

ELIZABETH CITY STATE UNIVERSITY
Academic Program Review Policy

Preamble

This policy is adopted to implement the requirements of UNC System Policy 400.1, the Policy on Academic Program Planning, mandates that all academic degree programs be reviewed at least once every seven years. The policy requires each institution to assess the quality, efficiency, and productivity of its programs to ensure that they align with the institution's mission and maintain educational soundness. The policy specifically directs Chancellors to be prepared to expand, contract, or discontinue programs based on the institution's program review.

A. Purpose

This Academic Program Review Policy establishes and defines the process for academic program review at Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) and assigns roles and responsibilities to all stakeholders (Program Coordinators, Chairs, Deans, Provost, and Chancellor) involved in the review process.

B. Program Review Self-Study

The self-study is an essential process for enhancing academic quality. It allows faculty to reflect on past goals, evaluate program performance, and identify areas for improvement. Through systematic data analysis and open inquiry, the self-study fosters continuous enhancement to meet the evolving needs of students and the broader educational community.

- i. Each program must undertake a self-study.
- ii. The self-study document will outline the program's assessment plan, present evidence of its strengths and weaknesses, and propose an action plan for improvements based on the evidence.
- iii. The Office of Academic Affairs, in consultation with faculty, will provide a template to guide the self-study process. This process will be led by faculty.

C. Evaluation Metrics

To ensure the effectiveness and relevance of programs, robust evaluation metrics must be implemented. These metrics will provide valuable insights into student demand, workforce needs, and overall student outcomes, enabling informed decision-making that enhances program quality and better prepares graduates for success in their careers.

- i. Current and projected student demand, as measured by enrollments in majors and degrees, as well as in courses that support general education requirements.

- ii. Current and projected workforce demand, as measured by projected job growth and data on student employment outcomes specific to Northeastern North Carolina and surrounding 21 counties, as well as the state of North Carolina, out of state, military, and federal government employment.
- iii. Student outcomes, including retention, graduation rates, time to degree, and, where possible, post-graduation success.
- iv. Program costs and productivity, including research, scholarship, accreditation standards, creative activity, and student credit hours produced relative to the number and cost of faculty and staff.
- v. The program's contribution to professions that are critical to the health and wellness, educational attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians.
- vi. Any other considerations identified by the Chancellor or the President.

D. Review Process

The following sections detail the requirements, responsibilities, and resources necessary for effective program evaluation:

- i. Each academic program must engage in the program review process at least once every seven years. Programs with external accreditation may align their review cycle with their accreditation cycle. Any request to delay the program review requires approval from the Provost and will not alter the seven-year review cycle. Programs that miss the review deadline without such approval will not be permitted to make substantive revisions until the review is completed.
- ii. Periodic review enables programs to assess past decisions and determine whether established goals have been achieved, providing continuity in long-term planning. However, program assessment is, an ongoing process, not limited to every seven years. The review should enable faculty to reflect on data collected over the past seven years using various assessment methods.
- iii. Continuous assessment is defined at the academic department level, but all assessment plans must include methods for evaluating student learning outcomes and determining whether the curriculum effectively graduates students who meet the program's educational goals and objectives.
- iv. Academic Affairs in conjunction with the Deans, will develop and maintain the required schedule of seven-year reviews for each academic program and will inform the Department Chair and Program Coordinator when the time for the program review is approaching.

- v. The University will provide the necessary resources for each academic program to complete a meaningful and comprehensive review, and to engage in effective assessment.

E. Review Initiation, Procedures, and Sequence

- i. The procedures, required documents, and timeline will be outlined in the ECSU Academic Program Review Guidelines.

F. Roles and Responsibilities

- i. To ensure an effective review process, the following stakeholders will collaborate to evaluate and enhance program quality. The specific responsibilities of Faculty, Program Coordinators, Department Chairs, Deans, the Provost and the Chancellor are outlined below.
- ii. **Faculty:** The program faculty will conduct the self-study, gather and analyze performance data, support review recommendations, and engage in discussions for continuous improvement. They will also provide insights into the program's strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement during the review process.
- iii. **Program Coordinator:** The Program Coordinator will facilitate the preparation of program review documentation and ensure adherence to the timeline. They will serve as the contact for faculty maintaining clear and timely communication. In collaboration with faculty, the Coordinator will develop and implement an action plan based on review findings and monitor and report on the progress of program improvements.
- ii. **Department Chair:** The Department Chairs will take the lead in overseeing the program review process, offering support to Coordinators and faculty, reviewing self-assessments and action plans, and advocating for the resources needed, based on the outcomes of the review. Key responsibilities include submitting all materials by deadlines set by the Provost's office, ensuring that all program faculty are actively involved in preparing the self-study materials, and providing timely responses to issues or queries pertaining to the review report submitted to the Dean's office.
- iii. **Deans:** The Dean will review the program's self-assessment and recommendations, provide feedback, and ensure alignment with strategic goals. They will advocate for resources, facilitate communication between the department and Provost's office, and ensure that program improvements align with broader institutional objectives.
- iv. **Provost:** The Provost will oversee the program review process to ensure consistency with UNC System and institutional policies. The Provost will review

recommendations, including action plans and resource requests. Additionally, the Provost will integrate review outcomes into strategic planning and decision-making, ensuring alignment with the institution's mission and holding stakeholders accountable for implementing changes.

- v. **Chancellor:** The Chancellor shall review the results of academic program reviews to ensure that they maintain a sound and balanced educational offering consistent with the institution's functions and mission. Based on these reviews, the Chancellor shall be prepared to expand, contract, or discontinue programs. Chancellors are required to review all academic degree programs at least once every seven years from the date of the previous review or from the implementation date of a new program, or according to a schedule prescribed by the UNC President through regulation.

G. Review by Another Entity

A review conducted for another entity, including but not limited to a programmatic accreditor or a professional licensing board, which satisfies section V(A)(ii) of UNC Policy 400.1 may be submitted to the President in lieu of a separate report. A review prepared for another entity may partially satisfy section V(A)(ii), the institution may supplement that review so that it satisfies provision of section V(A)(ii) and submit that supplemented review to the President.

H. Summary Reports of Academic Program Reviews

Summary reports of all academic program reviews shall be reviewed by the ECSU Board of Trustees and then submitted annually to the UNC President.

I. System-Level Review of Academic Program Productivity

As stipulated by UNC System Policy 400.1, the System Office will conduct a systematic review of academic program productivity to ensure adherence to quality standards and benchmarks. This process includes a Biennial Program Productivity Review, which evaluates the performance of all academic programs across the System. The review will assess key productivity measures, such as student demand, credentials produced, post-graduation employment outcomes, and return on investment, thereby providing valuable insights into program effectiveness and alignment with institutional goals.