

Procedures:	Review of Existing Instructional Programs
Associated Policy:	Review of Instructional Programs – AC 4.0
Procedure Holder:	Senate
Executive Lead:	Vice President Academic & Student Services
Original Date:	May 2017
Last Revised:	June 2018
Next Review:	June 2021

1. Purpose and Background

Every instructional program offered for credit must undergo periodic review to assess its quality, currency, and relevance. This requirement applies to all programs for which a Yukon University credential is granted, including those delivered in full or in part by affiliated institutions or in partnership with other post-secondary institutions. It is intended that the review process should be objective and consistent in its application to all programs and departments.

Program review is a self-reflective, in-depth formative assessment of a single program, with input from external reviewer(s), for the purpose of informing improvement to and change in that program. Program reviews are meant to be evidence-based and comprehensive, addressing a wide range of criteria and all aspects of the learning environment. A comprehensive review provides the opportunity for input from all those related to a program, including faculty, staff, administrators, current students, past students and graduates, industry representatives, First Nations, and employers. The goal is to identify program strengths and weaknesses and recommend changes, improvements, and future directions. It is assumed that all programs, even those of the highest quality, may be improved.

Program review is not intended to address the performance evaluation of personnel, which is appropriately carried out through established procedures in accordance with Yukon University's Collective Agreement and policies and procedures for instructor evaluation.

It is expected that conducting the review as well as the results and recommendations emerging from program reviews will be considered in the strategic and budget plans of instructional departments.

2. Responsibilities and Components of Review Process

The Vice President Academic and Student Services maintains responsibility for monitoring, assessing, and making recommendations regarding the program review process; and identifying issues related to program review. The Dean/Chair is responsible to ensure the procedures within this document are adhered to for reviews in their departments. Normally, the review process is coordinated by the Dean, Chair or Director in the department, in consultation with the department under review.

Components of the review process include the following:

- Data gathering
- Self-study
- External Review
- Action Plan
- Institutional Response
- Follow-up

A budget for academic reviews will reside in with the department undergoing said review. It is expected that the department undergoing a review will budget accordingly in advance of the commencement of the review for both the review itself as well as for the implementation of any recommendations stemming from it.

1. *Data Gathering*

Data will be gathered from various sources to assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses. Data typically includes: administrative/Banner data, labour market information from Government, focus group/interviews, annual program scans, etc. Surveys of students and faculty will be conducted to determine the strengths and weaknesses in the department.

"Student" surveys should include surveys of alumni (but not duplicating data that is already available from the Exit Survey) and perhaps of current students, using different instruments.

The surveys will use the same constructs and wording across departments but may be customized at the discretion of the department with additional questions of special interest to the instructional program. In addition to surveys of (current) students and faculty, surveys of other stakeholders (e.g. employers) may be valuable. First Nations perspectives on the program will also be sought during the data gathering phase in a manner determined by the Dean/Chair with the FNI department.

The results of the surveys and other instruments utilized will be compiled into a Program Data and Analysis (PD&A) report exploring the quantitative and qualitative themes found in the research data. While every effort will be made to generate reports that do not contain any information which could be used to identify students, or other participants or individuals, it cannot be guaranteed that the reports will not contain any information that could be used to identify faculty, as most programs have only a few faculty and some have only one. The PD&A will be used by the department to inform the self-study report and to provide context for the external reviewer(s).

The data gathering process will be supported by the Institutional Research and Planning Officer (IRPO) who oversees all aspects of survey research (question design, survey administration and data analysis). The IRPO also provides administrative and relevant external data (e.g. labour market data) and oversees any focus group and interview research that may be conducted as part of the review.

2. Self-study

A self-study will be undertaken by program faculty, staff, and administrators. The objective is to conduct a thorough, reflective, self-critical, evidence-based analysis of each program with regard to review. The result will be a self-study report identifying program strengths to be protected and enhanced, weaknesses requiring attention, and directions for the future. Student participation will be encouraged and sought throughout the review process.

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3. External Review

An external review shall be conducted by a team of experts who are at arm's length from the program under review (see Policy PO-04 Conflict of Interest). The external review team should consist of four members, two of whom must be academic peers from other post-secondary institutions with relevant expertise and experience. The third required member will be internal-external, meaning that they are a faculty member or instructional administrator from another instructional unit at Yukon University who does not participate in the program under consideration. The fourth member will be a First Nation representative, who will be identified and recommended by Yukon University's First Nations Initiatives department. In the case of non-degree programs, one of the external reviewers may be an expert in the field from outside the post-secondary system, such as a representative of an industry, profession, or practical training program. Possible members for the external review team will be nominated by the appropriate Dean, based on input from the department, and appointed by the Vice President Academic and Student Services.

