FEBRUARY 23, 2024

UTRio Grande Valley

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Table of Contents

Introduction:

The University of Texas Rio Grande (UTRGV) values and actively seeks opportunities to weave excellence throughout the fabric of the university and into the core of everything that it does. As part of this commitment to excellence, UTRGV engages in periodic review of each of its academic units and academic programs. The University supports the Academic Program Review (APR) process through the Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and is overseen by the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and the Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review.

APRs are designed to evaluate the quality, productivity, and role of each academic unit and academic program in the fulfillment of the University's mission and strategic priorities. APRs are also conducted to fulfill requirements of The University of Texas System and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). APRs provide a means of:

1. monitoring the status, progress, and effectiveness of degree programs.
2. identifying programmatic strengths and weaknesses.
3. pinpointing programmatic needs, trajectories, and priorities.
4. identifying emerging professional, regulatory, and disciplinary directions; and
5. stimulating reflection, goal setting, and planning.

These guidelines establish the institutional procedures for the preparation of APR materials and other steps of the review process. The guidelines are consistent with the THECB Best Practices for Graduate Program Reviews.

Overview of the Review Process:

Academic Unit

Effective academic year 2023-2024, APRs at UTRGV will be conducted at the academic unit level with all programs in the unit going through review concurrently. Programs will not submit stand-alone self-studies except for those degree programs that report directly to the college/school.

Academic unit refers to the following:

1. a department residing within a college/school.
2. a school residing within a college.
3. a degree program that reports directly to the college/school.

APRs conducted at the academic unit level supports UTRGV's compliance with SACSCOC Standard 7.1 Institutional Planning: *The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and(b) incorporate a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission.*

Academic Program

All academic programs offered by the academic unit will undergo review in the same year.

Academic program refers to:

1. bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional programs in the official UTRGV program inventory approved by THECB.
2. graduate stand-alone certificates approved by THECB.
3. undergraduate stand-alone minors; and
4. undergraduate stand-alone certificates.

Review Schedule

UTRGV degree programs will be reviewed at least every ten years to remain in compliance with the THECB Graduate Program Review Schedule. The THECB must approve the 10-year review cycle in advance of its implementation. THECB allows alterations to the schedule, but any changes require prior approval. Review site visits will only be scheduled during fall and spring semesters. Programs that undergo external review for programmatic licensure or accreditation may use their accreditation self-studies in lieu of the review process outlined in these guidelines. To do this, review schedules will be synchronized with the accreditation reviews of the professional association/organization.

Components of the APR

Program reviews are formative in nature, include peer review, and are conducted by the faculty of the academic program. The components of the APR include a comprehensive *self-study report*, an *external review report*, and a *response report*.

The self-study process is the academic unit and each of academic program's opportunity for self-evaluation. *The self-study report* provides an assessment of the quality, productivity, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges to the academic unit and each of its academic programs. All faculty in the academic unit are expected to contribute to the preparation of the self-study report.

In addition to the self-study process, external reviewers are invited to participate in an on-site evaluation of the academic unit and its degree programs. The purpose of the external review process is to provide feedback regarding the status of the academic unit and its programs and to make recommendations for improvement. Upon completion of their review, the reviewers will provide the academic unit with the *external review report*.

After receiving the external reviewers' recommendations, the academic unit will discuss the findings and identify future directions for unit and program improvements. The *response report* should address all recommendations provided by the external reviewers as well as the areas for improvement identified by the academic unit and its faculty.

Stages of the General Review Process

The general review process consists of the following stages:

1. The academic unit is informed of the upcoming review.
2. External reviewers are selected, and a site visit date is identified.
3. The academic unit prepares the self-study report.
4. The external reviewers review the self-study report and participate in a site visit.
5. The academic unit prepares a response report based on the external review feedback.
6. Reports are sent to institutional leadership and the THECB.
7. The college/school dean prepares a response to the self-study report.
8. The academic unit's progress is monitored at one and three years following the site visit.

Responsibilities

Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment

The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment provides leadership for the APR process.

