Guidelines for the Academic Program Review Process

Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Bradley University

Draft approved by the University Strategic Planning Committee

December 4, 2015

Introduction

The Academic Program Review (APR) process is an ongoing activity in which all academic programs will be reviewed over a multiple-year span of time. The definition of a program for APR purposes, the purpose of the APR process, the frequency of the reviews and the criteria for selection of programs to be reviewed are described in this introduction. The composition of the review team, the distribution of responsibilities in the APR process, a typical timeline for conducting a review, general guidelines for preparation of an APR self-study, and the format of a review team's report are contained in subsequent sections. These guidelines will be reviewed and updated as needed no later than every 6 years.

Definition of "Program" for APR purposes
The APR process covers all organized academic activities conducted within academic units (e.g., departments, colleges) and other key administrative units (e.g., Student Affairs, Centers) or spanning multiple units. Such activities include all non-accredited academic programs including majors, minors, and interdisciplinary educational programs; ongoing certificate programs and non-credit educational offerings; and ongoing research and service activities organized under internal units or under formal agreements with entities external to Bradley. Programs, units or centers that do not grant academic credit should modify their self-studies as needed, in collaboration with the University-wide Assessment Team (UAT), to reflect their key functions.

Although the focus of the APR process is on academic programs, in most cases the review process will involve entire units or combinations of units. Where multiple programs are conducted within a single unit all such programs within that unit will be reviewed if practical. Consequently, as individual programs are reviewed, related aspects of all relevant units will be reviewed including activity in all mission components. Thus these guidelines will often refer to unit-level resources, data, etc. particularly as they relate to the self-study. For simplicity, this document will refer to "program" and "unit" as singular constructions when in fact the appropriate frame of reference may be multiple programs within a single unit or multiple units supporting a single program.

The Purpose of the Academic Program Review Process
The academic program review process provides information that supports planning and decision-making regarding resource allocations and programmatic changes aimed at improving the quality and appropriateness of Bradley's programs. The review process will therefore focus both on the role of each program in the overall Bradley mission and on assessing the quality of each program being reviewed.

The Frequency of Academic Program Reviews
Academic programs at Bradley that are not reviewed by external accrediting bodies will be reviewed every six years. In units where there are programs that are reviewed by external accrediting bodies, the academic program review cycle will match the accreditation review cycle. However, under special circumstances a program may be scheduled for review outside this normal cycle.

Criteria for Selection of Programs to be Reviewed
The University-wide Assessment Team (UAT) will propose a schedule of review to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, who in consultation with the appropriate academic deans, will

select the programs to be reviewed in a given year. The University Strategic Planning Committee (USPC) may also suggest that a program be reviewed. Selection of programs to be reviewed will be based on the following considerations:

- Relationship of the program to other programs being reviewed
- Planned program changes
- Changes in the program market
- Accreditation cycles
- Time since the last review of the program

Elements of the APR Process

Once a program or set of programs is selected for review an APR Coordinator will be identified from within the unit administering the program. The unit will prepare a self-study in accordance with the guidelines provided in this document. A review team will be constituted in consultation with unit leadership, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the University Strategic Planning Committee. The APR Guidelines, including construction and responsibilities of the Review Team and guidelines for developing the review will be submitted to the team. A site visit will be conducted and a team report will be submitted to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The report will then be shared with the unit and a unit response prepared. Finally, the review team's report and the unit's response will be presented to the University Strategic Planning Committee and to the President. Based on the outcome of the review, appropriate recommendations for follow-up actions will be made. Some or all of these actions may require University Senate approval or may be subject to resource constraints that will dictate the timeline for implementation.

Composition of the Review Team
The composition of the review team will vary from program to program and will not duplicate the role of visiting accrediting teams where information from the accreditation visits can be incorporated into the academic program review. In such cases (where there is an accreditation visit) the APR review team will include only those persons necessary to accomplish the objectives of the APR while incorporating the results of the accreditation visit and report. In general the composition of the APR review team will include:

- Two individuals from other institutions with relevant expertise, one of whom will be designated as the chair of the Review Team
- Two Bradley faculty members appointed by the VPAA (at least one of these must be a member of the graduate faculty if a graduate program is being reviewed, and both must be external to the unit in which the review is taking place
- One (non-deliberating) representative from the University-wide Assessment Team, to serve in a consultative capacity

Responsibilities in the APR
Unit/Program being reviewed

- Identify an APR Coordinator within the unit.
- Suggest dates for the review.
- Develop the schedule for the review.
- Prepare the self-study
- Assist the Office of the Provost and VPAA in arranging for the needs of the review team during the visit.

APR Coordinator
- In consultation with the appropriate chair and dean, recommend to the Provost and VPAA prospective APR team members.
- Oversee the completion of the unit/program responsibilities listed above.
- Ensure that the review team report is reviewed within the unit.
- Oversee the development of a unit response to the review team report.
- Meet with the Provost and VPAA and the academic dean during the concluding program evaluation and with the USPC during the report to the Committee on the review.

