



PROGRAM REVIEW

Policy Number: CU-AA-05

PURPOSE

Each institution of higher education in West Virginia has responsibility for review of its programs consistent with W. Va. Code 18B-1B-4 and 18B-2A-4. The purpose of this document is to set forth policy regarding program review and associated process.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all existing undergraduate and graduate academic programs.

POLICY

It is the policy of Concord University to review all academic programs offered at least once every five years and to address the viability, adequacy, necessity, and consistency of the mission of the program with the University's mission, strategic plan, institutional compact (if any), and the education and workforce needs of the region.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, a "program" is defined as curriculum or course of study in a discipline specialty that leads to a certificate or degree.

AUTHORITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Provost and/or his/her designee may develop administrative processes, procedures, and/or forms for administering this policy. These procedures will, at a minimum, address requirements set forth in Series 10, the procedural rule regarding program review. (See Appendix A, Program Review Process)

LIMITATIONS

This policy does not preclude the establishment of alternate, including higher productivity standards for specific degree programs.

AUTHORITY FOR INTERPRETATION

The final authority for interpretation of this policy rests with the Provost.

AMENDMENTS

This Policy may be amended to change names, titles, links to information, grammatical and spelling without resorting to the rulemaking process.

Federal and State laws, rules and regulations change. Any portion of this policy may be modified in practice to ensure the due process rights of the individuals involved are provided and to conform with any current Federal and State law, rules and regulations. Subject to the institution's rulemaking policy, the institution will change this policy to conform to the most current laws and regulations within a reasonable time of discovering the change.

REFERENCE/ AUTHORITY

HEPC 133-10, Policy Regarding Program Review, effective October 10, 2008

Replaces BOG policy CU-AA-05, Policy Regarding Program Review, effective December 25, 2001

APPROVAL

Intent to Plan/ Revise Approved by the Board of Governors: April 20, 2021

Approved by the Board of Governors: June 15, 2021

Effective Date: June 15, 2021

APPENDIX A ACADEMIC AFFAIRS PROCEDURE PROCESS FOR PROGRAM REVIEWS

General

To ensure that each program is reviewed at least once every five years, consistent with the Code of State Regulations (CSR) requirements, the Board of Governors will select approximately 20 percent of all programs for review each year. The program review process must be accomplished within the limits of available staff and resources.

A continuous auditing process allows for early identification of programs that need particular scrutiny. Such a process is required for identification of changes needed, appropriate interventions to take place, and corrective action to be accomplished within normal institutional planning efforts.

A rational and comprehensive program review process requires differentiation among levels of degrees. The process, criteria, and standards for associate and/or baccalaureate degree programs will differ significantly from those applied to graduate programs.

A readily accessible computerized data base will be available to support the program review process.

Evaluative Components

The purpose of the Board review, performed on a regular five-year cycle, is to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the viability, adequacy, and necessity for each academic program, consistent with the mission of the institution.

To address the evaluative component, Concord will develop a reporting format that includes at least the following core components: Mission; Faculty; Curriculum; Resources; Student learning outcomes; Other learning and service activities; Viability; and Program improvement.

As part of the program review process, periodic studies of graduates and their employers is conducted to determine placement practices and the effectiveness of the education experience.

Levels of Review

The results of the program reviews conducted each academic year by Academic Affairs are reported to the Board of Governors for consideration and action to permit reporting to the Chancellor by May 31 for review by the Higher Education Policy Commission (HEPC) staff. The Board and / or HEPC may modify any institutional action consistent with its authority for review of academic programs.

Program Review by the Board of Governors

Comprehensive institutional self-studies conducted in compliance with accreditation or institutional processes and completed within the previous 60 months may be used to provide the base line data for the program review, with any necessary updating of factual information or interim reports to the accrediting body.

Programs that are accredited by specialized accrediting or approving agencies (for disciplines for which such agencies exist) recognized by the Federal Government and/or the Council on Higher Education Accreditation shall be considered to have met the minimum requirements of the review process with respect to adequacy. For programs so accredited or approved, programs shall submit: the comprehensive institutional self-study conducted in compliance with the accreditation or approval process, a copy of the letter containing the conferral of accreditation or approval and a documented statement from the chief academic officer regarding program consistency with mission, viability and necessity. In preparing the institutional self-study, each institution will utilize a collaborative process which includes faculty, students and administrators.

Program Review by the Higher Education Policy Commission

The HEPC has the responsibility for review of academic programs including the use of institutional missions as a template to assess the appropriateness of existing programs and the authority to implement needed changes. As does the Board, the HEPC staff will focus on the appropriateness of the institutional action, particularly as the actions relate to adequacy, viability, necessity and consistency with institutional mission for each program.

The HEPC staff may request a copy of the program's self-study or other supporting materials. If the HEPC staff concludes that the institutional program review action should be modified, the staff shall consult with the president or designee to reach consensus on the appropriate steps. Should a consensus and agreement not be reached, the matter would be referred to the sitting Commission for resolution.

Procedural Elements for Program Review

The University has established the following procedural elements for the review including, but not limited to, the following:

- Delineation of the roles of faculty, administrators and the institutional governing board in the policy and/or procedural document;
- A published 5-year review schedule, issued by the Office of the Provost;
- Assignment of responsibility for conducting 5-year program reviews to the University Assessment Committee (UAC);
- Inclusion of faculty from outside the program/discipline being reviewed in the review process.
- Utilization of a portal developed for program faculty to submit data and information to support the self-study;
- Review by the UAC of each program scheduled for the year, including submitted materials and annual assessment reports for the 5-year period, and develops a recommendation on the program.
- Provision of the SAC recommendation to the Provost, who adds her/his recommendation and presents the recommendation to the BOG for review and action.
- Providing the Board's recommendation to the HEPC for consideration.

