

Academic Program Review

Purpose

Program review provides an opportunity for shared reflection on a program's mission and how it relates to the mission of Wittenberg University. Through the process of program review, faculty members examine the educational effectiveness of all its curricular and co-curricular offerings, evaluate the structure and relevance of the curriculum, the availability and efficient use of staffing and material resources, and engagement in the broader life of the University. In this way, the program can assess its strengths, challenges, and opportunities, and incorporate internal and external feedback into an action plan for the future. The final outcome of program review is an action plan for academic improvement that is explicit, action-oriented, and includes a specific time frame for accomplishing it. For programs that undergo specialized accreditation, the on-site evaluation report, accreditation agency decisions and changes made in response to the report serve as the review and evaluation process.

Procedures

Academic program review consists of five stages within a five-year continuous improvement cycle. The five-year process is depicted in Figure 1 and includes annual reports, a program review 5th-year report and an action plan to implement over the next five years.

Figure 1.



The timeline for the process is outlined in Table 1. Year refers to the academic/fiscal year. The process starts from the prior program action plan. Annually, the program submits a report to the Provost that includes learning outcome assessment results. The program review 5th-yr report is due at the beginning of

the academic year 5. When an external review is authorized it occurs during the fall of Year 5 so that feedback from the external review team can be incorporated into the program action plan and evaluated by the Program Review and Assessment Committee. Guidelines for setting up and facilitating the external review and team visit are located in MyWitt.

The Program Review and Assessment Committee evaluates the program review 5th-yr report in Year 5, in addition to the external review (when applicable). With the feedback from the Committee's review, and the external review, the program faculty drafts an action plan for improvement to implement over the next five-year cycle and discusses the plan and any additional requested resources with the Provost. The Provost may consult the Educational Policies Committee as required when additional resources are requested.

Table 1. Timeline and Activities for Comprehensive Program Review Process		
TIME FRAME	WHO	RESPONSIBILITIES
Year 1	Program Faculty	Implement action plan developed at the end of Year 5
Years 1-4, Apr 1	Program Faculty	Submit information and data to department chairs for annual report, as necessary
Years 1-4, Sept 1	Program Leadership	Submit annual reports that include results from learning outcomes assessment to the Provost
Year 4, Jan-July	Program Faculty	Compile Program Review 5 th Yr Report
Year 4, April	Program Leadership	Submits list of potential external reviewers to the Provost, when applicable
Year 4, May	Provost/Program Faculty	Selects external reviewers in consultation with the program faculty; Program faculty drafts external visit schedule and contracts with selected reviewers
Year 5, Sept 1	Program Faculty/Provost's Office	Program Review 5 th Yr Report Due to Provost; Program Review and Assessment Committee and external review team, as appropriate
Year 5, Sept-Dec	Program Faculty	When appropriate, host external review team.
Year 5, Sept-Apr	Program Review and Assessment Committee	Review Program Review 5 th Yr Reports and external reviews; provide report and recommendations to the program faculty and Provost
Year 5, Jan- Year 1, Sept	Program Faculty	Program Faculty develop an Action Plan within the next annual report responding to Committee feedback; make budget requests for next year's budget cycle as appropriate
Year 5, Jan-Feb	Program Faculty/Program Review and Assessment Committee	Meet to discuss external review report when applicable
Year 5, Jan-July	Program Faculty + EPC +Provost	Discuss Report and Action Plan if additional resources are requested

Roles and Responsibilities

To be effective the program review process requires support and participation from several offices and committees.

Program Faculty

- Establish strategy, process, and emphases for the program review 5th-year report
- Reflect on action plan items, trends in metrics, annual reports, and assessment results in preparation for completing the program review 5th-year report
- Compose Program Review 5th-year Report
- Develop itinerary for external review team and recommend team candidates; manage visit logistics and host external review team as necessary
- Write review response and action plan
- Regularly and routinely monitor progress against the action plan through annual reports to Provost

Note: It is essential that all faculty in a program be involved in the program review process. The work of compiling and preparing the written report is significant and, therefore, program faculty completing the report may request one course release from the Provost during the 4th or 5th year of the process either to assist with the compiling of the Program Review 5th-year Report or with setting up and hosting an external review team, as applicable; the Provost may need to take a number of factors into consideration when reviewing this request

Program Review and Assessment Committee (refer to the faculty by-laws for the membership and explicit duties of the Committee)

- Monitor a long-term schedule of review by program, by academic year
- Notify programs a year in advance (Year 4) of the schedule and remind them of Year 5 report and review due dates
- Provide professional development to program faculty for engaging in the process and writing the program review 5th-year report
- Assist the program with issues pertaining to assessment of student learning and measuring progress on action plan items
- Review Program Review 5th-Year Report and provide formative and evaluative feedback

