OFFICE FOR ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM REVIEW

Program Review of Degrees and Certificates

Policies and Procedures

(REVISED MAY 2010)
PROGRAM REVIEW OF DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Program Review is a required process and helps to maintain institutional effectiveness. It is based on a five to seven (5-7) year cohort cycle and a one-year review process.

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1. Programs are required to adhere to the following Time Frame and Activities for Full Reviews, Subsequent Cycles and Interim Follow-Ups.

   September 15  Department Chairs and Area Deans are notified of upcoming review process and receive all pertinent materials for the review.

   October 15  Due from Chair to OAPR: (1) Names and contact information for 2 External Reviewers and (3) possible site visit dates.

   November 15  Initial contact made by OAPR with External Reviewers; OAPR subsequently finalizes site visit date, begins NCC contract process, and provides Reviewers with all pertinent materials for the review.

   February 15  Program Self-Study report due to Dean of OAPR and to Area Dean.

   March 15  Area Dean’s Response to the Self-Study Report due to Chair and to Dean of OAPR.

   April 15 - May 15  Site visits implemented as planned.

   October 1  Program post-review Action Plan due to Dean of OAPR and to Area Dean.

   1 Year Post-Action Plan  First Interim Follow-Up report of Action Plan implementation due to Dean of OAPR and to Area Dean.

   3 Years Post-Action Plan  Second Interim Follow-Up report of Action Plan implementation due to Dean of OAPR and to Area Dean.

   5-7 Years Post-Review  Subsequent Cycle Review
2. **Components of a Full Initial Program Review:** Self-Study – This consists of two (2) parts. First, there is a required response to a set of items that represent the organizing structure of the Full Program Review Self-Study Report. These are designed to give a global perspective of the program to respondents before examination of program data. Second, responses are required to address specific questions in the following categories:

   I. Program Success Indicators  
   II. Student Performance Indicators  
   III. Faculty  
   IV. Facilities/Resources  
   V. Program Need and Cost-Effectiveness

3. **Action Plan:** This is the program’s plan for the implementation of recommendations of the External Reviewers as a result of the on-site visit. It consists of a matrix that targets the goals and actions to achieve the goals, person responsible for the implementation of the action(s), as well as a target date for completion of the actions and the current status of the goal at the one, or three year interims.

4. **Components of a Subsequent Cyclical Review:** At the end of the five to seven (5-7) year cycle, the program is reviewed again, using a streamlined process. A set of customized questions is developed based on the previous review, Action Plan and interim follow-up reports. Included are self-study questions raised by the program respondents, recommendations and comments of external reviewers, and issues raised by the Area Dean. Subsequent cyclical reviews provide a feedback loop that translates the results of the program review process into an assessment of institutional effectiveness.

5. **Common Components of the Full Review and Subsequent Cycles:**

   - Self-Study Questions & Report  
   - Plan for Department-based review activities, e.g. meeting with students, and tour of facilities.  
   - Requirement of two (2) External Reviewers who are experts in their fields or in the industry in which they practice, and who have no connection to the college or a personal relationship with any of the respondents.  
   - Statistical support in the form of a standard Program Review “datapak”. Programs being reviewed are requested to use the statistics provided by OAPR as they respond to their text questions.  
   - Creation of a 5-7 year Action Plan including specific planned modifications, explicitly linked to the program review, and which are likely to strengthen the program.  
   - One-year and three-year interim follow-up reports are required to document implementation and progress made with respect to the Program’s Action Plan.

*NOTE: Any program that is reviewed by an outside accrediting agency is not required to participate in the internal review process. However, programs in this category MUST submit to the Office of Assessment and Program Review (OAPR): (1) a copy of the self-study document prepared for the outside accrediting agency, (2) a copy of the accrediting agency’s response report, indicating a re-accreditation time frame, and (3) a copy of the accrediting agency’s letter*
affirming the program’s accredited status. It is important that these be submitted to OAPR in a timely fashion.