The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment:

1. Coordinates the 10-year review cycle in consultation with THECB.
2. Schedules annual program review dates in consultation with the academic unit.
3. Maintains the APR process guidelines.
4. Resolves any issues of academic degree program definition.
5. Collaborates with college/school dean to select external reviewers.
6. Collaborates with the director/chair, college/school dean, and other appropriate institutional leaders to provide feedback on all APR reports prepared by the academic unit.
7. Extends formal invitations to potential reviewers and secures agreement to serve.
8. Monitors the academic unit's progress on responses to the external review team's recommendations.

Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review

The Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review serves as the primary point of contact for APRs.

The Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review:

1. Notifies the college/school dean, director/chair, program coordinator, and other relevant individuals of an upcoming review.
2. Advises the program and external reviewers of program review procedures and practices.
3. Ensures the academic unit receives institutional data needed for the self-study report.
4. Sets the agenda and makes travel arrangements for the external reviewers.
5. Provides funding for most review-related expenses.
6. Communicates agendas and travel itineraries with the school/department, college/school, and the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Graduate College, and Vice Provost for Student Success and other institutional leaders as appropriate.
7. Collaborates with the director/chair, college/school dean, and other appropriate institutional leaders to provide feedback on all APR reports prepared by the academic unit.
8. Provides external reviewers with the self-study report.
9. Submits required APR reports to THECB.
10. Monitors the academic unit progress in responding to the external review.
11. Communicates results and progress to Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Graduate College, and Vice Provost for Student Success and other institutional leaders as appropriate.
12. Monitors the academic unit's progress on responses to the external review team's recommendations.

College/School Dean

The college/school dean provides leadership and support to the school/department in the APR process.

The dean:

1. Collaborates with the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment to select external reviewers and alternates from the list provided by the program, and identifies additional potential reviewers as needed.
2. Prepares a college/school response to the self-study and response report indicating priorities to pursue and improvements that will fit into the college's overall improvement initiatives.
3. Participates in designated review meetings before, during and/or after the on-site visit.
4. Monitors the academic unit's progress on responses to the external review team's recommendations.

School Director/Department Chair

The director/chair of the school or department provides leadership and support to the program coordinator in the APR process.

The director/chair:

1. Appoints a program self-study committee with representation for each of the unit's academic programs.
2. Assists the program coordinator in the identification of suitable external reviewers for consideration by the college/school dean.
3. Prepares the academic unit self-study report.
4. Collaborates with the dean and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment to provide feedback to program coordinators contributing to the self-study report.
5. Participates in designated review meetings before, during and/or after the site visit.
6. Prepares the academic unit's response report using the THECB Graduate Program Institutional Response Form.
7. Monitors the academic unit's progress on responses to the external review team's recommendations.

Program Coordinator

Each program coordinator prepares their respective academic program's content for the academic unit's self-study report and monitors the program's progress in the years following the site visit.

The program coordinator:

1. Reviews the UTRGV Academic Program Review guidelines well in advance of the scheduled review.
2. Seeks guidance and schedules meetings with the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and/or Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review to discuss the review process, expectations, and timeline.
3. Provides the school/director, college/school dean and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment with the names of 4 to 6 potential external reviewers and a statement

of each reviewer's credentials with a description of any prior contact the program or its faculty has had with the reviewer.
4. Engages the program faculty in a self-evaluation process that provides insights regarding the quality and health of the program.
5. Gathers and aggregates locally collected data needed for the self-study report.
6. Seeks and incorporates feedback from the director/chair, college/school dean, Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and/or Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review.
7. Provides the final self-study report to the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment for distribution to the external reviewers.
8. Participates in designated review meetings before, during and/or after the site visit.
9. Contributes to the response report.
10. Ensures that the program monitors progress on the recommendations provided by the external reviewers.

Self-Study Committee
The Self-Study Committee actively participates in the development of the APR reports.

The Committee:

1. Assists the school director/department chair and program coordinator(s) in collecting data and other information needed from the program faculty to complete the self-study report.
2. Compiles information, analyzes data, and prepares the narrative of the self-study report under the leadership of the school director/department chair and program coordinator(s).
3. Assists the school director/department chair and program coordinator(s) in engaging the faculty in a self-evaluation process that provides insights regarding the quality and health of the academic unit and its programs.
4. Assists the school director/department chair and program coordinator(s) in the preparation of the response report.

