



Academic Program Review Handbook

October 2022

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW HANDBOOK

Academic Program Review Goals and Requirements

Goals of Academic Program Review

Academic Program Review contributes to UMKC's commitment to being a data-driven and developmental organization, starting with understanding and enhancing the student experience. To this end, the goals for Academic Program Review at UMKC are:

- to foster a culture of continuous quality improvement;
- to validate the program's contributions to supporting and enhancing student engagement and student learning;
- to identify priorities for resources investment; and
- to learn about the program's challenges and opportunities through the perspectives of diverse constituents.

Cyclical reviews of programs provide the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of the quality of the program and opportunities for improvement and innovation. Evaluating the program and planning for enhancements to support student learning, engagement in research and creative endeavors, and service to the community will inform the following:

- budgeting, including allocating resources for new faculty hires;
- aligning programmatic operations and innovations with the unit and university strategic plans;
- investing in new programs or program expansion;
- identifying programs for closure;
- responding to reporting requirements from accreditors, the UM System, and the State; and
- identifying quality improvement opportunities.

In addition to supporting the institution's commitment to continuous quality improvement, UMKC's Academic Program Review responds to the external demands for evidence of educational quality. For example, pursuant to the Collected Rules & Regulations (CRRs), [20.035 Program Assessment and Audit](#), the University of Missouri System requires academic program reviews at least once every five years for the purpose of improving the quality of the educational opportunities. The UM System provides the flexibility for each campus to determine its specific academic program review process. According to the CRRs:

The assessment will include any degree programs offered by the department. The department faculty should assess the processes developed through its planning efforts to improve student learning, to enhance the impact of its research and scholarship on the discipline, and to link its service activities with the needs of the campus, discipline, and the community. The assessment should also determine if the planning at the academic unit is aligned with the campus strategic plan.

1. *The campus determines the procedures and format of the program assessment.*

2. *The departmental standards for workload and for the annual performance review of tenured faculty will be reviewed as part of the five-year program review of departments*
3. *The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will provide cooperation and coordination with the program review process of any applicable state agency or department. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will post short summary reports on the UM website available to any applicable state agency or department according to a mutually agreeable **five-year** cycle for each program*
[\(http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collected_rules/administration/ch20/20.035_program_assessment_and_audit\)](http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collected_rules/administration/ch20/20.035_program_assessment_and_audit).

The Higher Learning Commission's *Criteria for Accreditation* directs the institution to maintain a practice of regular program reviews and to demonstrate a commitment to continuous quality improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes, analysis of resources to effectively provide high-quality programs and student services along with contribution to scholarship, creative work and discovery of knowledge (<https://www.ncahlc.org/Criteria-Eligibility-and-Candidacy/criteria-and-core-components.html>).

Additionally, programs offered in whole or in part through distance education, regardless of whether a face-to-face, on-ground or residential option is also available, must meet the Higher Learning Commission's standards for online course and distance program delivery and assessment (<https://hlcommission.org/Monitoring/distance-delivery.html>). HLC examines curriculum, staffing, support services, access to appropriate laboratory and library resources, and other facets of quality higher education. UMKC's comprehensive review follows the standards outlined within the *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (Online Learning)* (http://download.hlcommission.org/C-RAC_Distance_Ed_Guidelines_7_31_2009.pdf).

Academic Program Review Requirements

The UMKC Vice Provost for Curriculum & Assessment (VPCA) and Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness (VPIE) coordinates the review process. Each Academic Unit Dean is responsible for oversight of Academic Program Review. The formal five-year review cycle provides a mechanism for faculty members to evaluate on a continuous basis the effectiveness, progress, and status of academic degree programs, minors, and certificates; research and creative activities; and service to the various communities impacted by the program. The unit of analysis for Academic Program Review (APR) is an individual academic program defined as:

1. an undergraduate, graduate, or professional degree program (BA/BS programs or MA/MS programs may be combined in one report),
2. a minor program of study not associated with a specific degree program (a stand-alone minor), or
3. a certificate program.