6. Global Perspective: Please respond to the following before examining program data.

- What are the learning goals of the program? How are these program-level goals communicated to students? How are they aligned with the College Mission Statement, institutional goals and course-level learning goals?
- What are the measurable or observable program-level outcomes that would indicate how well the program is meeting its goals?
- What are the strengths of the program in terms of meeting its learning goals? (For example, do faculty members meet regularly to discuss these learning goals?)
- What might be considered the challenges to be met in order to strengthen the program and enable it to achieve its learning goals?
- Aside from a larger budget and/or additional faculty lines, how might the college support the program’s efforts to meet its learning goals for students?
- What are the emerging trends in this program/discipline? (For example, Department of Labor job forecasts, technological advances, and/or cultural shifts which may change perceptions of the program.) What other institutions have similar programs that may be competitors for enrollment, or potential transfer options?

7. Initial Program Review Self-Study Report Questions: Please respond to the questions as numbered and be explicit as to how your responses demonstrate congruence with both the College Mission and the goals of General Education.

I. PROGRAM SUCCESS INDICATORS

A. Curriculum

1. When was the last time the program curriculum was modified? What happened, and why? What criteria were used?

2. How are course-level learning goals and learning outcomes aligned with those of the program?

3. Please list and briefly describe the knowledge and skills-related competencies of students who successfully complete the program.

B. Recruitment

1. In addition to the efforts of the Office of Admissions, describe how program faculty and staff recruit students for the program, i.e., high school visits, advertisements, etc. What specific factors are used to identify target recruitment markets?

2. What other regional institutions offer comparable/similar programs? How might prospective students be encouraged to enter the NCC program rather than a similar one at another regional institution?
C. **Enrollment**
   1. Describe how enrollment has changed over the last five (5) years. To what factors do you attribute these changes, and is there evidence for identifying these factors? What specific actions have been taken to address these changes?

   2. Does it appear that over time the program is systematically attracting students with significantly better or significantly worse high school performance records? If yes, please interpret this enrollment trend, and discuss how this trend has influenced the program curriculum, including the content of program courses and offerings, (if at all).

D. **Student Preparation/Profile**
   1. If your program does not impose restrictions regarding remedial completion prior to enrollment, please identify the specific remedial courses that are taken by program students. Have there been noticeable and/or documented patterns or trends in program student remediation needs over the past five (5) years? If so, please describe these, and discuss how the program might better serve these students.

   2. What are the student demographics of your program (i.e. age, gender, ethnicity, etc.) Describe how these might influence student preparation and success, if at all.

E. **Advisement**
   1. Describe the program-based advisement process that guides students through the program.

   2. How are your “majors” tracked (course grades, GPA’s, placement, etc.)? What methods are used to gather tracking data?

   3. What training is in place to ensure that program faculty is able to provide students with appropriate and effective advisement?

F. **Retention/Completion**
   1. What serious impediments exist that affect students’ timely progress towards a degree? Describe common student dropout and/or stop out points and factors that may account for these. What strategies might be used to enhance student retention and completion of this program?

   2. Does the program offer special help in program-specific courses for students who are also taking remedial courses or for students who are having difficulty in content-specific courses? Discuss other program-specific approaches for supporting under-prepared and/or remediated students enrolling in the program.

   3. Please describe systematic program follow-up, if any, which is employed to (a) identify the factors which affect student retention in the program, and (b) recapture non-retained students. If the program is not currently employing such follow-up, suggest follow-up methods you might include in your five-year plan.

   4. How is student satisfaction with the program experience measured?
G. Transfer and Employment

1. How long does it take for students to graduate from the program? Do graduates generally immediately obtain jobs for which the program has prepared them?

2. What kinds of employment information does the program routinely collect about program graduates? How is this information obtained? How, if at all, does the program follow up on graduates’ successful employment? How is this information used in program and curriculum planning?

3. What specific transfer articulation agreements does the program have in place? How are program students made aware of the range of transfer opportunities? Do students take advantage of these agreements, and if so, at what frequency and/or rate? If students do not take advantage of articulation agreements, please explain.

4. What kinds of transfer information does the program routinely collect about students in the program? How is this information obtained? How does the program follow up in the long term on student transfers? How is transfer information used in program planning? What proportion of program students have transferred “in” from other programs, either “in house” or from another institution?

II. STUDENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

A. Measures of Success

1. What is (are) identified by the program as the most meaningful indicator(s) of individual and program student success (i.e., GPA, transfer, licensure, employment)?

2. In what ways do program performance indicators foster department/program discussion about program planning, revision, and support?

3. Discuss how and why program performance indicators have or have not been consistent over the last five (5) years?

4. How are results of assessment at the course, department and program levels used to identify program strengths and challenges? How do you use these data to develop appropriate program modifications where necessary and document improvements over time?

III. FACULTY

A. Faculty Qualifications

1. Do qualifications of current program faculty meet current as well as anticipated program needs? Based on anticipated program and curricular needs, what additional or enhanced faculty qualifications might be required in the future? How will the program ensure that its faculty has necessary qualifications and that faculty is well-matched to courses taught?
2. In terms of numbers, does the program anticipate a need to hire additional faculty? Has the number of adjunct faculty teaching in the program increased in the past five (5) years? What factors are determinants for new hires and adjuncts?

3. How diverse is the faculty in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, and disability? Describe how diversity enhances learning experiences as students progress through the program.

4. How do the Department Chair and the Coordinator/Director of the Program work together to ensure the program functions well?

B. Quality of Instruction
   1. What professionally developed initiatives has the program planned for and/or implemented in the past five (5) years for full-time and/or adjunct faculty? How is quality of instruction continuously assured so that program learning goals are met?

   2. Describe faculty development activities and individual professional activities that contribute to the overall enhancement of the program. Specifically list all (a) conferences and seminars attended by program faculty; (b) awards and certifications received; and (c) invited presentations and juried publications.

   3. Describe how adjunct instruction affects the quality of the program, if at all, specifically as regards meeting program learning goals. Describe program efforts to include adjunct faculty in (a) the work of assessing student learning outcomes and (b) professional development activities.

IV. FACILITIES/RESOURCES

A. Status
   1. Describe the current status of program facilities and resources. What additional or improved resources are critical to the future maintenance and improvement of the program? (Include facilities improvements). Provide a detailed list of critically needed resources in priority order, and justify the need for each within the context of program goals and student learning outcomes as previously described.

B. Budget
   1. Within the context of program learning goals and student outcomes, in what ways, if at all, do budgetary considerations affect program success? Over the last five (5) years has the program been satisfied with respect to budget requests and subsequent allocations? Please explain why or why not.

C. Grants
   1. Has the program previously received or is it currently receiving funding from external sources? If so, how was/is the funding used to enhance specific program learning goals and student outcomes?
2. If attempts to obtain external grants have been unsuccessful: (1) Have proposals actually been submitted? (2) Have proposals been revised and/or resubmitted as appropriate or permitted? (3) Have faculty sought assistance in grants preparation to increase the likelihood of success and if so, has available assistance with grant-writing enhanced funding success and/or increased the number of proposals submitted? Please explain.

V. NEED FOR PROGRAM AND PROGRAM COST-EFFECTIVENESS

A. Need
   1. Does the program address a verifiable regional (i.e., Nassau County, Long Island, greater metropolitan area, New York State) educational and/or training need for current and future students and employees of local businesses? On what do you base your conclusions regarding the need for the program, and is the demand for the program changing or expected to change in any way?

B. Cost-Effectiveness
   1. What portion of the department budget is allocated to the discrete program?
   2. What is the estimated total annual cost, including faculty and staff, of offering the program? Based on this figure and statistics provided in the datapak, discuss the per student program cost from entry to graduation?
   3. Within the context of its contribution to advancing the college mission, discuss the cost-effectiveness of the program. Include ideas for ways that program cost-effectiveness might be improved.

8. Action Plan (Due October 1st following the Review.)

Based on the outcomes of the Program Review process, please provide a new 5-7-year Action Plan for the program, including the following:

A. Recommendations/Goals
   Identification of program-level learning goals and related measurable and observable program-level outcomes.

B. Action(s) to be Taken to Achieve Goal(s)
   Outline of program modifications planned as a result of this Review, an implementation plan for these (including a timeline), and a plan for assessing the effects of the modification(s).

