Academic Program Review: 7-Year Self-Study (APR-7) Guidelines

Date: 01/15/2023[[1]](#footnote-1)

A self-study academic program review every seven years (APR-7) is integral to ISU’s institutional assessment process to support mission fulfillment related to educational offerings. It allows faculty and academic units to document continuous improvement of programs and curriculum delivery, assess the effectiveness of practices, and plan and implement action to enhance student learning.

The APR-7 review process supports programs periodically completing an in-depth evaluation of all aspects of their work. The review is, first and foremost, an opportunity to share successes. It is also a way to examine ways programs could improve and identify areas in which Academic Affairs may be able to increase or leverage support. The APR-7 meets the expectations of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) Standards [1.B.1 and 1.C.1 through 1.C.7.](https://nwccu.org/standards/) Additionally, this process supports the [State Board of Education III.G. Postsecondary Program Review and Approval](https://boardofed.idaho.gov/board-policies-rules/board-policies/higher-education-affairs-section-iii/iii-g-postsecondary-program-review-and-approval/) requirements and the Idaho State University’s [institutional strategic plan](https://www.isu.edu/strategicplan/) goals.

# General Education Courses

The General Education Program undergoes its own review process, which requires annual reports from all General Education courses and objective Review reports every five years. Annual reports and Objective Review reports are on the [General Education Requirements Committee](https://www.isu.edu/gerc/) webpage.

# Scope of Reviews

Programs not covered by specialized accreditation must complete an APR every seven years (APR-7). Reviews will usually be conducted at the departmental level and cover all degree programs housed in the department. However, reviews will focus on distinct programs within larger departments and will consider the full range of departmental activities.

# Scheduling

A schedule of program reviews will be posted on the university [Academic Program Review](https://www.isu.edu/assessment/academic-program-review/) web page. Reviews may be called for earlier than scheduled if program circumstances warrant closer monitoring.

Colleges should communicate any review schedule adjustments to Academic Affairs.

# Reviewers

The review team must have at least two members, and at least one must be external to the university with expertise in the field. Any review team member from ISU must be from a department or program other than the one under review. Review team members are selected from a list of candidates submitted by the department.

Selecting external reviewers with any recent connections with the program under review should be avoided; if this is not possible, full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest should be identified. Resources that help programs identify and select external reviewers can be found on the [Academic Program Review and Assessment web page.](https://www.isu.edu/assessment/)

# Process Timeline

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| **APR-7 TIMELINE[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| **Spring (one year before the review/campus visit)**  Programs that need to begin the periodic program review process receive a notice from the University Assessment Review Committee (UARC). Please contact your UARC representative or Academic Affairs for questions. |
| **Summer**  Programs collect the data needed for the report from the past 7 years in the categories listed in the Academic Program Review template. |
| **Fall**  Collaboratively write the program self-study review report with the faculty and other relevant stakeholders. Select external reviewers to read the report and meet with the program and stakeholders in the following spring. Share the self-study with faculty for comments. Revise and upload to BOX and provide access to college-level administrators for comments and feedback. |
| **Spring (the year of review & campus visit)**  Complete the campus visit. Reviewers write and submit their reports to the program and upload them to BOX within one month of the campus visit. |
| **Summer & Fall (the year of review & campus visit)**  Respond to the external review and discuss with faculty at departmental meetings. Upload final report through APR Google Form. |

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| **Timeline with Responsibilities** | | | |
| **Recommended Schedule**  (Absolute deadlines are indicated in bold) | **Who is taking action** | **Action/Artifact** | **Reporting to Whom** |
| March 15 of the academic year before the visit | Academic Affairs  University Assessment Review Committee | notifies college leadership and department chair of the program(s) to be reviewed for that academic year following the program review schedule | College leadership and department chair |
| One year before the visit | Program | begins assembling self-study document | (Interacts with program faculty) |
| Six months before the visit | Department chair or designee | submits a list of potential review team members | Dean or dean’s  designee |
| Four months before the visit | Dean or dean’s  designee | selects/approves review team members | Program |
| Three months before the visit | Dean or dean’s  designee | arranges for a review visit  shares recommended report template | Review Team |
| One month before visit | Program | completed self-study submitted | Review Team |
| Site Visit | Review team | visits campus and conducts program review | (Interacts with the program) |
| One month post visit | Review team | submits prepared report based on self-study and visit | College leadership |
| **May 10** (of the academic year in which the review took place) | College leadership | shares a copy of the report | Program Faculty |
| August - October | Program Faculty | review, discuss, and write a response to the review report, addressing issues that  are identified and outlining an action plan based on the report's recommendations |  |
| **November 1** (of the academic year following the review visit) | Program faculty or college leadership | submits a copy of the review report and the program response | Academic Affairs and dean or dean’s designee |
| *(as needed or requested)* | Academic Affairs | meets regarding the plan of action if needed | College leadership and department chair |

**Note**

It should be noted, during years in between the seven-year reports, departments will submit APR-A reports to Academic Affairs and college leadership. College leadership will review these reports annually. If trends or significant points of concern are noted, college leadership will recommend departmental action and work collaboratively with Academic Affairs to support programs.

# Resources

1. [ISU General Education Requirements Committee (GERC](https://www.isu.edu/gerc/)).
2. [ISU Program Assessment Handbook](https://isu.app.box.com/s/ev7qkuz7bzoh2jk4wcsfv36lq0ydjwdj)
3. ISU Institutional Research. [*Argos Reports Listing*](https://www.isu.edu/media/libraries/academic-affairs/institutional-research/argos-reports-listing/ArgosReportsListing.pdf)*.* (Contact [Institutional Research](https://www.isu.edu/institutionalresearch/contact-institutional-research/) for resources needed for the self-study report.

1. Initial Approval 2018:

   * Approved by Deans' Council, April 3, 2018,
   * Approved by Faculty Senate, April 23, 2018

   Updated Approval 2023:

   * Approved by AA Leadership March 6, 2023
   * Approved by UARC March 6, 2023
   * Approved by Faculty Senate April,, 2023
   * Approved by Dean’s Council March 9, 2023
   * Revised April, 2024

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For more information and documents, go to [Academic Program Review and Assessment](https://www.isu.edu/assessment/). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)