

Addition to University Handbook
Section L: Academic policy
L1-L5: Program Review Policy
Approved by Faculty Affairs on November 19, 2024
Approved by Faculty Senate on December 11, 2024

Policy Rationale:

In 2021 Kansas State University embarked on a process to develop a more frequent and meaningful program review process centered on a regular faculty assessment of our academic portfolio. The Academic Program Review and Revitalization process developed over two years, with feedback from faculty and administrators.

A full pilot of the program ran during the 2022-2023 academic year, with opportunities for departments to apply for strategic investment in programs. In 2023-2024, the program was adjusted to separate undergraduate and graduate program assessments. During this time, the APRR task force also drafted a policy and solidified the process. The pilot APRR cycles are now complete, and the Provost Office has submitted a policy and process for Faculty Senate review and approval.

In 2023, the Kansas Board of Regents also embarked on a revision of their program review requirements. 2024-2025 is the inaugural year of their new process and one of the criteria for institutions is to have an approved policy and process in place.

Program Review Policy:

Overview:

L1: Program review at Kansas State University (University) aligns long-term strategic planning and goals for academic program health and excellence with annual assessment of progress and activity towards these goals. As such, the program review asks that faculty establish a vision for their academic programs, concrete goals, and annual action plans to achieve these goals.

Program Vision and Goals:

L2: Academic units that offer credentialed degrees will develop a vision and concrete goals for their programs based on university, college, and/or department strategic plans. Program goals will be reported through the University Program Review process. Accredited programs will use the same vision and goals submitted for accreditation.

Annual Program Review:

The program review process at K-State is named Academic Program Review and Revitalization (APRR).

Annual Action Plans:

L3: Each year, faculty will discuss a data report prepared and provided by the Office of Data, Assessment, and Institutional Research (DAIR) alongside their program vision and goals and other relevant information. Using the information, each department head or program director will submit a report on the faculty conversation and analyze the program's health and demonstrate and plan for continuous improvement. A university undergraduate program assessment team and the Graduate Council Assessment and Review Committee (ARC) will evaluate the program reviews and suggest future action as appropriate. The DAIR office will collect the reports and make them available to College deans and the Dean of the Graduate School for review.

Accredited programs will complete the annual program review report except during their accreditation reporting year(s), during which they will submit to the Office of Assessment what they submit to their accrediting body in place of the annual program review report.

Program Review Assessment:

L4: The University program review process will be assessed every five years and will be adjusted as needed. In addition, the Provost will present the University's program review policy and process to the Kansas Board of Regents at five-year intervals, beginning in Academic Year 2024-2025.

Both the five-year University program review and annual APRR report assessments will be conducted by the Office of Assessment in the Office of Data, Assessment, and Institutional Research (DAIR) in coordination with the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Innovation (VP AAI) or their designee.

The undergraduate program APRR reports will be reviewed by an Undergraduate APRR Review Committee comprised of representatives from each of the colleges and schools offering undergraduate programs. Members of this committee will serve three-year terms. During the inaugural year, members of the committee will be assigned staggered service times, from one- to three-years. The committee will be chaired by the VP AAI or their designee.

The graduate program APRR reports will be reviewed by the Graduate Council Assessment and Review Committee (ARC) members as described in the [Graduate Handbook](#).

An analysis of all review findings will be created by DAIR's assessment team and provided to the Provost or their designee.

Additional review:

L5: The Provost's Office may conduct in-depth review of academic programs in circumstances such as, but not limited to, significant changes in the program's health and viability, requests from the College and/or the Graduate School, changes in KBOR rules and expectations, and inconsistent participation in annual program review.

DOCUMENTATION BELOW WILL RESIDE ON THE PROGRAM REVIEW WEBSITE, NOT IN THE UNIVERSITY HANDBOOK BUT FEEDBACK AND ENDORSEMENT WERE RECEIVED.

PROCESS:

The University program review process is called Academic Program Review and Revitalization (APRR). Its goals are to establish a common framework, process and set of metrics to:

- Gain a more holistic view of our academic portfolio of offerings to students.
- Identify programs for further review, improvement, investment and growth.
- Provide an internally developed decision support tool for faculty and academic leadership.
- Drive innovative curriculum and continuous program improvement.
- Promote academic excellence and accountability.
- Support the long-term financial viability of K-State by assuring we meet contemporary student and market demands.

