

1. Self study
2. Site visit and exit interview
3. Response to recommendations (action plan)

Program review scheduling began with the Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Committee (SPFIE) and is now coordinated by Institutional Research staff in cooperation with the Program Assessment and Review Committee (PARC), division chairs, and the dean of instruction. Questions regarding the process should be referred to the chair of PARC or to Institutional Research staff.

PARC invites all colleagues who complete the program review process to submit to the chair of PARC suggestions on how to improve the review process. Suggestions may be made during the review process or at the end of the review cycle; however, changes to the review process will not be made until the next period of review.

PARC's WestNET page: <https://intranet.wnc.edu/committees/parc/>

TIMELINE

The stakeholders for each step in the process are listed in **boldface**.

Links are provided to relevant templates and guidelines published on the Institutional Research website (<http://www.wnc.edu/institutional/>).

April-May 2010: Program Review Process Introduction

program faculty | division chairs | PARC

1. Members of PARC meet with all division chairs and program faculty who will be responsible for program reviews in the next academic year in order to introduce the program review process.

September 2010: Selection of PRT Members

program faculty | division chair | dean of instruction | PARC

2. The division chair consults with program faculty and the dean of instruction to determine membership of the PRT. The PRT will consist of faculty and staff from within the program.

3. The division chair forwards the team members' names to the chair of PARC. The PRT will be headed by a chair appointed by the division chair.

September 2010: Selection of Internal and External Reviewers

PRT | division chair | dean of instruction | PARC | internal and external reviewers

4. The division chair consults with the PRT and the dean of instruction to select internal and external reviewers.

The external reviewer should be an academic faculty member from another college or university teaching in the same discipline, or, in the case of occupational programs, the external reviewer could be someone who is either currently working or has recently worked in the same business or industry.

The internal reviewer should be an academic faculty member who teaches outside of the program being reviewed.

5. The division chair forwards the names of the internal and external reviewers to the chair of PARC.

September 2010: Commencement of Self Study

PRT | division chair

6. The division chair and the PRT begin meeting to work on the self-study report. Elements of the program review report are described in detail in the next section of this document.
7. The division chair and the PRT begin updating outlines for required courses in preparation for a curriculum review.

September-November 2010: Curriculum Review

PRT | Curriculum Committee

8. The PRT presents a Curriculum Review Report at a meeting of the Curriculum Committee. Included in the report are: updated course outlines, a suggested sequence of offerings, Scheduling/Enrollment History Report (provided by Institutional Research), and an evaluation of library resources. Contact the Curriculum Committee chair to have the review placed on the meeting agenda.
9. The Curriculum Committee provides feedback on the Curriculum Review Report (the Curriculum Committee Program Evaluation) to the PRT.

Curriculum Review Report guidelines:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/curriculum_review_guidelines.pdf

October-November 2010: Institutional Research Data

PRT | division chair | Institutional Research

10. Institutional Research delivers the Summary Data Sheet and the Course Scheduling/Enrollment History Report to the division chair and the PRT. The Summary Data Sheet provides five years' worth of data, including the headcount of students who have declared majors in the program,

number of degrees or certificates granted, successful course completion data, student credit hours data, FTE students, FTE faculty, workload ratios, and other information that provides a basis for demonstrating program efficiency and effectiveness. The Course Scheduling/Enrollment History Report provides scheduling history and enrollment data for program core courses.

Upon request by the division chair, Institutional Research can also provide other data, including summary student course evaluation data and enrollment and graduation data by gender, age, or ethnicity.

November 2010: Assistance from PARC

PRT | PARC

11. Members of PARC contact PRTs to discuss the curriculum review process; help analyze the data provided by Institutional Research; and review the nature of the events that will take place when the external reviewer comes to campus for the site visit, discussion with students, and exit interview with executive faculty.
12. PARC can assist the PRT with the development of a Five-Year Assessment Plan, which is submitted as part of the program review report. The plan serves as a framework for annual outcomes-based assessment activities to be conducted during the next five-year review period. The plan gives a brief summary of the outcomes to be assessed, the year or years in which each outcome will be assessed, and the assessment methods to be used.

To document plans for and results of these assessment activities in greater detail, assessment plans and reports are submitted in May each year for each of the assessment activities listed in the Five-Year Assessment Plan. These assessment reports then become part of the next program review report.