C. Target Dates for Completion of Action(s)

D. Person(s) Responsible for Action Plan Implementation

E. Action Plan Progress (To be included in 1- and 3-year Interim Follow-Up Reports.)
   1. What progress has been made toward achieving Action Plan goals?
   2. What challenges to achievement of Action Plan goals have been encountered?
APPENDIX A

MISSION OF THE COLLEGE

Nassau Community College, a constituent member of the State University of New York system, is a comprehensive, full-opportunity institution of higher education. All who can benefit from its resources have the opportunity to expand their knowledge and skills and to pursue the goal of lifelong learning. The College is dedicated to high quality, low-cost education and career preparation to meet the needs and interests of the community it serves. It is committed to academic excellence and the dignity and worth of the individual. To this end, Nassau Community College offers Associate in Arts, Associate in Science, and Associate in Applied Science degrees, certificates and continuing education programs. Its curricula span the liberal arts and sciences, pre-professional and professional areas for the benefit of a diverse population. The College places a high priority on small classes, taught by qualified, experienced faculty, to provide an optimal educational environment.

In fulfillment of this Mission, Nassau Community College affirms these goals:

- To maintain an open admissions policy that ensures the availability of educational programs for traditional and non-traditional students
- To create educational programs that respond to and satisfy diverse community needs
- To provide general education that teaches students to think critically and analytically about a body of knowledge conducive to lifelong learning
- To maintain developmental programs which upgrade student skills for success in college level courses, and to provide special courses of study that enhance general education
- To provide the support services necessary for students to realize their maximum potential
- To create a wide variety of activities and cultural programs to enrich student and community life
- To create a multicultural environment which fosters the synthesis of knowledge, aesthetic appreciation, and commitment to ethical and social values
- To encourage faculty development with programs that promote scholarship and creativity, and to encourage the adoption of innovative teaching methods and technology to enhance student learning
- To support and strengthen academic programs which best prepare students for transfer to senior institutions, and to provide career programs to prepare students for regional and global employment opportunities
- To provide administrative leadership which assures educational quality, furnishes adequate student support services, maintains effective budgeting and facilities management, and stimulates thoughtful planning for the future of the College
- To enhance the economic and cultural vitality of the County by promoting an educational environment which responds to the changing needs of the communities we serve
APPENDIX B

NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE –
EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW TEAM ACTIVITIES

The External Review Team adds an unbiased view to the Program Review Process in order to strengthen the program’s value to students, the College, and the surrounding community.

1. **Review of Materials**
   The following items will be sent in hard copy, via email or on CD-ROM prior to the on-site visit:
   a) Nassau Community College Catalog – We will provide a link. The catalog includes degree requirements and course descriptions.
   b) Nassau Community College Program Review of Degree and Certificate Programs Policies and Procedures (Includes College Mission)
   c) Nassau Community College Comprehensive Assessment Plan
   d) Program Datapak - Data provided to the program for use in the Program Review
   e) Program Self-Study – The Program’s written response to the Program Review Questions and datapak
   f) Area Dean’s Response to Program Self-Study
   g) External Program Review Team- Final Report Guidelines
   h) External Program Review Team Site Visit Schedule
   i) Information regarding reviewer contracts, honoraria and payment.

2. **Site Visit**
   The External Program Review Team will participate in the following activities with the administration, faculty and students during their one day visit.
   o **Administrative Meeting** – Preview Program Review policies and procedures and answer questions from team about the process. Review highlights from program self-study and Dean’s response and ask additional questions.
   o **Tour Campus and/or Program Facilities** – Program chairperson provides a tour of the campus and/or program facilities.
   o **Student Meetings** – Meet with current program students and/or graduates to discuss their satisfaction with the program and suggestions for future development.
   o **Executive Session** – Ask/discuss additional questions and discuss preliminary comments.

3. **External Program Review Team Final Report**
   Within two (3) weeks of the site visit, the External Program Review team will submit a report that follows the attached guidelines and summarizes findings of all reviewers. While the Reviewer-author is responsible for the actual written report, the Reviewer-contributor is responsible for providing the author with any and all pertinent information about the site visit that might impact on the review. (Be sure to include the date of the on-site visit, the names and titles of the evaluators and the faculty involved in the review.)
External Program Review Team- Final Report Guidelines: Using information gained from the Program Self-Study and Dean’s reports, the site visit and any additional relevant data or information, the final report should answer the following questions.

