Program Review Policy # 350.020

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE: April 16, 2014
LAST REVISION DATE: November 17, 2020
RESPONSIBLE UNIVERSITY DIVISION/DEPARTMENT
Division of Academic Affairs/Office of Academic Planning and Accountability

POLICY STATEMENT

Quality assurance is a hallmark of higher education. A systematic review of degree programs should provide evidence that a degree program is educationally sound and economically viable. Program reviews assist the university, in the discharge of its statutory obligations, to be accountable to the public through summary reports to the Florida Board of Governors. In addition, a program review and its self-study provide input to the university to determine the following:

- Document how individual academic programs are achieving stated student learning and program outcomes within the context of the university's mission and the Florida Board of Governors' Strategic Plan.
- Monitor the academic programs' performance vis-à-vis national trends.
- Make necessary resource (re-) allocations.
- Inform strategic planning, program development, and budgeting decisions.

The systematic program review provides the vehicle for the following:

- A periodic analysis of the extent to which degree programs provide students with a high quality education and preparation to compete in the global economy.
- For baccalaureate programs, a review of lower-level prerequisite courses to ensure that the program is in compliance with State-approved common prerequisites and, if appropriate, a review of the limited-access status of the program to determine if such a status is still warranted.
- A focus on the assessment of student learning outcomes, including Academic Learning Compacts for undergraduate programs, and continuous program improvement.
- A review of the mission(s) and purpose(s) of academic programs within the context of the institutional mission and the Board of Governors’ Strategic Plan.
- The establishment of teaching, research, service, and other programs goals and objectives, including expected outputs and outcomes, especially in the area of student learning.
- An assessment of:
The Florida Board of Governors requires the cyclical review, at least every seven years, of all academic degree programs in the State University System. Aligned with regional and discipline-specific accreditation expectations, the program review process emphasizes the assessment of student learning outcomes and continuous program improvement. As such, the program review process culminates in the development of an improvement action plan. Such a plan reflects the consensus of various stakeholders (e.g., department faculty and college or school) regarding enhancing student learning and strategic improvement action items; furthermore, the plan establishes goals. A program review summary report must be completed for every program review that is conducted and submitted to the Florida Board of Governors.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all academic degree programs and thus includes members of the University Community (faculty, administration, staff, and students).

REASON FOR POLICY

This policy sets forth the requirements of the systematic review of degree programs at Florida International University as mandated by the Florida Board of Governors.

DEFINITIONS

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<td>Student Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Each degree program develops and assesses student learning outcomes (SLOs) related to the major knowledge, skills, and behaviors taught in the discipline. These outcomes direct the efforts of faculty and program leaders for teaching, services and assessment. The main purpose of SLOs is to directly measure foundational competencies that enhance the quality of education for students and ensure completion of courses/program. The results of these measures provide faculty insights on what they can focus on for continuous improvement within their programs and to help their students excel.</td>
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### Program Outcomes

Each degree program is required to submit program outcomes (POs) for their majors. POs focus on assessing efficiency outcomes that do not directly pertain to student learning for each degree program. Much like the student learning outcomes, the purpose of these outcomes is to measure major components of each degree in order to continuously improve the quality of the program. They serve to meet institutional and accreditation assessment expectations.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Academic Unit:** The unit drafts the self-study(ies), revising as necessary to address feedback of college deans and APA. The unit recommends consultant(s) to its dean and/or designees for consideration and, thereafter, if the recommendations are approved, submits the recommendations to APA. The external review component tied to specialized accreditations will fulfill the requirement of the external consultancy for those degree programs under specialized accreditation. Upon obtaining the approval, the unit schedules the consultant(s) visit. In the case that a doctoral program is involved, the University Graduate School’s Associate Dean is also consulted regarding the recommendations of the unit. The unit handles all travel logistics of the consultant(s) and the preparation of consultant(s) agreement(s) for services, ensuring the correct implementation of university protocols and requirements. Additionally, the unit develops improvement action plans based on consultant(s) recommendations and the findings of self-studies. Lastly, the unit prepares program review summary reports for uploading on the Florida Board of Governors program review site by APA.

**College Dean:** The dean or the dean's designee approves the self-study(ies), improvement action plan(s), and program review summary report(s).

**Academic Planning and Accountability:** APA provides guidance throughout the entire process and is responsible for the day-to-day program review implementation. APA oversees the program review process, on behalf of the Office of the Provost. Additionally, APA provides access to student learning and program outcome data and results. APA organizes and implements orientation sessions to disseminate important information related to the program review policy, guidelines, and deadlines.

**Transfer and Transition Services (TTS):** TTS conducts research on the common pre-requisites of undergraduate programs to ensure compliance with State-mandated common pre-requisites. In case of misalignment, TTS works directly with the unit to align the common pre-requisites.
University Graduate School (UGS): UGS will participate in program review visits whenever doctoral programs are involved, as organized by APA and will provide feedback to units on graduate programs, as necessary.

Analysis and Information Management (AIM): AIM provides relevant FIU metrics and/or dashboards related to student enrollment, graduation and retention data, including, but not limited to, metrics related to the BOG’s Performance Funding Model. AIM also prepares trend analyses on data. Additionally, units have the option to meet with AIM staff to review the data and trend analyses.

Provost: The Provost or the Provost’s designee oversees the program review process.

RELATED RESOURCES

Authority
Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.015, Academic Program Review.
Related Policy
FIU 380.102 Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes Policy

CONTACTS

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HISTORY

Initial Effective Date: Approved by Deans Advisory Council on April 16, 2014
Review Dates (review performed, no updates): N/A
Revision Dates (updates made to document): July 11, 2017; November 17, 2020
Program Review Procedure # 350.020a

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PROCEDURE STATEMENT

At Florida International University, the Program Review process is mainly composed of four elements:

1. **A Self-Study developed by the Department:** The self-study is a comprehensive report about the degree programs offered. The self-study contains the departmental vision, mission, goals, and recommendations based on an analysis of the program and measurable performance indicators. The findings confirm the program's relevance and viability within the context of the university, the discipline, and the Florida Board of Governors’ Strategic Plan. The document focuses on program performance based on an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) and charts a course of continuous program improvement. The academic unit has the responsibility to develop the self-study. The departmental self-study team should include the department chair or designee, one or more senior faculty members of the department, and staff, as assigned. The college dean or designee needs to approve the self-study prior to submission to Academic Planning and Accountability (APA) for review and approval.

2. **External Consultant(s):** An external consultant(s) visit provides an objective outsider’s assessment on the quality of the program. The external review component tied to specialized accreditations will fulfill the requirement of the external consultancy for those degree programs under specialized accreditation.

3. **Improvement Action Plan:** The findings of the self-study and the recommendations of the external consultant will guide the development, by the academic unit, of an improvement action plan. Plans reflect the collective thinking of the department and college in regards to charting the most optimal improvement course, particularly in areas related to enhancing student learning. Deans and/or their designees review and approve plans. Improvement action plans advance strategic goals and priorities of colleges within the context of available resources.
4. **Program Review Summary Report**: As the culmination of the self-study process, units prepare program review summary reports. These reports denote the most salient findings of the process, including strengths and weaknesses of a program and action plans. Representing a significant mechanism to articulate consensus on leading change and student learning enhancement, the program review summary reports require the approval of college deans and/or their designees prior to submission to APA for review and approval.