

Program Review Policy

Policy Statement

All credit-bearing academic programs (degrees and certificates) undergo a review of academic excellence, relevance, and sustainability at least once every 10 years. The review will be conducted in conjunction with the review of the academic department in which the program is housed.

Application

This policy applies to all schools, colleges, and departments, beginning with the 2022-23 academic year.

Definitions

Department: An academic unit of a college that contains one or more programs.

External Accreditation: External accreditation is a voluntary peer-reviewed process of adherence to standards established by the academic discipline or profession.

External Reviewers: Faculty from comparable programs at other institutions who provide feedback on program review reports and may also conduct on-campus visits.

Program: A program is a course of study offered by TCU for which academic credit is awarded and transcribed, leading to the award of an academic credential (e.g., certificate, degree) at either the undergraduate or graduate level.

Program-Specific External Accreditation: External accreditation that is specific to a program, discipline, or profession.

Implementation

Process:

Program reviews, collated by academic department, will occur on a 10-year cycle. The calendar of scheduled reviews will be maintained on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness webpage.

Standard formats for each component of the review will be provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and will include:

- Guidelines for Academic Program Review
- Academic Program Review Self-Study Document
- Academic Program External Reviewer Feedback & Rubric Form
- Academic Program Review Department and College Response

Programs with program-specific external accreditation will also be asked to provide the requested content during the academic program review process, and will likely be able to use some content from their external accreditation process as supporting evidence. In addition, on an ongoing basis, programs with program specific external accreditation must provide the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with copies of all communication to/from their accrediting body; schedules of accreditation reviews, visits, etc.; and any other information relevant to their external accreditation.

External reviews:

Departments will identify external reviewers appropriate for the discipline and/or programs being reviewed.

Each department review will include written feedback from external reviewers as well as virtual sessions with the external reviewers. Departments are encouraged to consider reviewers from universities similar to TCU or aspirant institutions.

Written, virtual, and/or in-person reports from external reviewers will be provided to the Program Director, Department Chair, and Dean of the respective school or college.

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness's budget will provide stipend assistance for external reviewers (a pre-determined amount will be allocated to the department). Departments may choose to use departmental funds to supplement the stipend assistance provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Departments wishing to include on-campus sessions with their external reviewers may request permission to do so through their Dean who, if in agreement, will seek permission from the Provost. The Dean will then notify the Office of Institutional Effectiveness of the plans and schedule for the on-campus sessions. The department requesting the on-campus component will cover the additional costs for the on-campus component (e.g. external reviewer travel, catering, etc.)

Report to Provost:

At the conclusion of the review process, the Dean will provide a summary report of findings to the Provost.

The Provost will respond with comments and return to the Dean.

Exceptions:

Extraordinary emergency circumstances (e.g. natural disaster, pandemic, etc.) may result in a temporary suspension of this policy and/or postponement of the program review cycle.