

Academic Program Review: Purpose and Process

The purpose of this document is to lay out the purposes and processes for Academic Program Review (APR) at Hostos Community College.¹

Purpose of the APR: The APR is intended to provide departments/units/programs (the term “department” and/or “program” will be used throughout the remainder of the document to indicate all of these levels of organization) with an opportunity to review and reflect on the totality of their work of the course of the past several academic years. It is also a time for the department, as a group, to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to begin to plan the future direction(s) of the department. While the APR is a time for the department to reflect on its work and activities and plan for the future, the APR is also an administrative function.

As such, it is also an opportunity for a department, unit, or program to provide the Provost with complete information about the department, unit, or program as it moves forward in concert with the overall goals and objectives of the college and the Division of Academic Affairs.

Process of the APR:

- The Provost meets with the department chair and others to charge them with the following tasks: prepare the APR for the department in the coming academic year; appoint a committee, including one individual to serve as chair, to oversee and guide the preparation of the APR and to meet the relevant deadlines. (Timeframe: April/May of prior academic year)
- Departmental committee is convened and is formally charged by the Provost prior to the end of the academic year. (Timeframe: May of prior academic year)
- Committee prepares timeline for completing the APR, including benchmarks for completing specific tasks. The committee meets with the Provost review these materials and they agree on the final timeline for the department, including dates for benchmarks: data gathering; completion of initial draft; review and comment of draft; submission of report to Provost; review and/or visit by external reviewer; submission of final report; final meeting with Provost. (Timeframe: May/June of prior academic year)
- During the summer, the committee organizes for the task and begins the process of identifying specific data and materials to collect, prepare interview protocols (as appropriate), etc. (Timeframe: June/July/August of prior academic year)
- Committee meets with and works with other offices (e.g., OAA, OIR, SDEM, Admissions, Financial Aid, Human Resources, Budget, etc.) to obtain necessary materials and/or data. (Timeframe: September/October of academic year)
- Preparation of the draft report. (Timeframe: November/December of academic year)

¹ The following materials are adapted from Academic Program Review materials used by Florida A & M University. This document is intended to serve as a follow-up to previous proposals and to previously distributed materials.

- Draft report is provided to all faculty members in the department for review and comment. (Timeframe: January of academic year)
- Final report is submitted to the Provost with the names of between three and five individuals who have agreed to serve as external reviewers. (Timeframe: February of academic year)
- Provost selects external reviewer(s) for site visit(s). (Timeframe: February/March of academic year)
- Following site visit(s), the external reviewer(s) submit their final report(s). (Timeframe: March/April of academic year)
- Final meeting with the committee (or possibly the entire department) and Provost to review the findings of the reports and external reviewers and develop action goals for the coming academic year. (Timeframe: April/May of academic year)
- Brief follow-up report on the implementation of the action goals and their impact. (Timeframe: May of succeeding academic year)

Components of the APR:

To ensure comparability across the departments and across the APRs, there are specific items that need to be included. The components of the APR are as follows:

Executive Summary: to be prepared when the full report is completed. Not to exceed five pages.

Academic Program: this section of the report needs to address the following components:

- A brief overview of the academic program in the department
- Department mission statement and program goals and objectives
- Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) of the academic program in the department and how they relate to the goals and objectives
- A matrix relating each course to the SLOs
- Admissions requirements (if applicable)
- Specification of the degree requirements
- Brief course descriptions for all courses offered within the last three academic years (copies of most recent syllabus, with date of last update, to be included in the appendices). A separate table will be provided to list each course with its associated information (i.e., credit hours, enrollment, etc.).
- Community/business/education links and/or involvement in the department's academic program (e.g., internships, clinical practica, fieldwork, etc.)
- Articulation agreements, as appropriate

- New academic programs (include only those that are in process, not those that are still in the initial planning stages).

Outcomes Assessment Activities and Program Evaluation:

- Course and program assessment activities—provide a brief description of activities, results, and the use of the results in improving the academic program. (Full reports can be placed in the appendices.)
- Analysis of course grade patterns across terms and plan(s) for addressing issues relating to high course failure or withdrawal rates
- Use of student evaluations in course improvement
- Results from surveys of students and/or faculty, as appropriate and/or available.

Students in the Department's Academic Program(s):

- Enrollment, including enrollment trends
- Demographic profile of current students in the department's academic program
- Performance on the CUNY Skills Tests (as appropriate) and CPE (as appropriate)
- Student recruitment
- Retention and graduation statistics for department's academic program
- Student outcomes—performance on licensure examinations, job placement, transfer rates to senior college, etc.

Faculty:

- Overview of faculty including: number, length of service, tenure status, adjuncts, courses taught, and faculty demographics
- Summary of faculty scholarship and grants
- Faculty development activities within the department and how those activities relate to improving the department's academic program(s)
- Each faculty member is required to provide a paragraph summarizing recent and accomplishments and current activities. (Curriculum vitae for each faculty member are included in the appendices.)

Facilities and Resources:

- Overview of non-faculty staff—brief description of who they are and their functions in the department
- Adequacy/appropriateness of library facilities and collections for department's academic program(s)
- Space (including office, classroom, and other space)
- Equipment/laboratories (as appropriate)
- Budget, including PS and OTPS issues

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT):

- Identify areas that would support or impede achieving the goals of the department's academic program(s) and/or impede the growth of the department's academic program(s).
- Include a review of the discipline(s) relating to the department's academic program(s). The review should focus on issues relating to the continuing need and/or viability for an academic program in this discipline, the outlook for employment for graduates of the program, the availability of quality faculty in the future, etc.

Future Directions for the Academic Program(s):

- Based on the data collected and the analyses that have been performed, where does (do) the academic program(s) want to be in three years? In 5 years?
- What new courses and/or other curricular changes should be implemented?
- Are there new programs that should be added? Are there existing programs be dropped or substantially modified?
- What needs to happen in order for this academic program to achieve the goals it has set out for itself?

Recommendations:

The department should make specific recommendations that address the issues raised above. These recommendations are to be divided into two categories:

- Those recommendations that can be implemented by the department
- Those recommendations that can be implemented only by the intervention and/or assistance of OAA, the Provost, the President, or higher authority.