Program Faculty
The program faculty contribute much of the information and data needed to complete the self-study report.

The program faculty:

1. Actively engage in the academic unit's self-evaluation process.
2. Provide documents, reports, files, data, and any other relevant information for use as evidence in the self-study report.

External Reviewers
The external reviewers review and analyze the academic unit's self-study report.

The external reviewers:

1. Identify academic unit and program strengths and weaknesses from the self-study report.
2. Request additional information from the academic unit and its program as desired.

3. Participate in a two-day site visit.
4. Conduct interviews of faculty, staff, administrators, and other relevant parties during the site visit.
5. Provide a prioritized set of recommended strategies for future improvements.
6. Complete the external review report using THECB Graduate Program External Review Form.

Internal Reviewers

The internal reviewers serve as a resource to the external reviewers.

The internal reviewers:

1. Provide a University/collegiate perspective where it would be helpful in the external reviewer's considerations.
2. Does not evaluate or make judgments about the department and programs under review.
3. Does not co-author the final review report.
4. Participate in a two-day site visit.

Specific Review Process and Timeline:

The specific review process and timeline consists of the following steps:

1. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment notifies the dean school director/department chair of the upcoming review.
2. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment provides the dean, school director/department chair, and program coordinator(s) with the Academic Program Review Guidelines, seeking guidance and provides training as needed.
3. The school director/department chair forms a self-study committee composed of program coordinators and other faculty as needed.
4. The school director/department chair identifies a list of 4 to 6 potential external reviewers. For diverse disciplinary departments, the potential list of external reviewers must be inclusive of all relevant disciplines being reviewed. If feasible, representation from all relevant disciplines should be considered when preparing the list of potential external reviewers.
5. UTRGV's Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment compiles and sends the historical statistical and demographic data needed for the self-study to the program. Data from the most recently completed year must also be included and will be provided as soon as it becomes available.
6. School director/department chairs and program coordinator(s) compile self-study data from the program faculty, the school/department, college/school, and other resources as needed.
7. The school director/department chair, program coordinator(s) and self-study committee prepare the self-study report and seeks frequent feedback from the college/school dean, Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment, Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review and other appropriate institutional leaders.
8. The college/school dean and the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment collaborate to select external reviewers.
9. The school director/department chair submits the self-study draft to the college/school dean and the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment.
10. The school director/department chair revises the self-study and incorporates feedback provided.
11. The school director/department chair submits the final draft of the self-study to the college/school dean and the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment.
12. The final self-study report is distributed to the external reviewers by the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment.
13. The external reviewers request additional information to be made available during the site visit.
14. The site visit is conducted, and the academic unit and its program provides any additional information requested.
15. The external reviewers submit the external review report to the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and the college/school dean after the site visit.
16. The school director/department chair and program coordinator(s) and the self-study committee complete the draft program response report after the site visit.
17. The program coordinator(s), director/chair, college/school dean, and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review meet to discuss the draft program response report following the site visit.

18. The school director/department chair and program coordinator(s) incorporate any feedback provided and submit the final response report to the college dean and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review.
19. The college/school dean prepares a college response to the self-study report and response report.
20. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment provides the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Graduate College, and Vice Provost for Student Success and other institutional leadership with all reports as appropriate.
21. The Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review uploads reports to the THECB at least 180 days (6 months) following the site visit. (THECB requires reports be uploaded no later than 180 days after the conclusion of the review).
22. Follow-up meetings among the program coordinator(s), director/chair, college/school dean, and the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review are held after one year and then again three years after the review to monitor the academic unit's progress in responding to the external review.
23. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment will provide Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Graduate College, and Vice Provost for Student Success and other institutional leadership with a summary of the one year and three-year improvement activity as appropriate.