The objective of the external review is to conduct a thorough, evidence-based analysis of each program with regard to review. The external review will include an in-person site visit during which members of the team will normally meet with faculty, current and/or past students and administrators, to gather information. The result will be an external review report identifying program strengths to be protected and enhanced, weaknesses requiring attention, and opportunities for improvement and change.

4. Action Plan

Following completion of the review, the Dean of the program, in consultation with the Chair and department, will prepare an action plan identifying specific actions to be taken as a result of the review and accountabilities for each action item. The action plan, including timelines for completion, must be approved by the Vice President Academic and Student Services and will become part of the review documentation.

5. Institutional Response

The Dean of a program or programs under review, in consultation with the department, may provide a written response to the self-study, external review report and may be used to further inform the action plan. These responses will become part of the review documentation.

6. Follow-up and Accountability

One year after completion of a review, and in subsequent years as needed, the Dean will provide a progress report on the action plan to the Vice President Academic and Student Services, Senate and PACFINI.

3. Disposition/Communication of Reports

Final review reports, including self-study reports, external review reports, written responses, and action plans may, at the discretion of the Dean or Director responsible, be posted on the Yukon University intranet, subject to the issues of personal privacy and confidentiality. A summary of completed reviews will be presented to Senate, Senior Executive Committee, Yukon University Board of Governors, PACFINI and other committees for information as appropriate. Copies of final review documentation should be filed and stored by the Dean as well as the VPASS.

4. Schedule for Reviews

Degree programs will undergo review at least once every five to seven (5-7) years and all other non-degree programs will undergo review at least once every five (5) years. Programs may be reviewed more often at the request of the department, Dean or Vice President Academic and Student Services and as resources and logistics allow. The rationale for these chosen review timelines are due to the respective lengths and cycles of degree and non-degree programs, as well as to meet Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) requirements. Information derived from annual program scans, as well as timeline since last review, will also be used to inform decision making on what programs may be recommended for review in a particular year.

In years where a summative review is occurring, the commencement of individual program reviews will be suspended, except where a degree program review is otherwise required by (CAQC) within that year.

A program review will normally be completed within 18 months of its commencement.

Following consultation with the Deans, the Vice President Academic and Student Services will annually propose a schedule for reviews, with a minimum duration of three years, to be approved by Senate by no later than April 1st. Once approved, the schedule for reviews will be posted on the Yukon University intranet and provided as information to the Yukon University Board of Governors.

In order to minimize the number of different review cycles, reviews of multiple programs offered by a given instructional department or similar programs offered at more than one campus, should be synchronized wherever possible. However, within such a combined review, the quality of each program must be explicitly addressed.

5. Relationship to External Accreditation Reviews

If possible, program reviews should be scheduled to coincide with professional accreditation reviews conducted by external bodies. Because accreditation review may overlap with the requirements of the program review process, an accreditation review may be used to satisfy the requirements of this policy where it can be demonstrated to have similar criteria and standards. If necessary, accreditation review should be supplemented with additional content to ensure that all criteria of the program review policy have been met.

6. Ethical Considerations

Yukon University is committed to conducting program reviews in an ethical manner and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the process, as well as those affected by its results. Specific terms are outlined below.

a. Conflict of interest

All external reviewers will conduct themselves in a way so as to preserve the confidence of all stakeholders in their ability to discharge their responsibility properly, accomplish their purpose, and carry out their functions in a fair, objective and transparent manner. External reviewers will perform their duties conscientiously, not put themselves in a position in which their private interests and those of the institution might be perceived to be in conflict and ensure that any relationship or involvement with the unit or program being reviewed is fully disclosed before participating in any program evaluation.

There is an apparent conflict of interest when a reasonably well-informed person could perceive that an external reviewer's ability to perform a duty or function of the position would be biased or otherwise affected by their private interests. A private interest means a pecuniary or economic interest or advantage that could provide a real or tangible benefit to the reviewers or members of their immediate family.

Integrity, honesty and trust are essential elements of the review process. Any person who is aware of a possible conflict has a duty to report it. It is also expected that anyone chosen as an external reviewer who is in a conflict of interest will make an initial declaration and withdraw from participating on the team.