APRR serves as a valuable and forward-looking process to assess academic programs' activities and to identify actions that serve the mission of the academic program and of the department. This annual process is data informed, collaborative and engages all department constituents. This faculty-driven process is grounded in discussions informed by centrally provided data, self-study, and external accreditation requirements (if applicable).

The APRR process should help the University:

- Build a culture of collaboration and partnership by aligning program visions to aspects of university, college, and/or department strategic plans.
- Serve as the foundation for completing any internal or external accreditation or reporting required
- Make data informed decisions and strategic investments based on strategic goals and opportunities
- Provide each college with a planning tool that serves their long-term strategic planning process and decision-making process (i.e. budget allocation, faculty hires, new program development, mergers, program changes, etc.)

At academic program and department level, APRR will ensure that each academic program has,

- Long term goals for providing high quality education connected to a strong research, creative, and artistic portfolio.
- Action items to achieve long-term goals.
- A foundation for discussion with college- and university-level leadership about the program.

APRR is formed of two components: a long-term program plan and an annual creation of action items to realize this vision and accompanying goals.

Long-term program plan

At least once every five years, departments will create a vision statement and set of three to five long term goals for their programs that include three to five outcomes. The APRR process serves as the annual implementation process for the long-term plan.

Externally accredited academic programs will use their accreditation report goals as their long-term plans.

Annual program review and revitalization (APRR)

Every year departments are expected to discuss and analyze the data provided by DAIR and to establish annual goals aligned with long-term plans. For each program offered, departments will submit an annual report of their discussion of the data analysis and the action items developed in support of their long-term goals. The annual report serves as the basis for eligibility for college and university-level investments.

Externally accredited academic programs will use their accreditation reports as their APRR submission on years when they must submit to external accreditors.

Additional review

The Provost's Office may conduct in-depth review of academic programs in circumstances such as, but not limited to, significant changes in the program's health and viability, requests from the College and/or the Graduate School, changes in KBOR rules and expectations, and inconsistent participation in annual program review.

APRR Process:

1. Establish a long-term program plan.

On a five-year cycle, each department will create a long-term program plan that lists 3-5 goals that align with the department, college, and/or university strategic plan. The APRR process serves as the annual implementation process for achieving the long-term goals.

The department members will discuss the following:

- Alignment of academic program's goals with the College's and University's goals
- Service that academic program provides to discipline, university, state, and global community
- Strengths and impact of faculty on curriculum, research, student success. Identify areas of change
- Strengths of curriculum and curriculum impact on students.
- Opportunities and challenges for the next 5 years
- Areas for growth or adjustment

Based on this discussion, the department will establish a long-term vision and 3-5 goals.

2. Discuss data, establish annual goals, and submit report.

The office of Data, Assessment, and Institutional Research provides central data for each program. The data is available in the APRR dashboard

- Academic departments have the academic year to review, discuss the data provided and create annual action items
- Department heads or program administrators complete the APRR report to share annual program goals by March 1.

3. Reports Assessed & Distributed

- The DAIR office makes the reports available to review teams.
- **Undergraduate Programs:** An Undergraduate Program APRR Committee will evaluate undergraduate program reports to ensure quality of the review. The APRR assessment team may suggest future action as appropriate, including but not limited to:
 - a more detailed or extensive program review,
 - Provost office consultation with college deans and department heads about action plans, or
 - strategic investment.

Please note: Only programs with strong and consistent submission of annual APRR reports will be eligible for strategic investment. Programs with inconsistent or absent APRR reports may be automatically triggered for more extensive program review the following academic year.

- **Graduate Programs:** The Graduate Council Assessment and Review Committee will assess the graduate-level APRR reports and identify programs that would benefit from a more comprehensive program review.
 - The identified program will have the following academic year to dedicate to the graduate program review. During this year, the departments will be exempt from doing APRR for graduate programs
 - The Dean of the Graduate School will discuss with the department head the goals for their programs to ensure alignment with the College's curriculum.
- **College deans** may wish to discuss APRR reports with department heads to ensure alignment within the College's curriculum.
- **The Provost**, or their designee, may ask to meet with deans and department heads to discuss program action plans, strategic investments, strategic plans, or other future steps.