Guidelines

Next Generation Academic Program Review (APR)

UMBC

Office of the Provost

April 2022

Contents

I. Overview and Purpose

Required by the University System of Maryland (USM), the Academic Program Review (APR) at UMBC involves periodic data-based evaluations of academic program quality and planning for continuous program improvement. It consists of the following three components:

A. Annual Data Review
B. Year Seven Self-Study, External Review, and Action Plan
C. Year Three Review and Action Plan

Each component is described in detail below.

A. Annual Data Review

Each year, department faculty led by the chair/director review a set of program data in a Dashboard developed by IRADS (See Appendix A). The chair/director is encouraged to consult with IRADS for assistance in interpretation and use of the data. Following this review, the dean provides an opportunity for the chair/director to discuss that data with them.

At the same time, department faculty analyze direct measure data on student learning outcomes (extracted from Blackboard or department-implemented assessment tool) to develop more nuanced understanding of student learning, success, and progress to degree. Departmental faculty synthesize these data and document next steps (i.e., by closing the loop and/or using double-loop analysis) for improving student learning and success (See Appendix C for instructions on assessing student learning outcomes). Departments are encouraged to consult with UMBC's Center for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT) (formerly, the Faculty Development Center) in analyzing these data:

- 7-year trends in program student learning outcomes and how they support institutional-level outcomes (the Functional Competencies)
- 7-year trends in General Education Program student learning outcomes as aligned to the Functional Competencies

B. Year Seven Self-Study, External Review, and Action Plan

Once every seven years, following faculty review and analysis of program data in the IRADS Dashboard (See Appendix A) and resources data provided by the Provost's Office, the program prepares a self-study that addresses the following overarching questions:

- What has been done since the last review and Action Plan?
- In what ways is the program(s) contributing to the mission of UMBC?
- In what ways is the program(s) advancing the state of the field(s) in research and curriculum?
- How effectively are students in the program achieving program (and institutional) student learning outcomes? How is the program assessing student learning outcomes? How is the program using student learning outcomes data to improve student learning?
- What does the program(s) do well currently and how did this success come about?
- What areas need improvement?
- What are the vision and future goals of the program(s) and what is the strategy for achieving these?
- How could the program deploy its resources differently to achieve its goals? What is the program's greatest need?

- How does the program solicit input from its internal and external stakeholders (e.g., students, faculty, staff, alumni, community groups, industry)?
- What additional information (quantitative or qualitative) about the program(s) completes the picture of the program?

In addition to these questions, the dean may ask the program to address additional special questions and to analyze certain data in greater detail in the self-study. Following the instructions in Section IV: Procedures for Year Seven Self-Study, External Review, and Action Plan, the faculty and chair/director develop a self-study and prepare for the external visit.

External reviewers review the self-study and conduct a visit. The Department chair drafts an action plan based on the self-study, recommendations in the external reviewers' report, and the dean's response, and meets with senior administration to discuss the action plan draft. The finalized APR documents are made available to faculty governance committees, including the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, the Undergraduate Council, and the Graduate Council, which report to the Faculty Senate. In October of the year following the review, the Provost's Office sends a report on the review to the USM.

C. Year Three Review and Action Plan

At the end of the third year following completion of the Year Seven self-study and external visit, the chair/director prepares the Year Three Review Report, based on the IRADS dashboard and direct measure data collected and analyzed by the department. This is a brief narrative (maximum 5 pages) summarizing progress on the action plan that was developed following the APR. The chair/director, in collaboration with the dean, prepares a draft Year Three Review Action Plan. The chair/director meets with senior administration to discuss the Year Three Review Report and Action Plan. The Year Three Review report and Action Plan are submitted to shared governance for review.

II. Timeline and Responsibilities (Fall to Spring Schedule)

10 months in advance of September start	Chair prepares department for review and establishes committees and self-study leadership as needed.
April before the September start	Associate Provost for Academic Affairs meets with chair and others for kick-off.
September 29 – year of review	Department accesses data on Dashboard to write the self-study. *(Data provided by IRADS and the Provost's office is continuously available via REX, except for the data for the fall semester before the scheduled review takes place. IRADS posts this data after the ten day count.)*
October 1 – year of review	Department chair posts on (Bb) a list of proposed external reviewers with biographical information.
November 1 – year of review	Department chair posts on Bb available and unavailable dates for spring external visit.
By winter break – year of review	Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (in consultation) selects external reviewers. Academic Affairs Specialist schedules dates for external visit.
January 10 – year of review	Provost's office EAA sends name and contact information on hotel and restaurant to Academic Affairs Specialist.
January 15 – year of review	Chair posts draft self-study on Bb.
January 25 – year of review	Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Collegiate Dean post comments on self-study on Bb.
February 1 – year of review	Chair posts on Bb up to five proposed additional questions for external reviewers (beyond those in Appendix D).
February 10 – year of review	Chair posts final self-study on Bb.
March 1- May 10 – year of review	External visit occurs.
Spring/summer – year of review	Post-APR meeting occurs with chair and senior administration. APR documents are made available to faculty governance committees.
Each year following the APR	Annual data review takes place.
At the end of the third year following the APR	Chair develops Year Three Review Report and Action Plan and meets with senior administration for discussion. Year Three Review materials are shared with faculty governance.