If a potential conflict of interest is disclosed, the Vice President Academic and Student Services will be informed and will establish a process for determining whether a real conflict exists. The Vice President Academic and Student Services will prepare a written statement regarding the potential conflict of interest, to become part of the file on the review process, indicating either that no conflict was discovered or that there was a conflict and it was resolved.

b. Compensation for Reviewers

The University may pay reasonable travel, hospitality, and other out-of-pocket expenses related to the conduct of a review and a site visit. Financial payment or other material compensation may also be provided to external reviewers in return for their services as

reviewers. All such expenses must be authorized in advance by the Vice President Academic and Student Services and be budgeted for by the department undergoing the review.

c. Confidentiality

If, during the conduct of a review, external reviewers receive damaging or prejudicial information or allegations regarding specific individuals, this information will not be included in the review report but will be transmitted to the appropriate persons within the University and handled in accordance with existing institutional policies and procedures. In any case, the names of individuals, as well as identifying statements, will be removed from final review reports prior to publication, and will be subject to the terms of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act.

7. Participation in External Reviews

Yukon University supports the concept of the external review of instructional programs. Yukon University faculty and staff are encouraged to serve as external experts when invited to participate in program reviews by other institutions. This is seen to be a benefit to Yukon University as well as to the other institutions involved.

8. Review Outcomes and Implementation

Deans/Directors and Chairs are responsible for the implementation and monitoring progress of action plans.

9. Forms

Action Plan Template

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Program Self-Study Guidelines/Factors for Review

Appendix B – Guidelines for External Reviewers

Appendix C – Yukon University Program Review Steps and Roles

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APPENDIX A – PROGRAM SELF-STUDY GUIDELINES/FACTORS FOR REVIEW

The self-study conducted by academic department provides an opportunity to assess every dimension of the program’s academic quality. The background and history of the program and the academic unit responsible for the program shall be summarized as a context for the delivery of the program.

The review procedure is intended to assist and support instructional departments in the quality assessment of their programs by providing information on a comprehensive range of factors. However, because standards and expectations vary among programs, departments, and disciplines, factors as worded may not be appropriate in all cases and should be clarified by the Dean in consultation with the instructional department at the commencement of each review. Instructional departments may also choose to identify additional factors or questions for consideration.

The self-study produced by the academic department should follow a recommended format, and should include:

Mission and Goals:

- Clearly stated learning outcomes are made clear to faculty and students.
- The program is consistent with institutional mission, goals, values, and long-range plans, and the following institutional priority areas are addressed:
 - Faculty and student involvement in reconciliation and indigenization;
 - Collaboration with faculty in other departments; and,
 - Faculty and student involvement with and service to the community (outside Yukon University).
- Assessment of program strengths and weaknesses and level of success in meeting its stated outcomes (with a description of the criteria, performance indicators, and evaluative tools employed by the program as a basis for its self-study), including:
 - consistency of the program with the University’s mission and strategic plan and the standards, goals and learning outcomes for the degree/program;

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- appropriateness and effectiveness of the admission requirements;
- appropriateness of the program’s structure, curriculum, delivery modes and evaluation methods to satisfy the learning outcomes;
- appropriateness and effectiveness of the utilization of resources, especially human resources; and,
- evidence of quality of faculty, students and overall program success.
- A preliminary response by the academic department to the program’s strengths and weaknesses identified through the self-study.

Program Structure, Delivery, and Curriculum:

- A statement of the goals and learning outcomes of the program, changes in these since the last review or since the program was initially approved, and their consistency with the mandate and academic priorities of the University.
- A summary of how each course contributes to achieving the goals and learning outcomes of the program. This will include:
 - subject matter, methods of delivery, especially approaches to pedagogy;
 - typical class sizes and trends in student enrolments;
 - all course outlines, as an appendix; and,
 - procedures used to evaluate and address course and instructional quality.
- The program, including:
 - the curriculum as presented in the calendar, incorporating course titles and hours;
 - major options/streams within the program, if applicable; and,
 - the identification of any courses that are not offered on a regularly accessible basis.
- Are students provided with opportunities for the practical application of skills and knowledge, such as through experiential learning? Is the level of the curriculum appropriate to the credential?
- Are program structure, curriculum, and modes of delivery designed to effectively achieve student learning outcomes?
- For programs delivered in communities, how well is the program serving community needs?