General Process Timeline – Fall Site Visits

PRIOR TO THE SITE VISIT		
Responsibility	**Approximate Timeframe**	**Person/Office Responsible**
Academic Year 1 – Notification (one year in advance of the site visit)		
Notify the dean and school director/department chair of upcoming review	September	Dean and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Provide APR guidelines	September	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Form the self-study Committee	October	School Director/Department Chair
Provide program review training	November/December	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 1 – Prepare the Self-study		
Provide institutional data	February	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit nominations for members external reviewers to the dean	February	School Director/Department Chair
Approve and submit names of potential external reviewers to the VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	February	Dean
Approve list of potential external reviewers	February	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Invite external reviewers	February	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit Self-study to the Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment	3 months prior to the site visit (about late July/early Aug.)	School Director/Department Chair
Provide feedback on the self-study to the School Director/Department Chair and request revisions	11 weeks prior to the site visit (about early/late Aug.)	Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 2 – Finalize the Self-study and Conduct Site Visit		
Submit final revisions to the Self-study	8 weeks prior to the site visit (about late Aug./mid Sept.)	School Director/Department Chair, Program Coordinators, and Academic Unit Self-study Committee
Forward the self-study to institutional leaders	6 weeks prior to site visit (about mid/late Sept.)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final self-study report to external reviewers	2 weeks prior to site visit (about late Sept./Oct.)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment

Conduct the site visit	October/November	Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
AFTER THE SITE VISIT		
Submit external site review report to the VP of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	2 weeks following the site visit (about mid or late Nov. to early Dec.)	External review committee
Submit draft of response report	1 month following the site visit (about mid/late Dec.)	School Director/Department Chair
Meet to discuss draft response report	1 to 2 months following the site visit (about Dec./Jan.)	Program Coordinator(s), director/chair, college/school dean, and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final draft of response report	3 months following the site visit (about late Jan./Feb.)	School Director/Department Chair
Submit a college response report	4 months following the site visit (about Mar./early Apr.)	College/school dean
Submit all reports institutional leadership	4 months following a site visits (about Mar./early Apr.)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Upload reports to THECB portal	May	Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING		
Academic Year 3 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	First spring term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
Academic Year 5 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	Third spring term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review

Example Fall Site Visit Timeline

PRIOR TO THE SITE VISIT		
Responsibility	**Approximate Timeframe**	**Person/Office Responsible**
Academic Year 1 – Notify Academic Units (one year in advance of the site visit)		
Notify the dean and school director/department chair of upcoming review	September	Dean and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Provide APR guidelines	September	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Form self-study committee	October	School Director/Department Chair
Provide program review training	November/December	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 1 – Prepare the Self-study		
Provide institutional data	February	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit nominations for members external reviewers to the dean	February	School Director/Department Chair
Approve and submit names of potential external reviewers to the VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	February	Dean
Approve list of potential external reviewers	February	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Invite external reviewers	February	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit Self-study to the Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment	August 11th (3 months prior to the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair
Provide feedback on the self-study to the School Director/Department Chair and request revisions	August 26th (11 weeks prior to the site visit)	Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 2 – Finalize the Self-study and Conduct Site Visit		
Submit final revisions to the Self-study	September 16th (8 weeks prior to the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair, Program Coordinators, and Academic Unit Self-study Committee
Forward the self-study to institutional leaders	September 30th (6 weeks prior to site visit)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final self-study report to external reviewers	October 28th (2 weeks prior to site visit)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment

Conduct the site visit	November 11	Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
AFTER THE SITE VISIT		
Submit external site review report to the AVP of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	November 25th (2 weeks following the site visit)	External review committee
Submit draft of response report	December 23rd (1 month following the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair
Meet to discuss draft response report	December 23rd to January 23rd (1 to 2 months following the site visit	Program Coordinator(s), director/chair, college/school dean, and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final draft of response report	February 23rd (3 months following the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair
Submit a college response report	March 23rd (4 months following the site visit)	College/school dean
Submit all reports institutional leadership	March 23rd 4 months following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Upload reports to THECB portal	May	Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING		
Academic Year 3 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	First fall term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
Academic Year 5 –Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	Third fall term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review

