



GREAT FALLS COLLEGE
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

INTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

Updated April 2013

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In accordance with The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy 303.3 – Program Review, these procedures are provided for the internal review of Certificate of Applied Science, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts, and Associate of Science degrees at Great Falls College Montana State University (Great Falls College MSU).

The primary goal of the internal program review process is to enhance the alignment and quality of the College's academic programs with community and state needs. To achieve this purpose, these internal program review procedures encourage self-study and planning within programs and serve to strengthen the connections between the strategic plan and the mission of Great Falls College MSU. In addition, the essential element of the internal program review is the identification and evaluation of student learning outcomes as a key indicator of program effectiveness. Further, internal program reviews provide information for curricular and budgetary planning decisions for the Division and the College.

Benberg (T. Benberg, December 7, 2003) says, "Outcomes-based academic program review is a thinking person's process." In essence, it requires faculty and co-curricular professionals to purposefully plan the delivery of the intended student learning as well as systematically evaluate the extent to which that learning has been met and to propose recommendations for improving delivery of the learning.

The internal program review process at Great Falls College MSU is based on a cycle of self-inquiry, review, and continuous improvement. The basic components of internal program review include the following:

- a self-study, recommendations, and preliminary Improvement plan completed by the faculty associated with the program;
- review and recommendations by the College's Internal Program Review Committee;
- revision of the preliminary Improvement plan in response to recommendations by the Internal Program Review Committee;
- final approval by the Internal Program Review Committee and Associate Dean of all elements of the internal program review documents; and Improvement of actions to improve program effectiveness and quality.

I. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Associate Dean/Chief Academic Officer, on behalf of the Dean/CEO, manages the internal program review process and works closely with the College's Internal Program Review Committee, Division Directors, department chairs, and faculty senate to ensure that (a) a meaningful and thorough review is conducted for each degree program; (b) self-study reports, recommendations, and Improvement plans are completed in a timely manner; (c) outcomes of the review are communicated to the campus community and the Board of Regents; and (d) outcomes of the review are linked to decision making processes for academic program development and strategic planning.

The College's Internal Program Review Committee is the faculty-led committee responsible for managing the internal program review process on an annual basis. It is chaired by a faculty member, who is generally charged with coordinating the review process, supporting faculty and staff involved in internal program review, and initially discussing and reviewing Improvement plans. The Internal Program Review Committee advances a final Improvement plan with recommendations through the faculty senate to the Associate Dean/CAO. Internal Program Review reports will also be shared with the Curriculum Committee in their late November meeting.

Each academic program has an identified program director and division director who are responsible for overseeing the academic program. It is expected that all full-time faculty participate in the preparation and review of the program's internal program review. Where possible and as appropriate to each program, it is desirable to involve adjunct faculty as well. Program directors are responsible for developing expected student learning outcomes for each of the programs listed and for employing methods annually to evaluate program effectiveness in achieving programmatic student learning outcomes. The assessment of these outcomes forms the core of the internal program review.

II. TIMEFRAME FOR REVIEW

The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education requires that each campus review all of its programs at least once every seven years. At Great Falls College MSU, programs are internally reviewed on a five-year cycle. This schedule may be accelerated in individual cases either at the discretion of the Associate Dean/CAO, Division Director, or in compliance with recommendations from the Internal Program Review Committee. Programs accredited by a disciplinary accrediting agency are reviewed in accordance with the review cycle established by the agency, not to exceed seven years.

Requests for delaying a review are initiated by the program director to the Division Director, who determines whether to advance the recommendation to the Associate Dean/CAO. The decision to delay a review rests with the Associate Dean/CAO and normally is granted only in rare circumstances (e.g., normally to coordinate with a professional accreditation review process or to allow a new program sufficient time to conduct a review). Delays are granted normally for one year only.

III. SELF-STUDY OVERVIEW

The internal program review process provides a comprehensive, candid, and reflective self-study that focuses on future planning to enhance student learning and program quality. Programs with multi-level credentials (e.g. CAS and AAS in Medical Transcription) must provide separate data sheets for each level but may write an integrated review for each degree level, including comprehensive assessments of student learning and program functioning at both levels. Programs with an application process for admission should include both pre- and admitted students in data provided for the self-study.

The self-study is comprised of multiple parts. These include the appropriate cover pages, the self-study narrative, program data forms, and other materials as deemed appropriate by the program or division. The Internal Program Review Committee or Associate Dean/CAO may also request specific information or materials not explicitly identified in the self-study criteria section below.