The Academic Program Review Self-Study Report

The APR *Self-Study Report* should provide a data-driven, reflective, candid assessment of strengths, challenges, and areas in need of improvement, and should result in an improvement plan. The document should offer a descriptive analysis of the program's curricular offerings (and

all modes of curriculum delivery), the creative/research accomplishments of faculty, the service contributions, and the plans for program improvement. Importantly, the report should demonstrate linkages among program review, assessment of student learning, strategic planning, and budgeting. Thus, the guiding principles for APR include:

- the process should be broadly participatory, involving faculty, instructors, students, staff, administrators, and relevant community constituents;
- as an opportunity to explore, enhance, and integrate student learning and faculty teaching, service and research/creative efforts into the unit's mission and goals, the APR should provide a framework for excellence;
- the process should facilitate short-term and long-term strategic planning in areas such as curricular development, resource investment (e.g., financial, physical), faculty/staff workload and hiring, and research foci;
- the APR should account for the university's use of public resources and foster future support; and
- the process should provide flexibility to meet requirements specific to each academic unit, including those imposed by external accreditors.

UMKC's APR process guides programs in thoughtful, data-driven deliberations focused on the following essential areas:

1. The Student Experience
 - 1.1 The quality of the degree program and its impact on students
 - 1.2 Students in the program
2. The Quality of the Faculty
3. Academic Portfolio Data Analysis
4. Program Quality and Innovation
5. Future Plans
6. Impact of Planned Improvements on the Student Experience and Program Quality

It is not the intent of the APR to unnecessarily burden externally accredited academic units. The VPCA will work with those units to capitalize on the requirements for external accreditation in the Academic Program Review process. If external accreditation self-study and review has been conducted within two-years, please include feedback as appropriate.

Academic Program Review Timeline and Documentation

The APR process unfolds across an academic year and consists of four phases: 1) the Notification and Expectations, 2) Self-Study Report Development, 3) Review and Revisions, and 4) Action Plan Development. In general, the first two phases (notification and self-study preparation) occur in the late fall and early spring semesters and the last two phases (submission and action planning) occur in the summer and early fall semester. See the *Academic Program Review Overview and Timeline* for the schedule of deadlines.

1. Notification and Expectations (November)
 - The VPCA and VPIE notifies the dean, the head of the program, and the academic chair (if different) that a review has been scheduled.

- The VPCA and VPIE meet with the dean, program director, and the department chair to discuss any requests for specific information, the overall process, the timeline, and expectations for program review.
2. Self-Study Report Development (January-May)
 - Program faculty complete the Self-Study Report form, following the Academic Program Review Self-Study Report Outline and Checklist.
 - The VPIE provides the Academic Portfolio data for the program by January 15.
 - The Self-Study Report is submitted to the Dean by April 1.
 3. Review and Submission of Final Report (May to August)
 - The Dean provides feedback to the program faculty.
 - The faculty address the recommendations and submit a final report.
 - The Dean submits the final report to the VPCA.
 4. Action Plan Development (October-November)
 - The Dean, Program Director, and Department Chair meet with the Provost, VPCA and VPIE to discuss the report and proposed Action Plan.
 - The Dean finalizes and submits the Action Plan Form to the VPCA.

After finalizing the Action Plan, the Dean will meet with the Program Director and Department Chair to discuss plan implementation and monitoring. The Provost will meet with department faculty to discuss key aspects of the program review process, the *Self-Study Report*, and the *Action Plan*.

The final *Self-Study Report* and the *Action Plan Form* are considered the permanent record of the and will be stored electronically in the Office of the Provost. Additionally, the VPIE will complete the *UM System Executive Summary of Program Assessment* form for each Academic Program Review. This form will be submitted to the UM System Office of Academic Affairs for posting and will be stored electronically as part of APR record.

Academic Program Review Documents

- Academic Program Review Policy (available in the Academic Policy Library <https://www.umkc.edu/Provost/policy-library/default.aspx>)
- UMKC Academic Program Review Guidelines
- Scheduled Five-Year Reviews
- Program Review Timeline
- Self-Study Report Outline
- Self-Study Report Form
- Action Plan Form
- Statistical Data Definitions (in the department's Academic Program Review Folder in Box)
- UM System Executive Summary of Program Assessment Form