1. Are the learning goals and outcomes of the program clear? Does the information presented indicate accomplishment of these goals, and how success is addressed?
2. Is the regional competition for the program identified and is there evidence of demand for the program at Nassau Community College,(within the service community)?
3. How does the program further the College Mission and the Strategic Themes?
4. How does the program use results and recommendations from the program-level assessment process to improve the curriculum?
5. How has the program addressed the lack of student preparedness for College-level courses? Have these initiatives produced demonstrable results?
6. How does the program communicate with graduates’ potential and current employers? Is there evidence that graduates are meeting local employers’ needs?
7. Are current articulation and transfer agreements in place and are they effective? How does the program communicate with institutions to which its students transfer?
8. How do the responses provided by the program address the data presented?
9. What are the major strengths and challenges of the program?
10. Provide a list of overall and specific recommendations for program improvement, especially highlighting how these would positively impact program-level learning goals.
11. Rate the program using the Program Criteria listed below.

We provide the following headings to help you organize your report:

1. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES/FURTHERANCE OF COLLEGE MISSION
2. DEMAND FOR THE PROGRAM/ENROLLMENT
3. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES
4. USE OF ASSESSMENT PROCESS TO IMPROVE CURRICULA
5. STUDENT PREPAREDNESS/RETENTION/COMPLETION
6. COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYERS OF GRADUATES
7. ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER
8. REFLECTION OF DATA IN SELF-STUDY (REFERENCE DATA PAK)
9. PROGRAM STRENGTHS/PROGRAM CHALLENGES/NEED FOR SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES

PROGRAM CRITERIA*
Each of the following descriptions constitutes a criterion for Holistic Program Evaluation. A program need not meet all the characteristics of a rating in order to be assigned a particular category. The categories are dynamic, in that each item contributes to the whole, but no one item defines the rating.

1. NEED FOR THE PROGRAM:

HIGH: Central to the mission of the college. High student demand, high or moderate present and future workforce demand in terms of jobs or needs of the community. Closely aligned with the college mission. Has unique or substantial advantage over competing programs in the region.

MEDIUM: Fits within the mission of the college, but may not be central to it. Moderate student demand and at least moderate present and future workforce demand in terms of jobs or needs of society. Has some advantage over competing programs in the region.

LOW: Fits minimally within the mission of the college. Little student demand. Little present or future workforce demand in terms of jobs or needs of society. Little or no advantage competing programs in the region.
2. QUALITY OF PROGRAM:

**HIGH:** Curriculum exemplifies the best standards of the discipline. Effective and/or innovative pedagogy and effective advisement. Student learning outcomes defined and measured. Students and graduates have attained high level of achievement. Highly qualified and productive faculty in terms of scholarship and college and community service. Resources such as facilities and library holdings are sufficient to support a high quality program.

**MEDIUM:** Sound curriculum by the standards of the discipline. Adequate pedagogy advisement. Student learning outcomes defined, but not measured. Students and graduates have attained adequate level of achievement. Qualified faculty with moderate levels of productivity in terms of scholarship and college service. Resources are sufficient to support an adequate program.

**LOW:** Curriculum is weak by the discipline’s standards. Little or no evidence of effective pedagogy or advisement. Student learning outcomes not defined. Students and graduates have not attained adequate level of achievement. Qualified faculty but little productivity in terms of scholarship and college and community service. Resources are not sufficient to support an adequate program.

3. COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAM:

**HIGH:** Substantial number of program graduates. Low cost per student credit hour, few special costs. Special or unique benefits accrue to the college because of program.

**MEDIUM:** Moderate number of program graduates, or moderate cost per student credit hour, some special costs. Some benefit accrues to the college because of the program.

**LOW:** Few program graduates. High cost per student credit hour. May have significant special costs. Few benefits accrue to the college.

*Adapted from compendium of Program Reviews*