- Is there potential for delivery of said program to communities and are there viable options for access?
- Do student evaluation methods accurately and fairly reflect student performance and clearly assess what students are expected to learn?
- Are program admission requirements appropriate to program learning outcomes?
- An explanation of any variations from Yukon University standard policies on grading, promotion, and academic standing, if applicable.

Student Enrolment and Outcomes:

- Are efforts to recruit students effective? Are student applications of sufficient number and quality?
- Are student enrolment, retention, graduation rates, and time to completion, satisfactory?
- Are graduates successful in getting jobs and, if so, does the program prepare them well for their jobs?
- Do graduates continue on to further education and, if so, does the program prepare them well for further studies?
- Is the program relevant to the field of practice?
- Does the program/department compare well to those at peer institutions with regard to student enrolment and outcomes?
- The past, present and projected student enrolment in the program, including majors and number of full-time equivalents (FTEs).
- Student retention and graduation rates.
- Admissions information, including:
 - admission requirements and qualifications of incoming students;
 - enrolment targets and numbers of students registered; and,
 - enrolment patterns with respect to entrants, transfer students, and/or other categories relevant to the program.

Student Experience and Learning Environment:

- Are students satisfied with their educational experience?

- Are the learning environment and educational experience provided to students (both inside and outside the classroom) of good quality?
- Is the morale of the students in the program/department good?
- Are faculty and department expectations clearly communicated to students and are there sufficient opportunities for students to communicate with faculty and raise issues?
- The findings of representative surveys (conducted by the Institutional Research and Planning Department) of current students' and recent graduates' perceptions of the program's effectiveness in preparing them for careers and graduate studies.
- The results of surveys/consultations with representatives of industry, professions or practical training programs, as appropriate.

Faculty Experience:

- Are faculty and staff satisfied with their working environment?
- Is the morale of faculty and staff in the program/department good?
- What is the range of current faculty research and scholarly activity and does it enhance the quality of the program?
- Are efforts to recruit suitably qualified faculty and staff effective?
- Faculty and staff, including:
 - Full-time and part-time instructional resources;
 - Curricula vitae of all faculty members who have been teaching in the program in the last three years; and,
 - A summary of faculty in the program indicating:
 - Name
 - highest earned degree and year
 - teaching assignments
 - summary of teaching evaluations
 - scholarly activity, which could include a listing of peer-reviewed and other journal articles (current and preceding five years), chapters, monographs, policy papers, reports, presentations, conferences
 - community service activities.

Program Resources:

- Are the number and qualifications of faculty and staff sufficient to support program goals?
- Are facilities and equipment, including information technology, adequate to support the program and are they being used effectively?
- Are financial resources adequate to support program goals and are they being used effectively?
- Description of the resources available to the program (labs, student spaces, computing facilities, library resources, equipment, and other categories as appropriate).
- Information about collaborative arrangements (with other academic units or institutions) when applicable.

Additional Guidelines for Format of Self-Study Report:

- Length is 30 to 35 pages (maximum) long;
- Includes a Table of Contents;
- All pages are numbered and that the page numbers correspond to the Table of Contents;
- “DRAFT” is used as a watermark on all pages throughout the process until the final report is ready for submission.

APPENDIX B – GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

Overview

The External Review is the second stage of the program review process after the completion of the internal self-study. The External Review is conducted by a team of two members who are external to Yukon University, a First Nation representative and a faculty member from another department within Yukon University. The purpose of the External Review is to validate the self-study report and provide additional information regarding program strengths and opportunities for improvement. The final program review report will include a summary of both the self-study and external review reports and will include recommendations for future quality assurance.

Responsibilities of the External Review Team (ERT)

The purpose of the External Review process is to assist the Program and the institution in identifying specific program strengths and successes upon which to build and to address areas needing improvement.

Members of the ERT will be reimbursed for reasonable expenses for travel, lodging, meals, local transportation, and materials incurred while fulfilling their duties.

All members of the ERT must maintain confidentiality with regard to their findings before, during and after the site visit. Any questions or concerns of the ERT should be addressed to The Vice President Academic and Student Services.

Tasks

1. Prior to site visit

- Meet with the program review staff via teleconference. At that time, any questions will be answered, the schedule will be vetted and finalized, and the ERT will select a chair.
- Review the summary report submitted by the self-study team (to be forwarded by email).
- Contact the program review staff to request any additional information or assistance.