Five-Year Assessment Plan template:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/five-year_academic_assessment_plan.doc

Annual Assessment Plan template:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/annual_administrative_unit_assessment_plan_2010-2011.doc

Annual Assessment Report template:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/annual_administrative_unit_assessment_report_2009-2010.doc

January -February 2011: Planning for Site Visit and Exit Interview

PRT | dean of instruction | internal and external reviewers

13. The PRT works with the dean of instruction to finalize the itinerary for the internal and external reviewers' site visit, which includes a morning session with PARC and PRT members; a focus group session exclusively between the internal and external reviewers and randomly selected students in the program (Institutional Research provides the list of students and their contact information); a tour of program facilities; and an afternoon exit interview with the president, vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, dean of instruction, division chair, and the PRT. The site visit should be planned far enough in advance to schedule the exit interview with the president and to meet program review deadlines.

March-April 2011: Submission of Final Report

PRT | division chair | dean of instruction | vice president of academic and student affairs | president | internal and external reviewers | PARC

14. The PRT sends copies of the program review report to the internal and external reviewers, president, vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, dean of instruction, division chair, and members of PARC one month before the internal and external reviewers arrive for their campus visit. The internal and external reviewers examine the program review report and engage in additional research as necessary in order to identify program strengths and recommend improvements.

April-May 2011: Site Visit and Exit Interview

PRT | division chair | dean of instruction | vice president of academic and student affairs | president | PARC | student focus group | internal and external reviewers

15. The internal and external reviewers spend most of a day on campus. In the morning, they discuss the self-study and related information with the dean of instruction, the division chair, the PRT, and PARC members. Then the internal and external reviewers tour program facilities and meet with a focus group of students with declared majors in the program. In the afternoon, internal and external reviewers complete an exit interview with the president, vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, dean of instruction, the division chair, and the PRT. The exit interview takes place with all parties together in one meeting.
16. The discussions on the day of the site visit, including the exit interview, will be transcribed by the office of the dean of instruction and delivered to the PRT and the internal and external reviewers.

May-June 2011: External and Internal Reviewer Reports

PRT | division chair | dean of instruction | vice president of academic and student affairs | president | internal and external reviewers | PARC

17. The internal and external reviewers write reviewer reports and send them to the PRT within 30 days of receipt of the exit interview transcript. The PRT forwards these reports to members of PARC, the dean of instruction, the vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, and the president.

The reports should include commendations as well as recommendations, emphasizing recommendations for improvements that require no new resources. The suggested organization for the report is as follows:

- Program strengths and weaknesses
- Strategies for improvement
- Evaluation of the internal or external review process, site visit and self-study document

Guidelines for internal and external reviewers:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/guidelines_for_internal_and_external_reviewers.pdf

May-June 2011: Program Review Summary

vice president of academic and student affairs | Institutional Research

18. The vice president of Academic and Student Affairs works with Institutional Research staff to complete a program review summary to submit to the Student and Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents.

September-October 2011: Exchange Feedback

PRT | division chair | dean of instruction | vice president of academic and student affairs | president | PARC

19. The PRT and PARC exchange feedback on the program review findings and process during a PARC meeting. During this meeting, PARC will give recognition to the PRT for their efforts, go over the Program Review Summary, and offer assistance in completing the Action Plan. After the meeting, PARC completes the PARC Academic Program Review Feedback Form, and the chair of PARC signs it. Copies of the PARC Academic Program Review Feedback Form are provided to the president, vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, dean of instruction, and PRT.

October-December 2011: Create Action Plan

PRT | division chair | dean of instruction

20. The dean of instruction and division chair will hold a meeting with the PRT to discuss the findings and recommendations that arose during the program review process and finalize an Action Plan that addresses those recommendations. All appropriate representatives of the campus administration will be invited to this meeting in order to bring to bear all the college resources that are needed to assist the program in addressing recommendations. The Action Plan form utilizes a table to align program goals with recommendations, and it also provides a means for the dean of instruction, vice president of Academic and Student Affairs, and the president to record responses to the Action Plan items and to pledge outlined resources, if applicable. The Action Plan will be archived with the final report.

Action Plan template:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/academic_program_review_action_plan_-_rev..doc

REPORT ELEMENTS

1. Program Description

No more than two pages, not including supporting documents.