III. Timeline and Responsibilities (Spring to Fall Schedule)

10 months in advance of February start	Chair prepares department for review and establishes committees and self-study leadership as needed.
November before the February start	Associate Provost for Academic Affairs meets with chair and others for kick-off.
February 15 – year of review	Department accesses data on Dashboard to write the self-study. *(Data provided by IRADS and the Provost's office is continuously available via REX, except for the data for the spring semester before the scheduled review takes place. IRADS posts this data after the ten day count.)*
February 15 – year of review	Department chair posts on Bb a list of proposed external reviewers with biographical information.
March 1 – year of review	Department chair posts on Bb available and unavailable dates for fall external visit.
By spring break – year of review	Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (in consultation) selects external reviewers and Academic Affairs Specialist schedules dates for external visit.
April 1 – year of review	Provost's office EAA sends name and contact information on hotel and restaurant to Academic Affairs Specialist.
April 15 – year of review	Chair posts draft self-study in Bb.
May 1 – year of review	Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Collegiate Dean post comments on self-study on Bb.
May 1 – year of review	Chair posts on Bb proposed additional questions for external reviewers (besides those in Appendix D).
May 10 – year of review	Chair posts final self-study on Bb.
Mid-September – Mid-November – year of review	External visit occurs.
Fall/winter – year of review	Post-APR meeting occurs with chair and senior administration. APR documents are made available to faculty governance committees.
Each year following the APR	Annual data review takes place.
At the end of the third year following the APR	Chair develops Year Three Review Report and Action

Plan and meets with senior administration for discussion. Year Three Review materials are shared with faculty governance.

IV. Procedures for Year Seven Self Study, External Review, and Action Plan

A. Preparing the Year Seven Self-Study

The narrative portion of the self-study (not including appendices) should be no more than 40 pages. Each section of the self-study has its own page limit, as shown below. Programs are strongly encouraged to stay within the page limits in the first draft they submit.

1. Executive summary (2 pages maximum)

Once the self-study is completed, provide an executive summary of 2 pages or less. If multiple program improvements or expansions are recommended, describe the one or two that will yield the most benefit for the program.

2. Program review (28 pages maximum)

a. Description of program(s) (3 pages maximum)

Provide a narrative description of the program, including mission, organization, specializations, and relationship to UMBC mission. Include in the description and other relevant parts of the self-study any M.P.S. program(s) in which the department participates. List degrees offered by the department and the year they were first offered. In addition, list non-degree programs offered and the year they were first offered.

b. **Analysis of data provided by IRADS & the Provost's Office (10 pages maximum)**
Please see Appendix A for links to the required data.

1. ***Admissions trends***: Provide analysis of the data on seven-year admissions trends for undergraduate and graduate programs.
2. ***Enrollment trends and degrees awarded***: Provide an analysis of the data on seven-year undergraduate and graduate student enrollment and degrees awarded. Identify any special circumstances that have posed challenges.
3. ***Ratio of transfer students to 1st time freshmen***: Provide an analysis of the data on seven-year trend in ratio of transfer students to 1st time freshmen, and how that ratio compares with that of the college and the university.
4. ***Curriculum***: Insert a link to listing and description of program curricula. Provide an analysis of the data on seven-year trends in number of course offerings. Provide an analysis of the composition of the curriculum (e.g., core vs. elective courses, upper- vs. lower-division courses). How do the programs maintain the currency of their curricula?
5. ***Student progression***: Provide an analysis of courses that impede student progression - those that have either low rates of passing grades, or insufficient capacity.
6. ***Time to degree***: Provide an analysis of the seven-year trends in average time to degree for undergraduates by entry type—new freshmen vs. new transfers; and for graduate students by degree objective.
7. ***Faculty profile***: Provide an analysis of the seven-year demographic data on faculty.

