

# **Fresno Pacific University**

## **Program Review Manual**



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The program review process implements the University strategic plan by addressing goal one.

Goal 1: Embody a culture of academic excellence in which enriched and challenging programs prepare students for faithful and wise leadership and service.

## **Program Review Summary**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the program review is to foster academic excellence at all levels by examination of educational effectiveness, best practices, and to evaluate University infrastructure resources and needs. Recommendations will be made that will provide guidance for administrative decisions in support of continual further improvement.

### **Report Elements**

The program review report has three main elements: 1) program review information, 2) assessment information and analysis, and 3) recommendations.

1. The program review section incorporates the following elements:

- Introduction

- Principle of Coherence

- Present Mission Statement and Desired Student Outcomes

- Basic Program Design Information

- Evaluate Academic Design and Strength

- Evaluate the Effectiveness of the Program

- Evaluate Faculty Resources

- Evaluate Resources to Support the Program

- Principle of Culminating Experience

- Principle of Interdependence

- Principle of Liberation

- Principle of Marketability

- Principle of Flexibility

2. The assessment section incorporates the information collected annually from the direct and indirect measures as well as the analysis from those measures. What has the program faculty learned about achieving the stated desired student outcomes? See assessment manual for additional information.

3. The recommendations section incorporates a summary of the changes to be made to the program based on what was learned in assessment activities and program review data. These include both institutional resources and curriculum design.

## Program Review Background

This document contains information to proceed with the five-year program review. It begins with some preliminary definitions, then proceeds with the following sections: 1) Principles to Guide the Creation, Shape, and Development of Academic Programs, 2) General Program Parameters, 3) Schedule of Program Reviews, 4) Review Process, and 5) Format for Program Review Report.

### **Preliminary Definitions:**

For our internal purposes, the following definitions will serve to distinguish the various elements of our assessment and program review process:

**Principles, mission, commitments** all refer to the more transcendent goals and purposes of the schools and University which guide the faculty and administration in shaping and directing the academic and other programs of the schools and University. They are stipulated in a series of nested documents, including *The Fresno Pacific University Idea*, the University mission and core values statements, and the University's desired student outcomes. Program creation, review, outcomes assessment, and development of programs requires the creative balancing of ideals and practicality, the seeking of workable solutions, commitment to transcendent purposes, the requirements of academic credibility, and the creativity of faculty and workday demands and needs of students.

**Academic program review** (sometimes shortened to “program review” or “program evaluation”) refers to the analysis, comparison and evaluation of academic programs with reference to the academic disciplines and professions, outside accrediting and reviewing bodies, resource and personnel needs to meet the demands of the program, enrollment, and other requirements as individual programs dictate. “Program review” refers to an internal and academically professional review of program design, elements, and resources.

**Outcomes assessment** (sometimes referred to simply as “assessment”) refers to the process of analyzing and coming to conclusions about student learning, or student achievement of “desired student outcomes” or stipulated or required competencies. This “assessment” is not solely internally judged and verified by reference to faculty-awarded grades or analysis of portfolios, for example, but by reference to student achievement as compared to students regionally and nationally in, for example, graduate schools, professions, or through survey data from employers, of alumni reporting on their professional and personal progress, or by comparison through standardized testing or other comparative forms of student achievement. Thus, there is an external component to our assessment. Assessment uses and develops a set of data and evidence collected and used to test the achievement by our students against our internally and publicly stated claims for our academic programs and efforts. “Assessment” refers to a systematic and cumulative analysis of indirect and direct measures to verify student achievement of the outlined

and stated desired outcomes. Assessment responds to public requests that we as a University demonstrate that our graduates can and do achieve what we claim our programs offer to them.

**Desired student outcomes** (DSOs) refer to the stated goals for student learning as developed by the faculty, in concert with the mission of the University and the academic professions of the various disciplines. They may also reflect and be modified by student or other public requests that academic programs meet certain needs. These outcomes are publicly stated, explicit, and may or may not be easily measurable or quantifiable. For the purposes of this handbook, “competencies” will be understood as synonymous with desired outcomes.

**Indirect/Direct Assessment:** Assessment is seen as direct if the measure can directly assess the student learning outcome. This is done through indicators such as portfolios, capstone courses, internships, testing, thesis, etc. If a measure only indirectly assesses the desired student outcome, the measure is known as indirect. A key to indirect measures are their reliance on perception of the DSO. Measures such as perception surveys – employers and alumni- exit interviews, focus groups, etc. are indirect measures.