General Review Process Timeline – Spring Site Visits

PRIOR TO THE SITE VISIT		
Responsibility	**Approximate Timeframe**	**Person/Office Responsible**
Academic Year 1 – Notify Academic Units (one year in advance of the site visit)		
Notify the dean and school director/department chair of upcoming review	March/April	Dean and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Provide APR guidelines	March/April	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 2 – Prepare the Self-study		
Form self-study committee	September	School Director/Department Chair
Provide program review training	September	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Provide institutional data	September	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit nominations for members external reviewers to the dean	September/October	School Director/Department Chair
Approve and submit names of potential external reviewers to the VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	September/October	Dean
Approve list of potential external reviewers	October	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Invite external reviewers	October	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit Self-study to the Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment	3 months prior to the site visit (about end of Jan.)	School Director/Department Chair
Provide feedback on the self-study to the School Director/Department Chair and request revisions	11 weeks prior to the site visit (about early Feb.)	Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 2 – Finalize the Self-study and Conduct Site Visit		
Submit final revisions to the Self-study	8 weeks prior to the site visit (about late Feb.)	School Director/Department Chair, Program Coordinators, and Academic Unit Self-study Committee
Forward the self-study to institutional leaders	6 weeks prior to site visit (about mid. Feb./early March).	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final self-study report to external reviewers	2 weeks prior to site visit (about Mar./early April)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment

Conduct the site visit	April	Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
AFTER THE SITE VISIT		
Submit external site review report to the AVP of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	2 weeks following the site visit (about late Apr./early May).	External review committee
Submit draft of response report	1 month following the site visit (May)	School Director/Department Chair
Meet to discuss draft response report	1 to 2 months following the site visit (May/June)	Program Coordinator(s), director/chair, college/school dean, and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final draft of response report	3 months following the site visit (about end of July)	School Director/Department Chair
Submit a college response report	4 months following the site visit (about end of Aug.)	College/school dean
Submit all reports institutional leadership	4 months following a site visits (about end of Aug.)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Upload reports to THECB portal	August	Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING		
Academic Year 3 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	First spring term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
Academic Year 5 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	Third spring term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review

Example Spring Site Visit Timeline

PRIOR TO THE SITE VISIT		
Responsibility	**Approximate Timeframe**	**Person/Office Responsible**
Academic Year 1 – Notification Year		
Notify the dean and school director/department chair of upcoming review	March/April	Dean and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Provide APR guidelines	March/April	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 2 – Prepare the Self-study		
Provide program review training	September	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Form self-study committee	September	School Director/Department Chair
Provide institutional data	September	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit nominations for members external reviewers to the dean	September/October	School Director/Department Chair
Approve and submit names of potential external reviewers to the VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	September/October	Dean
Approve list of potential external reviewers	October	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Invite external reviewers	October	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit Self-study to the Dean and AVP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment	January 23rd (3 months prior to the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair
Provide feedback on the self-study to the School Director/Department Chair and request revisions	February 6th (11 weeks prior to the site visit)	Dean and VP for Curriculum & Institutional Assessment
Academic Year 2 – Finalize the Self-study and Conduct Site Visit		
Submit final revisions to the Self-study	February 27th (8 weeks prior to the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair, Program Coordinators, and Academic Unit Self-study Committee
Forward the self-study to institutional leaders	March 12th (6 weeks prior to site visit)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final self-study report to external reviewers	April 9th (2 weeks prior to site visit)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Conduct the site visit	April 23rd	Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment

AFTER THE SITE VISIT		
Submit external site review report to the VP of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment	May 6th (2weeks following the site visit)	External review committee
Submit draft of response report	May 23rd (1 month following the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair
Meet to discuss draft response report	May 23rd to June 23rd (1 to 2 months following the site visit)	Program Coordinator(s), director/chair, college/school dean, and VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Submit final draft of response report	July 23rd (3 months following the site visit)	School Director/Department Chair
Submit a college response report	August 23rd (4 months following the site visit)	College/school dean
Submit all reports institutional leadership	Late August (4 months following the site visit)	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment
Upload reports to THECB portal	August	Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING		
Academic Year 3 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	First spring term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
Academic Year 5 – Reporting and Continuous Improvement		
Schedule a follow-up meeting to review progress	Third spring term following the site visit	VP for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review