8. ***Faculty-student ratio***: Provide an analysis of the data on seven-year trends in FTES and FTES per faculty per various faculty combination.
9. ***Faculty productivity***: Provide an analysis of the data on faculty productivity in research, teaching, and service.
10. ***Budget*****:** Based on program resource data provided by the Provost's Office, discuss the adequacy of the budget.

c. Analysis of data provided by the program (10 pages maximum)

1. ***Educational goals, learning outcomes, and program assessment plans***: Provide an analysis of seven-year trends in program (and aligned institutional) student learning outcomes. Use Appendix C to craft a narrative about outcomes assessment results and students' achievement of program learning outcomes. Demonstrate how the program has bridged outcomes and IRADS data to delve deeply into student learning across the seven-year period. Provide an analysis of seven-year trends in general education courses and resubmit courses for approval to the GEC as stipulated in Appendix C.
2. ***Student advising***: Analyze how effectively undergraduate and graduate students are advised.
3. ***Student research***: Discuss undergraduate and graduate research of the last three years, including student publications, exhibitions, and professional presentations, as well as theses and dissertations. Include list of undergraduate and graduate student research projects for the past three years in appendix.
4. ***Financial support for graduate students***: Complete the template in Appendix J. Discuss amount of departmental, program, and institutional funding for graduate students and types of support (teaching/research assistantships, tuition remission, stipends, scholarships, fellowships, and loans) and the selection process.
5. ***Facilities***: Complete the template in Appendix K. Evaluate the adequacy of space (classroom, research, office, student congregate space), laboratory, and core facilities resources. Include library and computer resources.

d. **Contextual Program Analysis (5 pages maximum)**

Provide a summary analysis that **briefly** addresses the following questions. Include analysis of any qualitative data and special questions requested by dean.

1. What has been done since the last review?
2. In what ways is the program(s) contributing to the mission of UMBC?
3. In what ways is the program(s) advancing the state of the fields in research and curriculum?
4. How effectively are students in the program achieving program (and institutional) student learning outcomes? How is the program assessing student learning outcomes? How is the program using student learning outcomes data to improve student learning?
5. What does the program(s) do well currently and how did this success come about?
6. How is faculty oversight of the curriculum and its content achieved and maintained?
7. How is input solicited from the program's internal and external stakeholders?
8. What additional data (quantitative or qualitative) about the program(s) complete the picture of the program?

3. Program Planning (10 pages maximum)

Provide a summary analysis that briefly addresses the following questions. Include analysis of any qualitative data and special questions requested by dean.

1. What areas need improvement?
2. What are the vision and future goals of the program(s) and what is the strategy for achieving these?
3. How could the program deploy its resources differently to accomplish its goals? What is the program’s highest priority need?

The CVs of all program faculty in the same standardized format should be included in appendix.

B. Preparing for the External Review

1. Proposed Reviewers

By the date listed in Timeline and Responsibilities, the department posts on Bb the names and biographical and contact information for at least six proposed reviewers. In posting this information, the chair affirms that there are no known conflicts of interest for these proposed reviewers. Criteria for determining whether conflicts of interest may exist are listed in Appendix B. Selected reviewers are also asked to certify that no conflicts of interest exist.

Each review team typically includes two reviewers (In some special circumstances a decision is made to include three reviewers. A chair who believes that three reviewers are needed for appropriate coverage of the programs is welcome to make this recommendation, with accompanying justification, for consideration by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.) Proposed reviewers should have administrative experience at the level of department chair or higher. The department may recommend particular pairings of reviewers for best coverage of specialties in the program. At least one of the team members must come from outside the State of Maryland, and at least one must come from a public institution.

It is strongly preferred that the department refrain from contacting proposed reviewers. It is the responsibility of the Provost’s Office to consult with the dean and to select a review team that is qualified to render an evaluation of the program. The Associate Provost for Academic Affairs contacts the selected reviewers and works with them to ascertain their availability/interest to serve as reviewers and to schedule the visit dates.

2. Proposed dates for external visit

By the date listed in the Timeline and Responsibilities, the department posts on Bb two lists of dates. The first list includes dates requested to be excluded from consideration for the external visit. The reasons for exclusion are also noted. Examples of valid reasons are: Most of the faculty will be at a conference, or the chair will be away. The second list includes dates that are especially good for the department to have the external visit.

Because scheduling external visits is very challenging, departments are advised to request exclusion of as few dates as possible, and only for very strong reasons. The Provost’s Office makes every effort to honor the department’s requests.