### **The Program Review**

The purpose of the program review is to foster academic excellence at all levels by examination of educational effectiveness, best practices, and to evaluate University infrastructure resources and needs. Recommendations will be made that will provide guidance for administrative decisions in support of continual further improvement.

#### **Principles to Guide the Creation, Shape, and Development of Academic Programs:**

The design and development of academic programs are guided by the following several principles. These are available for review by the faculty and administration, and are developed out of the transcendent commitments as articulated in the *Idea* of the University, the liberal arts tradition of education, the ongoing needs and emphases of the academic disciplines, the needs and desires of the University’s constituencies (churches, public expectations, etc.) and students. The following guide all academic programs, and are thus general enough to apply to all, but specific enough to point to the distinguishing characteristics of the Fresno Pacific academic program. The following do not refer specifically to desired student outcomes, but to program and curricular design and planning.

- A. **The principle of coherence:** The design of each program should be characterized by a clear and coherent mission, purpose, structure and a series of desired outcomes. The design of a program should link these together, and from this, resource and faculty needs can be determined. The coherence of the design should be evident to those who would

examine the design of a program, and the purposes and structure of it should be able to be clearly articulated by the faculty.

- B. The principle of a culminating experience:** A University education marks and shapes a person; it offers, if not confers, to its students (and its faculty over time) a certain habit of approach and perspective as they live, study, experience, and consider thoughtfully their experience. Thus, we desire a synthetic project or culminating experience, for example a thesis, research presentation, artistic performance, etc. This culminating experience brings together what has been studied in a program or major.
- C. The principle of interdependence or “interdisciplinarity:”** A unique feature of Fresno Pacific is the purposeful interconnectedness as we experience the FPU Idea. In order to be prophetic in our world, we need understanding of various approaches, such as philosophical backgrounds, methodologies and approaches to the discipline, etc. Various areas of knowledge support and broaden each other. Thus, whenever possible, the various programs should incorporate into their requirements courses from other disciplines.
- D. The principle of liberation:** As we support the principle of interdependence, we support the notion of how many perspectives free us from some of the limitations imposed by our narrow personal, cultural, and disciplinary interests. Multiple perspectives open to us various possible ways of seeing, examining, judging, and responding to an issue, problem, or opportunity. Each program of the University frees or liberates its students from narrow and provincial thought and action by creating understanding of the program’s theological and philosophical foundations, historical developments, core ideas and underlying structures, methodologies and cultural manifestations, interdisciplinary connections, and ethical issues.
- E. The principle of marketability:** Higher education has increasingly become the avenue of entry into professions, or the pathway to career advancement. In our “market society” the educational programs we offer must be related, and we must be able to articulate the relation of programs to professions, careers, callings, and opportunities. Increasingly we are told by our students that they are looking for training for particular professions so that they may move on into service and work. In our “knowledge society” education is the pathway to careers and callings both in the church and the world. Each program must balance the “freeing” and interdisciplinary quality, with the specific professional needs of the discipline. Programs are tested and developed according to both the demands required of a broad series of courses and programs in the liberal arts, and the specific needs, desires, and requests of students who join us. In practice this means that new program proposals and those for development of programs must be tested against student demand,

or marketability, and the cost for the program weighed against the benefit to students and the University.

- F. **The principle of flexibility or experimentation:** Our world is both shaped by its past and rapidly changing, both old and new. A hallmark of our programs has been our willingness to experiment and change, to explore new formulations of knowledge, adjust the parameters and boundaries of particular bodies of understanding, and reshape the packaging of our programs. As possible, each program should include in its design room for student choice and experimentation, recognizing that students bring with them insights into their own gifts and needs. Each program should also allow for ongoing experimentation with new courses, topics, examinations of current developments in the particular field, etc. This provides for experimentation in response to student request, in response to timely development in the disciplines, and for faculty to test new insights and research. In practice this means that programs and faculty will balance requirements with recommendations, options, and creative experimentation.

#### **General Program Parameters:**

Program review is the first part of the academic evaluation process. It concentrates on: program design as part of academic and professional disciplines; efficiency, effectiveness and coordination of human and monetary resources; evaluation of services to other departments; and general functioning of the program within the University. In general, the purpose of this part of the review is to test, demonstrate, and ensure that our programs are academically credible and excellent, that we are directing institutional resources to that end, and that this is reflected in the internal organization and implementation of the program. **The results of the review of the following outlined areas will be combined with the assessment of student outcomes to produce recommendations for program development.**

A. As noted above, programs should be (1) coherent in design, (2) have a culminating experience, (3) forge interdisciplinary connections where possible, (4) balance the breadth available through the liberal arts and the specific needs required of academic specialties and professions, (5) be responsive to student desires and market demands, and (6) include flexibility and openness to experimentation.