External Review Processes

Appointing External Reviewers

The following steps describe the nomination and selection process for external reviewers:

1. After notification from the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment regarding the APR, the school director/department chair recommends 4-6 external reviewers with subject-matter expertise and employed by institutions of higher education outside of Texas. . If among the external reviewers selected none have experience as a department chair, submit an additional list of 3 potential reviewers with current or past department chair experience. The school director/department chair may seek advice from the dean and faculty regarding recommendations for potential reviewers. The preliminary list of potential reviewers must be provided to the college/school dean and Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment for consideration.
2. External reviewers must:
    a. be from department/programs that are comparable to school/department under review at UTRGV.
    b. hold the rank of Associate or Full Professor.
    c. be actively involved in the highest level (administration, scholarly productivity, professional service, etc.) of the academic unit and/or the programs under review;
    d. have no conflicts of interest (e.g., not limited to, but including authoring publications, grants, and presentations with faculty in the academic unit, having supervised or mentored faculty in the academic unit, being colleagues at another institution with the seven most recent years, receiving professional or personal benefit resulting from the review) with their review of the UTRGV academic unit and its programs;
    e. not be former UTRGV or legacy institution faculty;
    f. not be scholarly collaborators with UTRGV faculty; and
    g. not be from a university where current UTRGV faculty were employed within the seven most recent years.
3. The following information should be submitted for the possible reviewers:
    a. Name
    b. Institution
    c. Contact Information
    d. CV or resume
    e. Justification of why the individual is appropriate to review the academic unit and its programs
4. The college/school dean reviews the list and adds or deletes names before submitting it to the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment for approval.
5. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment in consultation with the Provost and Dean of the Graduate College approves the list of potential reviewers at least 6 months in advance of the site visit.
6. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment verifies willingness of the candidates to serve as external reviewers and invites at least two but no more than three to serve within a mutually agreeable timeframe. If the invited external reviewers decline to participate, then the school director/department chair and dean will be given an opportunity to submit additional reviewer recommendations.

Appointing Internal Reviewers

The following steps describe the nomination and selection process for internal reviewers:

1. The school director/department chair recommends two to three UTRGV faculty members from a program not affiliated with the department and programs to be reviewed to serve as internal reviewers. When possible, the internal should have expertise in a complimentary field but no direct attachment to the department or its programs.
2. The school director/department chair recommends two to three academic administrators not affiliated with the department and programs to be reviewed to serve as internal reviewers. When possible, the internal should have expertise in a complimentary field but no direct attachment to the department or its programs.
3. The college/school dean reviews the lists and adds or deletes names before submitting it to the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment for approval.
4. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment in consultation with the Provost and Dean of the Graduate College approves the list of potential reviewers at least 6 months in advance of the site visit.
5. The Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment verifies willingness of the candidates to serve as internal reviewers and invites one faculty member and one administrator to serve as reviewer based on availability.

External Review Site Visit

The Office of Curriculum and Institutional Assessment handles the site visit. This includes setting of the agenda and arrangements for the external reviewers. During the site visit, the external reviewers will analyze additional documentation provided by the program if requested and will conduct interviews of administrators, faculty, students, staff, and other relevant individuals. The schedule will typically consist of:

Day 1 – External reviewer dinner with the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review
Day 2 – Meetings and interviews with director/chair, program coordinator(s), faculty, and students
Day 3 – Exit interview with director/chair and program coordinator(s) to discuss observations.
Day 3 – Exit interview with the dean of the college, Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment, Director of Institutional Assessment for Program Review, and other institutional leadership as appropriate to discuss observations.

If necessary, alternate formats for the site visit may be considered including virtual or hybrid visits (e.g., some events or reviewers scheduled to be online).