Academic Dean
- Participate in the selection of programs to be reviewed.
- Meet with the faculty of the units involved to explain and discuss the review process and purpose.
- Identify specific issues to be addressed in the self-study.
- Participate in selection of review team members.
- Review and evaluate the self-study.
- Provide specific questions to be posed to the review team.
- Participate in the visit and the exit interview.
- Review the team's final report.
- Meet with the faculty of the unit to discuss the final report.
- Provide a written report to the VPAA commenting on: 1) the final report and the unit's response; 2) the specific recommendations in the report; 3) anticipated changes resulting from the review; 4) a general evaluation of the unit.

Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Conduct an orientation session for the program/unit being reviewed
- Provide Institutional Research Information in support of the review
- Appoint the review team
- Serve as liaison between the review team and the program being reviewed
- Distribute the self-study as appropriate
- Provide the review team with specific questions to be addressed in the review
- Make local arrangements and handle financial aspects of the review
- Provide a written statement addressing the entire review including the dean's general evaluation
- Meet with the USPC to report on the outcome of the APR

University-wide Assessment Team (UAT)
- Provide support for the development and implementation of the unit's assessment plan
- Provide the unit with a critical and facilitative appraisal of the unit's assessment plan and assessment activities
- Provide consultative support to the APR Review Team

Review Team
- Examine the self-study report and questions posed for the review
- Conduct the campus visit, which will include two exit interviews: one with the faculty of the appropriate unit and one with the appropriate dean and administrative representatives
- Provide a written report on the APR shortly after the campus interview

Program Review Timeline and Review Activities by Phase

Typically the process of preparing for and completing a program review will span most of two semesters. In many cases the process will be contained within one academic year. However, there will be situations where it will be more efficient or effective to begin the process in the spring semester of one academic year and complete it in the fall semester of the subsequent academic year.
A typical timeline for a program review and the review activities by phase are illustrated in the following figures.

Program Review Timeline										
	Pre-Review Activity						Review Team Visit	Post Visit Activity		
	Months Before Review							Months After Visit		
	Pre-visit Phase 1		Pre-visit Phase 2		Pre-visit Phase 3		Visit	Post 1	Post 2	Post 3
Activity	6+	5	4	3	2	1		1	2	3
Consult with UAT	▓									
Prepare Self-Study Report	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓					
Select Review Team					▓					
Unit Submits Self-Study					▓					
Self-Study Sent to Team Members						▓				
Questions Submitted to Provost						▓				
Agenda for Site Visit Completed						▓				
Preparation of Team Report								▓		
Unit's Response to Report									▓	
Dean's Response to Report										▓
USPC Team Members Reports to USPC										▓
Provost Reports to President										▓

Program Review Activities By Phase And Responsible Entity		
ACTIVITY	**PHASE**	**RESPONSIBLE ENTITY**
Identify an APR Coordinator within the unit	PRE VISIT I (3 - 6 Months prior to review)	The Unit/Program being Reviewed
Suggest dates for the review	PRE VISIT I	The Unit/Program being Reviewed
Prepare the self-study	PRE VISIT I	The Unit/Program being Reviewed
Participate in the selection of programs to be reviewed	PRE VISIT I	The Academic Dean
Meet with the faculty of the units involved to explain and discuss the review process and purpose	PRE VISIT I	The Academic Dean
Identify specific issues to be addressed in the self- study	PRE VISIT I	The Academic Dean
Conduct an orientation session for the program/unit being reviewed	PRE VISIT I	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Develop the schedule for the review	PRE VISIT 2 (Two months prior to review)	The Unit/Program being Reviewed
In consultation with the appropriate chair and dean, recommend to the VPAA prospective APR team members	PRE VISIT 2	The APR Coordinator
Participate in selection of review team members	PRE VISIT 2	The Academic Dean
Review and evaluate the self-study	PRE VISIT 2	The Academic Dean
Provide specific questions to be posed to the review team	PRE VISIT 2	The Academic Dean
Appoint the review team	PRE VISIT 2	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Distribute the self-study as appropriate	PRE VISIT 3 (One month prior to review)	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Provide the review team with specific questions to be addressed in the review	PRE VISIT 3	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Make local arrangements and handle financial aspects of the review	PRE VISIT 3	Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Members of the review team will examine the self-study report and questions posed for the review	PRE VISIT 3	Review Team
Assist the Office of the VPAA in arranging for the needs of the review team during the visit	REVIEW VISIT	The Unit/Program being Reviewed
Participate in the visit and the exit interview	REVIEW VISIT	The Academic Dean
The team will conduct the campus visit, which will include two exit interviews: one with the faculty of the appropriate unit, one with the appropriate dean and administrative representatives	REVIEW VISIT	Review Team
The review team will provide a written report	POST VISIT PHASE I (Recommended within one month after visit)	Review Team
Ensure that the review team report is reviewed within the unit	POST VISIT 2 (Second month after visit)	The APR Coordinator
Oversee the development of a unit response to the review team report	POST VISIT 2	The APR Coordinator
Review the team's final report	POST VISIT 2	The Academic Dean

Guidelines for Preparation of the Self-Study Document

The guidelines for preparation of the self-study document presented herein are intended specifically for units/programs that are not reviewed by external accrediting bodies. For accredited programs, the accreditation report will serve as the APR self-study. Only information required by APR but not contained in the accreditation self-study must be provided within the APR self-study document. The Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will assist the unit with analysis,

reconciliation, and presentation of data to be included in the self-study document.