B. Each program will have a mission statement and set of desired student outcomes, developed by the faculty of the program, and approved by the School in which the program is housed. Mission statements and desired student outcomes of programs are understood to be linked to and to be in harmony with the University's *Idea*, mission and desired outcomes.

The University's DSOs are the following:

- Oral communication both in individual and group settings
- Written communication to inform and persuade others
- Content knowledge, including how the liberal arts inform society, and the application of such knowledge to effect change
- Reflection for personal and professional growth to manage change in oneself and one's vocation
- Critical thinking
- Moral reasoning and ethical decision making, including understanding a Christian world-view
- Service and reconciliation as a way of leadership
- Cultural and global perspectives to understand complex systems
- Computational/methodological skills to understand and expand disciplines, including an understanding of technological systems

1. Program mission statements will indicate the purpose or central intent of the program/major of study as an academic and/or professional field of study; range of inclusion of subject matter or parameters of study; etc

2. Desired student outcome statements will include from four to eight outcomes, simply stated in single sentences.

C. Each program/major will undergo a regular and systematic program review and assessment of outcomes according to the process and standards outlined by the University. The results of this review and assessment will be used to plan for and develop the academic programs of the University. The purpose of assessment is to evaluate how well the program is meeting its educational DSOs.

Reviews will have the following characteristics:

1. Reviews should incorporate external review.
2. Reviews are evaluative, not just descriptive
3. Reviews are forward thinking. Priorities for continual future improvement and long-range vision and planning are of utmost importance.
4. Reviews provide a concise, honest appraisal of an academics unit's strengths and weaknesses.
5. Program reviews are independent of any other type of review. They are not related to the faculty evaluation process. The program review must be complete before other accreditation reviews are submitted.

D. For the development of programs there should be at least two faculty members in the discipline to guide the program. Where this is not possible, a group of three (including two from closely allied disciplines or with significant graduate level training in the discipline) will form a committee under the leadership of the program director to guide the program. When possible, advisory committees are encouraged.

### **Schedule of Program Review:**

The University Assessment Committee will prepare and maintain a program review schedule to be revised annually.

- A. Major/programs will conduct reviews on a five-year schedule, beginning five years after the conclusion of the last review--if a review was completed and approved in April of 2005, the next review will be conducted during the 2010-2011 academic year, with expected review in April of 2011.
- B. The general education program will be conducted on a seven-year schedule, and be allowed a two-year process for completion (involving as necessary the entire faculty, and conducted by the director of the program and the GE faculty composed of members from each of the divisions of the University).
- C. If majors/programs have accreditation through professional agencies, program reviews will be coordinated with program accreditation schedules, subject to the following conditions: 1) assessment of program effectiveness is ongoing, and b) the interval between accreditation reviews is no longer than seven years.
- D. If ongoing assessment reveals needs or issues that need more immediate attention, a program review may be called for by the dean and/or Academic Committee at a time shorter than the standard five-year interval.

### **Review Process:**

## Review and Assessment Handbook

- A. The dean of each school will meet in the early fall of the year of the review with all program chairs who will be conducting program reviews to review the process and determine if administrative load is available.
- B. The program chair will coordinate the faculty in the program to complete the various parts of the review and to gather and analyze the annual assessment data. All faculty in the department will participate in the review, helping to determine the review needs and methods of assessment, reviewing the data, and affirming the recommendations. The division chairs, deans, and University Assessment Committee members will serve as resource personnel for the programs.
- C. The review will continue through the fall and spring of the year, concluding with a report due in April which will address the issues as outlined in the format section of this manual.
- D. The report must be approved by the faculty of the department, by the division (if applicable), school, and finally by the appropriate academic committee. The report may be returned to the program for revision or additional analysis before acceptance by the academic committee. Financial requests will not have approval until they have been considered by the Provost and VP of Finance.
- E. The chair overseeing the academic committee will prepare a memorandum to the dean of the school and program director (which houses the program) outlining the affirmations and requests of the academic committee, including any necessary further work of review and/or assessment and a requested timeline for completion and reporting.
- F. The dean of the school in coordination with the dean of the academic committee will present information about the program review to the Academic Cabinet.
- G. The dean of the school will prepare a memorandum of resource needs to the Provost who takes the recommendations to Academic Cabinet and to President's Cabinet/VP of Finance. The dean of the school will keep a copy of the program review in the dean's office and will also forward a copy to the Provost's Office.
- H. The program review process and results will be shared in Faculty Session and with the Board by way of program report. Key points to address would be: 1) general overview, 2) program review information, including what the program/major learned about the program/major during the program review process, 3) assessment strategies and how the DSOs are being measured, to include what was learned during this process and 4) recommendations from the program.