Self-Study Statement

For each program identified for annual review, the institution will develop a self-study statement addressing

the following items.

- **Viability** - Viability is tested by an analysis of unit cost factors, sustaining a critical mass, and relative productivity. Based upon past trends in enrollment, patterns of graduates, and the best predictive data available, the institution shall assess the program's past ability and future prospects to attract students and sustain a viable, cost-effective program.
- **Adequacy** - The institution shall assess the quality of the program. A valuable (but not the sole) criterion for determining the program's adequacy is accreditation by a specialized accrediting or approving agency recognized by the Federal Government or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The institution shall evaluate the preparation and performance of faculty and students, and the adequacy of facilities.
- **Necessity** - The dimensions of necessity include whether the program is necessary for the institution's service region, and whether the program is needed by society (as indicated by current employment opportunities, evidence of future need, rate of placement of the programs' graduates). Whether the needs of West Virginia justify the duplication of programs in several geographic service regions shall also be addressed.
- **Consistency with Mission** - The program shall be a component of, and appropriately contribute to, the fulfillment of the institutional and system missions. The review should indicate the centrality of the program to the institution, explain how the program complements other programs offered, and state how the program draws upon or supports other programs. Both institutional aspects of the program should be addressed. The effects (positive or negative) that discontinuance of the program might have upon the institution's ability to accomplish its mission should be stated.

Report Format

The program review is provided to the Board and HEPC in a common format containing essential information including the following elements.

- Name and degree level of program;
- Synopses of significant findings, including findings of external reviewer(s);
- Plans for program improvement, including timeline;
- Identification of weaknesses or deficiencies from the previous review and the status of improvements implemented or accomplished;
- Five-year trend data on graduates and majors enrolled;
- Summary of assessment model and how results are used for program improvement;
- Data on student placement (for example, number of students employed in positions related to the field of study or pursuing advanced degrees); and
- Final recommendations approved by the governing board.

- For programs with specialized accreditation, the program shall provide a copy of the letter continuing the conferral of accreditation. Accredited programs that meet productivity guidelines will not be subject to further review by the Commission.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF PROGRAM REVIEW

Institutional Recommendation

The appropriate Board of Governors five-year cycle of program review will result in a recommendation by the institution for action relative to each program under review. The institution is clearly obligated to recommend continuation or discontinuation for each program reviewed. If recommending continuation, the institution should state what it intends:

- Continuation of the program at the current level of activity, with or without specific action;
- Continuation of the program at a reduced level of activity (e.g., reducing the range of optional tracks) or other corrective action.
- Identification of the program for further development; or
- Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing of courses, facilities, faculty, and the like.

If the Board recommends discontinuance of the program, then the provisions of HEPC policy on approval and discontinuance of academic programs, Series 11, will apply.

For each program, the institution will provide a brief rationale for the observations, evaluation, and recommendation. These should include concerns and achievements of the program. The institution will also make all supporting documentation available to the Commission upon request.

Committee Recommendation

The Institutional Program Review Committee will develop a recommendation for action and present it to the institutional Board of Governors for action and referral to the Policy Commission.

The committee may make recommendations that go beyond those also. The committee may request additional information and may recommend continuance on a provisional basis and request progress reports.

Appeals Committee and the Appeals Process

Any disagreement between a final recommendation of the Program Review Committee and the recommendation of the academic unit may be appealed to the Academic Council, which serves as an institutional Program Review Appeals Committee.

ANNUAL PRODUCTIVITY REVIEW

In addition to the five-year program review, each program is expected to submit an annual assessment report that includes the current number of students enrolled in the program to the University Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee provides feedback and direction to the program to help them meet expectations for the five-year program review. Each program is expected to meet the minimum productivity standards.

Programs will be required to exceed at least one of the productivity indicators below for each level:

<u>Degree Level</u>	<u>Degree Awards</u>	<u>Major Enrollment</u>
Baccalaureate	5	12.5
Masters/ First Professional	3	6
Doctoral	2	4.5

Unless exempted by the President and subject to approval of the Board and concurrence of the HEPC, academic programs that fail to meet the productivity standards detailed above shall be placed on probationary status for the following Academic Year.

Probationary status will automatically trigger a focused program review. Programs on probationary status are expected to increase program enrollment and degrees awarded. Programs will have 30 days from the date of the initiation of probationary status to provide the Provost with a plan for meeting degree program productivity standards within the next academic year. At the end of the probationary period, the Provost may recommend continuing the program if indicators are met, extending probation, or terminating the program.

In addition to any University action, the HEPC may modify the action taken or initiate alternate measures, including but not limited to placing a program on probation for five years, extending probation, or recommending program closure to the Board. Probationary status will automatically trigger a focused program review.

By HEPC rules, an institution may petition for a program to be exempt from further review by submitting documentation that addresses the reasons for the request including, at a minimum, how the program is critical to the mission of the institution and state.

Focused Program Review

Either the Higher Education Policy Commission or the Board may request at any time that focused program reviews be conducted for a given purpose such as:

- reviewing all programs within a discipline (e.g. biology) or
- concentrating on specific program review components (e.g. assessment).

Formal strategies for conducting such reviews will be developed, consistent with the purpose of the review.