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2. *During the site visit*

- Seek the input of students, employers, external stakeholder groups, First Nation partners, staff, faculty, and administration. A tentative schedule will follow by email
- Begin to prepare the External Review Report
- Four questions to be answered as a result of the site visit are:
 - a) Does the self-study report address the six elements of the inquiry framework sufficiently?
 - b) Do your on-site findings validate the findings of the self-study team?
 - c) Do the recommendations in the self-study report reflect the findings of the self-study team?
 - d) Do you have further recommendations for the program?
- Specifically, the External Review Team will assess the extent to which the self-study report reflects the reality of the program and identify the ways in which the program:
 - meets the educational practice requirements stated in the initial commitments for program approval;
 - meets the professional expectations for ongoing operation of a quality program;
 - fulfills outcomes, practices and standards as stated in their approved program description;
 - is relevant to the communities that Yukon University serves;
 - is consistent with Yukon University's mission and values;
 - meets their program goals and intended outcomes;
 - is current with developments and advancements in their field;
 - satisfies the requirements of internal and external stakeholders.

The ERT will be provided with office space and resources to assist them with the initial draft of the report during the site visit. The chair of the ERT will have the responsibility of writing and submitting the team's final report.

3. *Two – four weeks following site visit*

- The ERT chair writes the final External Review Team report with recommendations from all of the external reviewers.
- The report is then forwarded to the Dean who will distribute it to the self-study team (SST) and to the Vice President Academic and Student Services.

After reviewing the external report, the SST will distribute the report to all those in the Program for comment. These comments help form the Program's response to the External Review Team report; a copy of the response is also sent to the Dean. The SST then formulates an action plan based on the findings in the self-study report and the report from the ERT and forwards this to the Dean.

Yukon University Program Review Overview: Steps and Roles

Program Review is a faculty-led, collaborative, systematic, evidence-based examination of a program's quality. In accordance with Yukon University's Strategic and Academic Plans, it focuses on our pivotal vision: Grounded in northern expertise and strong partnerships, we will build a healthy and prosperous north through unique, relevant and inclusive education and research.

Consequently, the review aims to:

- Conduct a detailed analysis of the program's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Determine the efficacy of the program's curriculum and instructional design.
- Evaluate the program's competitiveness, relevance and viability within the sector/discipline.

Program Review is:

- One of Yukon University's quality assurance functions.
- Required by the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC).

Program Review Timing:

- Degree programs will undergo review at least once every five to seven (5-7) years.
- Non-degree programs will undergo review at least once every five (5) years.
- Related programs will be reviewed together.
- The schedule for program reviews is updated on a yearly basis and provided to Senate.

The components of the program review process are specified in Yukon University's Procedure #1 - Review of Existing Instructional Programs and include the following:

1. Self-Study (includes Data Gathering)
2. External Review

Yukon University Program Review Overview: Steps and Roles

3. Action Plan
4. Institutional Response
5. Follow-up

Key Roles and Responsibilities

The VPASS should approve key milestones, including:

- Final self-study
- External review(s)
- Action Plan

The Deans/Chairs are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the procedures within this document are followed within an appropriate timeline for departmental reviews
- Ensuring that the review process is coordinated in the department, and in consultation with the department under review.
- Providing input into key milestones
- Providing a progress report on the action plan to the Vice President Academic and Student Services, PACFINI and to Senate one year after completion of a review, and in subsequent years as needed

IRP

- The Institutional Research and Planning Officer (IRPO) oversees all aspects of survey research (question design, survey administration and data analysis).
- The IRPO also provides administrative and relevant external data (e.g. labour market data), internal data, and oversees any focus group and interview research that will be conducted as part of the self-study or review.

Yukon University Program Review Overview: Steps and Roles

To ensure quality standards are met, each component (beginning with the Data Gathering/Self-Study) must be submitted to the Vice President Academic and Student Services for approval before proceeding to the next phase of the process. Action Plan should be submitted together with the Institutional Response.

A program review should ideally take a maximum of 18 months elapsed time from its commencement to the completion of an Action Plan/Institutional Response. This 18-month timelines includes a range of activities to be undertaken by numerous stakeholders (e.g. IRP, the Dean, External Reviewers, and VPASS approvals). Consequently, the 18-month timeline accounts for data-gathering processes, site visits arranged for external reviewers, as well as two months of annual vacation.

The chart on the next page depicts the ideal timeline for all steps of the review (prior to the Follow-up).