## Format for Program Review Report

The following is intended as a very simple outline of a generic program review report. Programs should include elements and topics according to the need of their particular academic subject area and issues that have arisen out of their review and assessment work. It is assumed that writers of reports will exercise judgment and creativity in the presentation of the report. **The report has three main elements: 1) program review information, 2) assessment information and analysis, and 3) recommendations.**

If the information below has an asterisk beside it, the data will be pulled by the ISAs (Information Systems Analyst in a standard review format. The spreadsheets of this information will be sent to the program director.

### I. Program Review Components:

- A. Introduction: Preliminary issues – history, date of last review, statement of needs from last review (if applicable), background, process of how report was created, and the kind of data gathered for this report (any background information needed for understanding the report).
- B. Principle of Coherence: Presentation of program mission, desired student outcomes and basic program design information.

Evaluate academic design and strength of the program by considering the following:

1. Consideration of the program (both breadth and depth) in relation to the academic discipline as reflected in selected similar and dissimilar schools, scholarly associations guidelines, etc.
2. Consideration of the rigorousness of the program as reflected in grading patterns\*, levels of preparedness of entering students\*, and comparison of these with other programs and national, state or regional trends and patterns.
3. Consideration of the content of the program by relating course objectives to the program's mission and desired student outcomes, and to professional expectations.
4. Other as determined to be needed by the faculty of the program.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the program by considering the following:

1. Analysis of average enrollments in courses\*, and number of faculty (headcount

- and FTE) in the program, cycle of course offerings, etc.
- 2. Evaluation of other programs served--does the service, enrollment overlap meet the needs of each program, are course objectives coordinated to meet these needs, etc.
- 3. Analysis of student credit hours\* and full-time faculty (FTE).
- 4. Other analysis as needed by the program.

Evaluate the faculty resources by considering the following:

- 1. Adequacy of regular and adjunct faculty FTE.
- 2. Appropriateness and balance of workloads within the department.
- 3. Evaluations of overall teaching quality in the program to assess program effectiveness.
- 4. Analysis of faculty development in relation to program offerings and teaching assignments.
- 5. Special faculty activities, awards, publications in relation to program assignments.
- 6. Other as determined by the faculty of the program.

Evaluate the resources required to support the program by considering the following:

- 1. Adequacy of teaching and research resources (library, technology, classroom, etc.).
- 2. Adequacy of budget.
- 3. Program and faculty development funds.
- 4. General institutional services (student life, registrar, etc.)
- 5. Other as determined by the faculty of the program.

C. Principle of Culminating Experience: Discuss and evaluate this design element. How does the culminating experience meet this requirement?

D. Principle of Interdependence: Discuss how the program design meets this requirement. If applicable, 1) survey the faculty whose courses are not housed in your program, but are used in your program to assess effectiveness and 2) survey the faculty who use your courses to see if your courses are meeting needs of other programs.

E. Principle of Liberation: Discuss how the program design meets this requirement. Specifically, how does the program create understanding of the programs theological and philosophical foundations, historical developments, core ideas, etc.

G. Principle of Marketability:

Evaluate the marketability and associated factors by considering the following elements:

1. Consideration of the majors, minors, emphases in the program in relation to market demands, or desires by students, as reviewed by professional/community advisory groups, alumni, etc.
2. University support for program development, initiative, marketing, recruiting, etc.
3. Test of student demand of the program, that is potential for major/program.
4. Cost of the program weighed against the benefit to students and the University
5. Other as determined to be needed by the faculty of the program.

F. The principle of flexibility or experimentation. Discuss how the program design incorporates these elements.

II. Assessment

Present assessment activities and analysis. Discuss data collection as it relates to desired student outcomes and discuss how this information has been incorporated into the program. See University Assessment Manual for more detailed information.

III. Recommendations/revisions/requests of/for the program, faculty, budget, needed resources, mission, desired student outcomes, development of new catalog copy, etc.