The purpose of these guidelines is to encourage reflection, analysis, and self-evaluation within the unit. It is not meant to constrain units in the presentation of the self-study information. Consequently, although all of the following items must be addressed in the self-study, additional relevant information may be included and germane departure from the following format is acceptable.

Main Body of the APR Self-Study Document
The main body of the APR self-study document should contain (explicitly or by reference to other appended documents) narrative on the following points relevant to the program under review:

Mission of the Unit
Provide the mission statement for the unit, and explain how the unit's mission relates to Bradley's mission. What are the faculty activities under this mission? What are the products of these activities and how are they measured? (see Section I of the Departmental Report) How do these activities relate to the program under review? Provide evidence of need for the program.

Program/Unit Objectives
State the short and long-term objectives for the program and the related unit. How have these changed in recent years? Are these objectives being achieved? If so, how? If not, why not? What is the vision for the program/unit ten years from now?

Quality of the Program
Provide evidence of the quality of the program relevant to similar programs at other institutions. Describe how the quality of the program is assessed on a regular basis and how this assessment mechanism is used to assure program quality. How is faculty instruction evaluated? Provide evidence of the quality of instruction supporting the program. Describe unique aspects and special strengths in the program. Also describe any weaknesses in the program. Explain how these weaknesses can be corrected.

Bradley University's University-wide Assessment Team (UAT) recommends identifying program goals and learning outcomes as the first steps in assessing the quality of an academic program. The UAT has developed materials* to help units create and execute meaningful assessment plans (*insert hyperlinks to Assessment Cycle, Assessment Plan Rubric, Assessment Glossary). The UAT is available to help develop or evaluate any academic program's assessment plan.

Appendices to the APR Self-Study Document
The three most recent Departmental Annual Reports of the unit with responsibility for the program under review should be appended to the APR self-study. Information in these reports that is useful in the APR self-study may be incorporated by reference. In particular, the Annual Reports contain information that characterizes the unit): mission, activities and products of these activities. The Annual Reports also contain short and long-term objectives (elements of planning), accomplishments, obstacles to accomplishing objectives, and an assessment of the quality of the unit products. Annual Reports also contain information on the departmental assessment plans.

Additionally the appendices the APR self-study should contain:
- A description of the administration of the program. What is the administrative structure

including committees with oversight?

- A list of all faculty members involved in the program under review and their current vitae (The office of the Provost and VPAA will provide additional demographic information on this group of faculty members that will be included in the self-study document.)
- A current description of the relevant curricula including course descriptions etc. (catalog copy should be included)
- Program data and analysis including enrollment and instructional productivity, degree production, theses, etc. (the Office of the Provost and VPAA will assist with this) since the last APR (over the past three years for an initial APR)
- A compilation, covering the same period of time, of the research and creative productions of all faculty members involved in the program under review
- A compilation, covering the same period of time, of the service activities and products of all faculty members involved in the program under review
- A list of any unit-level policies applicable to faculty and students involved in the program under review
- A profile of students enrolled in the program including demographic information over the same period of time (the Office of the Provost and VPAA will assist with this)
- The most recent unit and/or college strategic plans
- A listing of all support services relevant to the program under review
- A description (including quantitative information as appropriate) of the facilities utilized by the program under review and the related faculty (the Office of the Provost and VPAA will assist with this as necessary)
- A list of any additional questions that the unit would like specific feedback on from the Review Team
- NOTE: A budget analysis for the program/unit under review will also be done administratively, but this analysis and supporting budget data will not be included in the self-study document.

Guidelines for Review Team's Report

The review team report should address:
- the appropriateness of the program's goals and objectives. Are the program's goals and objectives consistent with those of the University mission? Are the goals and objectives appropriate for the external marketplace?
- the quality of (1) the program -particularly the curricula (2) the program administration, and (3) the students enrolled in the program
- the appropriateness and effectiveness of evaluation and assessment procedures applied to the curricula, instruction, and student retention
- the quality and productivity of faculty teaching, research and creative production, and service
- the adequacy of the resources and support services available to the program
- the self-study conclusions, especially those regarding program quality— strengths, weaknesses, etc.
- specific review team recommendations regarding the additional questions provided for the program under review