- A. College and Program Mission:** The college mission and program mission are presented side-by-side in a table to show how the college and program missions align. The program mission states the purpose of the program; names its primary functions, activities and stakeholders; supports the college mission; and is distinctive.

| College Mission | Program Mission |
|--|-----------------|
| Western Nevada College inspires success in our community through opportunities that cultivate creativity, intellectual growth and technological excellence, in an environment that nurtures individual potential and respects differences. | |

- B. College and Program Goals:** The College Strategic Goals and the program goals and related outcomes are presented side-by-side in a table to show how they align.

| College Goals | Program Goals and Outcomes |
|--|----------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve student success in program completion and graduation rates • Ensure institutional excellence in teaching, programs and services • Embrace our college's many communities and respond to their diverse needs. | |

- C. Short Description:** Include the following information and append supporting documents as appropriate:

- i. Unique characteristics
- ii. Concerns or trends affecting the program
- iii. Significant changes or needs in the next five years

- D. Program SLO/Required Course Matrix:** Attach to the report this matrix which maps the student learning outcomes to required courses and shows the degree to which a course addresses an

outcome. The matrix should reflect required courses and SLOs for the 2010-2011 catalog.

When changes are made to the curriculum, Program SLO/Course Matrices are to be updated and submitted to Institutional Research (ir@wnc.edu) for publication on the college website.

SLO/Required Course Matrix template:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/slo_course_matrix_template.xlsx

- E. Degrees and/or Certificates Offered:** List degrees or certificates that are being evaluated for the purposes of this program review.
- F. Niches Served:** Describe any niches in the community the program serves, including other academic programs served by program core courses.

2. Quality of Program

No more than ten pages, excluding supporting documents.

A. Evidence of Effectiveness

- i. Course Scheduling/Enrollment History Report:** Institutional Research provides this spreadsheet, which includes course scheduling history and enrollment figures for the most recent four-year period. This report is used to satisfy item #5 of the Curriculum Review Report portion of the program review report.
- ii. Summary Data Sheet:** Institutional Research provides the Summary Data Sheet, a document that provides information on the headcount of students who have declared majors in the program, number of degrees and certificates granted, successful course completion data, student credit hours data, FTE, FTE faculty, workload ratios, and other information that provides a basis for demonstrating program efficiency and effectiveness.
- iii. Systematic Assessment:** Instructional programs must include evidence that they systematically assess program outcomes and student learning outcomes and that data from assessments are used to make improvements to programs. The final program review report should include the Five-Year Assessment Plan. The report should also indicate the steps taken to make the student learning outcomes public and available to students.

Five-Year Assessment Plan:

http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/five-year_academic_assessment_plan.doc

- B. Evidence of Satisfaction:** Instructional programs may include additional hard data regarding student satisfaction with courses and programs, employer satisfaction studies, etc., as indicators of effectiveness of the program. Results from the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (2007 and 2009) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (2008 and 2010) can be broken out by declared major and are available upon request. Summarized results from student course evaluations are another source of satisfaction evidence, and instructors can add one question of their choice to the evaluations. The chair of the PRT should consult with Institutional Research regarding the availability of data.

- C. Certifications/Licenses:** Instructional programs need to explain if there are special certifications or accreditations available to the program and the status of the program relative to these certifications or accreditations.
- D. Enrollment Trends:** Instructional programs should discuss general student demographics and enrollment trends outlined by the following questions:
- a. What student demographic and enrollment trends are most notable?
 - b. What groups constitute the program's main demographic?
 - c. What efforts have been made by the program to recruit students?
 - d. What initiatives have been undertaken to increase FTE?
 - e. What initiatives have been undertaken to improve student retention?
- E. Need for the Program:** Explain the need and basis for determining the need for the program. Objective data, such as alumni studies, employer perceptions, data on transfer or transfer potential, local employment opportunities, and studies commissioned by WNC or NSHE, should be included when possible.
- F. Curriculum Review Report:** Attach to this report the Curriculum Review Report and the Curriculum Committee Program Evaluation (the committee's response to the Curriculum Review Report).
- Curriculum Review Report guidelines:
http://www.wnc.edu/files/assessment/curriculum_review_guidelines.pdf
- G. Findings and Recommendations:** Present the PRT's commendations and recommendations that are the result of the self-study process. If the review recommends any changes to the program, a detailed description of the specific plan of action to implement the recommendations and a timeline for implementation of the plan are required.