External Review Report

The reviewers should consider both the self-study report and the site visit when evaluating the program's quality. In their evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the academic units and its programs and in making recommendations for improvement, the reviewers should:

- describe the academic unit's strengths;
- describe the academic unit's weaknesses;
- address the future viability of the academic unit;
- make recommendations for improvement, including both immediate and long-term
- suggestions;
- provide an assessment of where the academic unit should strive to be in the next five years; and,
- suggest ways to strengthen the academic unit so it can move to the next level.

External Review Report

Self-study, Response, and Monitoring Reports

The Self-Study Report

The self-study is a comprehensive report that examines the status of the academic unit and its programs based on activities and achievements over the previous five years or since the previous review. The self-study must contain sufficient information for a preliminary evaluation of the academic unit and its programs and serves as a starting point for the external reviewers' in-depth review of unit. This document should identify strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction, student quality, educational outcomes, research activities and funding levels, resource availability and needs, and special features or services provided by the academic unit. The self-study should serve as a vehicle by which the academic unit can plan together with the University's strategic plan. Thus, the self-study should include mechanisms for solving current and projected problems, for building on current strengths, and for maximizing opportunities that are likely to develop within the academic unit and its program disciplines in the near future.

Preparing an Effective Self-Study

The self-study should incorporate the aforementioned information, as well as other information that committee members feel is important to the academic unit and its programs. The allocation of resources is an important matter to all academic units, but the self-study is not a budget request. The self-study is an opportunity to provide the administration and the external reviewers' information about the academic unit's strengths, weaknesses, plans, and goals. The report is likely to have its most favorable impact if the academic units use this opportunity to think creatively about its plans.

- *Responsiveness*. The report should adhere to its outline and be thorough, but concise, digestible, and crisp. It should address issues of program quality and its products; extraneous issues should be ignored.
- *Documentation*. The report should be data driven. Valid internal and external peer comparisons are very helpful. Simplistic, selective, and out-of-context summaries are counterproductive.
- *Tone*. The report should be constructive in tone. A balanced approach should be stricken between challenges, problems, aspirations, goals, opportunities, future plans and potential implementation of those External reviewer's express concern about "ax-grinding," defensive, or lecturing styles.
- *Objectiveness*. The report should be appropriately candid, introspective, and analytical. It should feature an honest look at the status of, and opportunities facing, the academic unit. The report must be credible to be useful.
- *Perspective*. The report should be forward looking, consistent with department, college, and University strategic plans and planning, and be neither an unconstrained "wish list" nor an exercise in self-congratulation. Needs should be addressed comparatively, with appropriate attention to priorities and spending.
- *Accuracy*. The committee responsible for preparing the self-study report must work with the head of the academic program to ensure the accuracy of the statements contained in the document.

Response Report

After receiving the external review report, the school director/department chair and the self-study committee prepare the academic unit's response report. The response report should focus on the recommendations in the external review report. The academic unit should identify those recommendations likely to lead to improvements for the academic unit and, as appropriate, should describe specific actions planned considering the recommendation. The academic unit's response should also include any findings by the external reviewers to which the academic unit disagrees and the basis for such disagreement.

Dean's Response

After receiving the academic unit's response report, the college/school dean prepares a college/school response indicating priorities to pursue and academic unit improvements that will fit into the college's/school's overall improvement initiatives. The dean's response should commit the college/school to a course of action designed to support the academic unit with its improvement efforts.

Follow-Up and Monitoring

One year following the submission of the response report, the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment and Director of Institutional Assessment and Program Review will schedule a meeting with the program coordinator(s), and director/chair, college/school dean to review progress in responding to the review. Three years following the site visit, a second follow-up meeting will be scheduled to discuss continued progress on the academic unit's improvements.

Accreditation in Lieu of External Review

Graduate or undergraduate programs that undergo external review for specialized accreditation may use their external accreditation review in lieu of the process outlined in these guidelines. Graduate programs who choose to use an external accreditation review to satisfy THECB review requirements should ensure that the self-study report submitted to the Vice Provost for Curriculum and Institutional Assessment includes all of the data points outlined in Texas Administrative Code 5.52. Program information that is not required for the accreditation review may be prepared as a separate document and submitted as a supplement to the self-study report.