Provost

- Review action plan progress and program assessment results and discuss with program faculty in annual meeting interactions
- Read and review as part of the Program Review and Assessment Committee the program review 5th-year reports
- Review and discuss staffing requests with the Educational Policies Committee; work within the budgeting process to determine appropriate funding to programs
- Review and approve final action plan from the program

Office of Academic Affairs and Institutional Research

- Provide process support as a member of the Program Review and Assessment Committee
- Provide data for metrics section of the annual reports and the program review 5th yr report
- Track program review schedule and communicate to the University
- Receive program review 5th-year reports and post in MyWitt

Educational Policies Committee

- When additional staffing requests are identified by the program, review the request, discuss with the Provost, and provide feedback as required

Program Review Report

In addition to a meaningful self-reflection for the purpose of continuous improvement, another purpose of program review is to be able to consider a common set of metrics (i.e., enrollment, instructional productivity, resources/expenses, student success measures, faculty demographics). The program will be responsible for collecting data from other sources such as annual reports, learning outcome assessment results, scholarly activity, faculty vitae, and co-curricular experiences for students, that could help measure the program's progress on action plan items and learning outcomes. It is possible that programs may have specific issues to be addressed in the review that will be reflected in how the programs craft the report. If the Provost's Office has particular areas that it would like the program to address, these will be made clear within the year prior to the review. The report should be submitted electronically to the Provost's Office September 1st of Year 5, who will then distribute the report to the Program Review and Assessment Committee. The Program Review Report Template is provided in MyWitt.

The primary components of the report are:

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Program Profile: Curriculum Structure
- C. Program Profile: Resources
- D. Contribution to Other Educational Offerings
- E. Professional Scholarship and Development
- F. Program Action Plan Items and Progress
- G. Reflections on Program Metrics and Their Relationship to Program Action Plan
- H. Program Learning Outcomes Assessment
- I. Summary of Review: Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities for Improvement
- J. Action Plan for the Future
- K. Action Plan Budget and Resource Implications
- L. Additional Considerations
- M. Program Metrics

Program Review Report Evaluation

The Program Review and Assessment Committee reviews the Program Review 5th-year Report during the fall or spring of the academic year in Year 5. The external review, if one is to be conducted, occurs in the fall of the academic year in Year 5. The external review team report should be submitted not later than January 15th. Once received, the external review report is shared with program faculty. Program leadership meets with the Committee to discuss the report. The Committee crafts an evaluation report using the criteria worksheet (available in MyWitt) and provides to the program and to the Provost on or about April 1st of Year 5. The Program Review and Assessment Committee summarizes the program's strengths and challenges and may make recommendations on opportunities for improvement. The evaluation and recommendations should include supporting rationale.

Response and Action Plan

Using the original Program Review 5th-year Report and the evaluation from the Program Review and Assessment Committee, and the external review if it exists, the program faculty will draft a final action plan with items to be accomplished for the next program review cycle. The plan includes budget and

resource implications. It is due by September 1 of Year 1 in the cycle. If staffing requests are made, the Provost may discuss with the Educational Policies Committee, where appropriate.

Schedule of Program Review Reports

Programs are categorized into five groups (A, B, C, D, and E) allowing for program reports to be submitted in five sequential years. The Program Review and Assessment Committee will create and monitor the report schedule. For a listing of the programs in each group go to the Program Review folder in MyWitt. New programs will be added to the program review schedule after they have operated for four years when they have at least one cohort of graduates.

Definitions

Academic program refers to any organized set of academic requirements, larger than the course level and smaller than the degree. This includes all majors and minors.

Assessment of student learning refers to the ongoing evaluation of student achievement of the learning outcomes of a given program. In learning assessment, direct assessment refers to the direct evaluation of students' learning (such as in comprehensive examinations, senior portfolios, external standardized exams). Indirect assessment refers to learning gains reported by students or reported by faculty, such as in surveys.

Action Plan Items are end statements to which a program's effort is directed; something the program hopes and plans to achieve. They can also be thought of as goals, projects, or tasks that are succinct. Action plan items that are well-articulated are:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant)
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating)
- Achievable (attainable)
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic, results-based)
- Time-based (time-bound, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive)

Learning outcomes refer to that which every student completing a given program should learn: knowledge, concepts, skills, application, synthesis, etc. Every program must have learning outcomes articulated. Course level learning outcomes are articulated and documented on the syllabus.

Metrics are data elements used to measure certain aspects of a program such as student demand, course efficiency, student success, and resources.