

Policies and Procedures

SECTION: Academic Concerns	NO. 4.1.5.			
CHAPTER: General	ISSUED: 11/15/12	REV. A 2/18/15	REV. B 1/30/2020	REV C 2/23/2023
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PURPOSE

Program review enables the University to focus attention on academic programs and to ensure that their strengths and resources are used in alignment with mission. During the program review process, faculty members have an opportunity to reflect on their work as teachers and scholars and to engage in deliberations about strategic planning, improvement, accountability measures, and resources. Thus, program review offers academic program personnel an opportunity to review and evaluate its program(s), reflect on and refine its vision, and exchange ideas and best practices with others in order to strengthen and improve existing programs. Furthermore, ideas for new programs or innovative solutions to long-standing problems may also emerge.

Creighton requires ongoing assessment of student learning as evidence of academic excellence. Annual evaluations of student learning, in both curricular and co-curricular educational endeavors, measure six common university-level outcomes. The University Learning Outcomes address cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of learning. Therefore, each school and college use existing assessments of student learning as they provide evidence for the following six common university-level outcomes:

All Creighton graduates will demonstrate:

- (1) disciplinary competence and/or professional proficiency,
- (2) critical thinking skills,
- (3) Ignatian values, to include but not limited to a commitment to an exploration of faith and the promotion of justice,
- (4) the ability to communicate clearly and effectively,
- (5) deliberative reflection for personal and professional formation,
- (6) the ability to work effectively across race, ethnicity, culture, gender, religion, and sexual orientation.

The University Assessment Committee also recognizes the need to report student learning outcomes to a variety of internal and external audiences (e.g., accreditation bodies, disciplinary groups) (University Policy 4.2.5 Annual Assessments). Creighton University embraces a culture of continuous improvement where an ongoing assessment process is not only focused on student learning and educational outcomes but also on ongoing improvement and institutional effectiveness. This requires reviews of programs using external judgments and consultation.

Creighton University's Academic Program Review Policy arises from the University's mission and University Learning Outcomes. *Creighton exists for students and learning.* Creighton University, as a Catholic, Jesuit University dedicated to excellence in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, is committed to an ongoing process of program evaluation that includes assessment of student learning, reflection, and action that is consistent with the model of Ignatian teaching and learning. It is with a commitment to academic excellence and within an Ignatian tradition and a Jesuit, Catholic campus culture that the University fosters students' learning. Ignatian pedagogy "aims at formation which includes but goes

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beyond academic mastery.” Creighton graduates will be persons for and with others.

Academic program review assists in identifying strong programs that need to be maintained and may help identify programs that need modification, consolidation, or elimination from the University’s academic portfolio.

POLICY

Creighton University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. The Higher Learning Commission requires all institutions to maintain a practice of regular academic program review and evidence of acting on the findings. While Creighton defines academic programs as degree programs, majors, minors, undergraduate certificates, graduate certificates, or concentrations, this academic program review policy applies to programs categorized as degree programs, majors, and certificate programs. Academic program review is an evaluation process that allows an institution to review and ensure quality for its academic programs.

This is done through systematic review of degree programs in order to provide evidence that the program is educationally sound and economically viable. Systematic academic program review provides a vehicle for ensuring the following:

- Evidence of educational quality and consistency with national trends
- Documentation of student performance and achievement of stated program outcomes within the context of the University mission
- Evaluation of resources including student support, faculty, and space
- Improvement of educational quality and strategies for improvement
- An evaluative process which identifies strengths and weaknesses with a forward-looking projection
- Actionable findings

External program review shall normally be conducted every seven (7) years unless a different schedule is required by an external accrediting body. For those programs that are in units or disciplines that undergo specialized accreditation, the on-site evaluation report, accreditation commission decisions, and a record of changes made in response to the report will serve as the external evaluation process.

New academic programs that do not fall under specialized accreditation will be scheduled for an academic program review when they have at least one cohort of graduates to evaluate progress and viability. Academic program review may also occur in response to a request from the program, Dean, or Provost (or his or her designee).

Department chairs and/or program directors will produce a Self-Study document which will be shared with a team of external reviewers. The reviewers will respond with a report that offers recommendations and advice regarding the future direction of the program. The Self Study Report and Reviewers Report will provide the basis for a written action plan prepared by the program in consultation with the Dean(s) that will be reviewed

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and approved by the Provost.

AMENDMENTS OR TERMINATION OF POLICY

The University reserves the right to modify, amend or terminate this policy at any time.