IV. SELF-STUDY CRITERIA

The following areas will be addressed in your self-study;

A. Introduction and Major Program Changes since the Last Internal Program Review

Before beginning the narrative, the program director will complete the data sheet questions and email it to the Executive Director of Institutional Research & Planning and the Registrar. They will provide much of the data needed on the Program Data Form. That process will aid in the compilation of the final report to the Committee.

The submitter will provide an overall description of the program including changes since the last review and how the curriculum was revised to address these changes. This should include a copy of the appropriate Great Falls College MSU Catalog pages with comments as appropriate. Where suitable, include program mission statements, application/admission processes and criteria, design of program, accreditation oversight, and other pertinent information. In addition, describe actions taken in response to the recommendations made in the previous internal program review.

B. Alignment with Community Needs (Applied programs only)

Using the program data form, provide the job placement statistics for all graduates. In addition, provide labor market statistics showing a need for workers in occupations related to this program. Also provide average wages of those occupations for either the community or state. Within the self-study narrative, list the types and length of time for any partnerships the program has had with business and industry since the last review. Finally, provide a listing of the program's advisory board members and the minutes from advisory board meetings occurring since the last program review where the curriculum was discussed.

C. Student Participation and Success

On the program data form provide the program's enrollment trends, demographic data, retention and graduation rates, degree production rate, and if applicable, pass rates on licensure and certification exams.

D. Student Learning Outcomes

List the student learning outcomes/goals for the program. Other than grades, describe how achievement of each of these learning outcomes on a program and institutional level (the 8 Abilities) are evaluated and documented through both indirect and direct methods. Provide evidence the program is in compliance with the current Student Learning Outcome assessment process.

E. Curriculum and Instruction

Provide the current curriculum for the program, including suggested program sequence, course numbers, titles, credits and descriptions. Describe the program's primary modes of instructional delivery (e.g., face-to-face, cohort, etc.) and why that mode is the proper fit to facilitate student learning outcomes. Describe innovations in program delivery, such as: if the program is offered online or in mixed-mode format, has evening, weekend or compressed courses/schedules to accommodate student needs, uses web supported tools as resources, etc. Describe the number of dual enrollment or other early college opportunities existing in the program for high school students. Describe future curricular plans and their alignment with the College's mission and strategic plan.

F. Faculty

Provide a list of all faculty currently teaching in the program. Include title, credentials, certifications, and status (e.g., Jane Doe, MA, RHIA, Program Director, Full-time). Describe and evaluate faculty expertise for covering the breadth of the program's curriculum. Summarize and evaluate data regarding faculty and their development -- sufficiency of full and part-time faculty, release time, anticipated retirements, and other faculty issues important to the program. Describe how faculty members are engaged in college and community/civic activities. Describe program support for and involvement in faculty development, especially new and non-tenured faculty. In order to track faculty resources, also provide the numbers of full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty for each year since the last review.

G. Fiscal and Physical Resources

In the narrative portion of the self-study, describe the adequacy of both fiscal and physical resources, highlighting those areas of the program well supported and explain any areas of resource needs. Using the program data form, provide the program's five-year average annual cost per student FTE, calculated by dividing the program's total annual budget by the average annual student FTE of the program. Also calculate the program's five-year average annual cost per graduate using the same calculation approach as cost per FTE.

H. Preliminary Improvement Plan

As a result of the self-study, the program director **may** develop a preliminary Improvement plan that reflects the view of the program faculty and addresses areas identified for quality improvement or innovation. This preliminary Improvement plan is discussed with the Division Director and Associate Dean/CAO prior to submission and discussion with the Internal Program Review Committee during the internal program review meeting.

The Improvement plan includes (but is not limited to) the following elements:

1. Key recommendations of the program faculty resulting from the self-study;
2. Anticipated student profile in terms of number and type of students over the next five years;
3. Action steps to be taken in order to achieve each of the recommendations and student enrollments over the next five years; and
4. Types of human, fiscal, and physical resources needed to implement recommendations.

V. OUTCOMES OF THE SELF-STUDY AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Internal Program Review Recommendations for Program Continuance/Discontinuance

Upon completion of all reviews, the Internal Program Review Committee recommends to the Associate Dean/CAO one of the following actions as a result of the internal program review:

1. Program approved for continuance with expectation for sustained performance;
2. Program approved for continuance with specified modifications recommended by the Committee, including progress reports and possible review in less than five years; or

Program recommended for discontinuance. The Associate Dean/CAO, with delegated authority from the Dean/CEO, makes the final determination for program continuance.

Final Improvement Plan

The Final Improvement plan is as a result of recommendations from the Internal Program Review Committee, recommendations from discussion and consultation among the program director, the program faculty, the Division Director, and the Associate Dean/CAO. The final Improvement plan is to be submitted electronically to the Associate Dean/CAO no later than three weeks after that By January 15.

VI. PROCESS OVERVIEW AND CHRONOLOGY

The process follows the chronology and timeline established by the Internal Program Review Committee to ensure a meaningful review. The timeline also allows for feedback and timely submission of internal program review reports to the Associate Dean/CAO, then faculty senate, and the Dean's Cabinet. In general, that timeline will be as follows with specific annual dates assigned as per the calendar of the review year – dependent on the Committee meeting schedule for the review year:

Subsequent Program Review Schedule

<i>Notification of Internal Program Review</i>	<i>January (reminder mid-March)</i>
<i>Orientation Meeting for Next Year's Program Directors And Assignment of Mentors</i>	<i>Late April</i>
<i>Data Available for Data Sheet Completion</i>	<i>June 1 and August 1 Financial</i>
<i>Program Review Drafts Submitted to Committee</i>	<i>September</i>
<i>Review Meetings for Programs in Review Process</i>	<i>October-November</i>
<i>Final Drafts of Program Recommendations to Associate Dean Improvement Plans</i>	<i>November Due January 15</i>
<i>Previous Year's Annual Summary Report Submitted to Board of Regents</i>	<i>November Meeting</i>
<i>Program Report Review to Faculty Senate</i>	<i>February 15</i>

Program directors submit a draft to the Committee and present that draft as per the schedule identified in their notification letter and outlined above. They then present their self-study in a 20 minute presentation to the full Internal Program Review Committee during a review meeting. The time-limit will be strictly enforced, so program directors should come prepared with an overview that will fit into the 20 minute time allotment. Typically, the Division Director accompanies the program director to this meeting.

Following the presentation of the self-study, the Committee will have 20 minutes to ask questions and seek clarification. The review meeting will then be concluded and the committee will deliberate and formalize recommendations to be moved forward to the program director for inclusion in the final report. A final meeting may be requested by the program director or the committee to discuss recommendations. Previous Year's Internal Program Review reports are always presented to the Board of Regents at the November meeting.

VII. ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

For programs subject to professional, disciplinary, or specialized accreditation, internal program review is coordinated with the accreditation or re-accreditation review cycle. The self-study developed for professional or specialized accreditation reviews normally provides the essential requirements of internal program review; however, the Great Falls College MSU protocol must be used.

VIII. EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW FOR NON-ACCREDITED PROGRAMS (during the self-study phase)

For non-accredited programs, a program may request, or the Associate Dean/CAO may determine, that the program be subject to an external independent evaluation as part of the self-study phase of the internal program review. An external reviewer may be approved to review the self-study, conduct interviews, and employ other strategies to evaluate program effectiveness. The external reviewers' summary of findings and recommendations becomes part of the materials submitted to subsequent levels for review. Funds for the external review are provided by the Associate Dean/CAO.

IX. EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW (*following completion of the internal program review*)

In addition to the normal internal program review procedures, programs may be subject to an independent evaluation by at least two external evaluators. External program review occurs only in those instances where a thorough review of a program's self-study has been completed and the Division Director or Associate Dean/CAO indicates the need for an external review.

The external evaluators will be individuals of significant professional reputation in the field who will report their findings to the appropriate division. One of the evaluators will be from a Montana University System (MUS) campus, while the other evaluator may be from a non-MUS institution, preferably within the region. The external evaluators' report becomes part of the permanent internal program review file. The Associate Dean/CAO is responsible for the overall coordination of the external review. Nominations for evaluators are solicited from the Division Director of the program being reviewed and from other institutions, higher education associations, and professional organizations. These nominees are reviewed by the divisional faculty, who may reject any of the nominees for cause. The evaluators are selected from the remaining nominees by the Division Director and Associate Dean/CAO. Funds in support of the expenses of the external reviews are provided by the Associate Dean/CAO.

X. UPDATE OF INTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW PROCEDURES

The internal program review procedures are updated as necessary for currency and consistency with institutional changes in mission, structure, institutional data, and academic programs. Draft changes are submitted by the Associate Dean/CAO to the Division Directors, faculty senate, and Executive Team for review and action, as necessary.