3. Proposed additional questions for reviewers

The standard questions that all reviewers are requested to address in the external report are shown in Appendix D. Departments are encouraged to propose up to five additional questions for reviewers to address. By the date listed in the Timeline and Responsibilities, the department posts on Bb any proposed additional questions for the reviewers. These additional questions are designed by the faculty to solicit the reviewers' consultation for the department on curricular, organizational, or other matters that will be of benefit to the department. Departments that propose additional questions increase their benefit from the external report. After consultation with the dean, the Provost's Office posts on Bb the final set of questions for the reviewers.

4. Preparing the visit schedule

Once the review team is selected, the Academic Affairs Specialist in the Office of the Provost schedules the dates for the visit with the reviewers, using the dates proposed by the department whenever possible. See Appendix E, which describes costs of the review visit and how they are paid.

A typical visit starts with an opening dinner, followed by one full day of meetings, followed by a half day that includes drafting of the visit report and exit meetings.

- The opening dinner includes the reviewers, the collegiate dean, the graduate dean (if applicable), the associate provost for academic affairs, the chair, and GPDs.
- The reviewers meet individually with the associate provost, the collegiate dean, and the chair.
- The reviewers meet with the program faculty, staff, and students, and tour facilities and observe classes.
- The reviewers may have optional meetings with alumni, advisory board, affiliated researchers, and observe student performances or other creative work.
- The reviewers will have time for drafting the report, and have a debriefing meeting with the chair (and any additional program or department leaders the chair wants to include), and an exit meeting with senior administration.

Two sample visit schedules are included in Appendix F. Departments should prepare to have all course syllabi available for examination by the external reviewers during the external visit.

C. <u>Preparing the Post-APR Action Plan</u>

The Department chair drafts an action plan based on the self-study, recommendations in the external reviewers' report, and the Dean's response, and meets with senior administration to discuss the action plan draft. The finalized APR documents are made available to faculty governance committees, including the Academic Planning and Budget Committee, the Undergraduate Council, and the Graduate Council, which report to the Faculty Senate.

Appendix A: Data for the Annual Data Review, Year Seven Self Study, and Year Three Review

Data	Data Title 7-year Trends:
	Reports are available in the REX reporting environment. Click here to learn more about how to access REX and use Guided Reports and PowerBI Data Visualizations.
	Data or data visualizations referenced in APR should have the following attribution- **Source: UMBC REX,** with following statement somewhere in the document text:
	"Data attributed to UMBC REX, the university's data warehousing system, provided by the Office of Institutional Research, Analysis & Decision Support and the REX Data Warehouse team, and reference data from relevant student, employee, and finance data tables, as well as other information systems across campus."
1	**Admissions – undergraduate & graduate by admit type**
	Applications
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Applications
	● *Print tab 'Undergraduate' by Application Type = Freshman*
	● *Print tab 'Undergraduate' by Application Type = Transfer*
	● *Print tab 'Graduate' by Plan Objective = Doctorate*
	● *Print tab 'Graduate' by Plan Objective = Master*
	● *Print tab 'Graduate' by Plan Objective = Post-Bacc Certificate*
	● *Print tab 'Graduate' by Plan Objective = Post-Master Certificate*
2	**Undergraduate student enrollment and degrees awarded**
	Plan Enrollments Table (Paginated Reports)
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Plan Enrollments Table
	● *Download as Excel document and embed table found on Undergraduate tab in APR appendix.*
	Degree and Plan Awards Table (Paginated Reports)
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Degree and Plan Awards Table
	● *Download as Excel document and embed table found on Undergraduate tab in APR appendix.*
	Plan Enrollments
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Plan Enrollments
	● *Print tab 'UGRD by Plan Objective'*
	● *Print tab 'UGRD Bachelor Demographics'*
	● *Print tab 'UGRD Enrollment Characteristics'*
	Degree and Plan Awards
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Degree and Plan Awards
	● *Print tab 'Undergraduate'*
3	**Graduate student enrollment and degrees awarded**
	Plan Enrollments Table (Paginated Reports)
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Plan Enrollments Table
	● *Download as Excel document and embed table found on Graduate tab in APR appendix.*

	Degree and Plan Awards Table (Paginated Reports)
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Degree and Plan Awards Table
	• *Download as Excel document and embed table found on Graduate tab in APR appendix.*
	Plan Enrollments
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Plan Enrollments
	• *Print tab 'GRAD by Plan Objective'*
	• *Print tab 'GRAD Demographics' by Plan Objective=Doctorate*
	• *Print tab 'GRAD Demographics' by Plan Objective=Master*
	• *Print tab 'GRAD Demographics' by Plan Objective=Post-Bacc Certificate*
	Degree and Plan Awards
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Degree and Plan Awards
	• *Print tab 'Graduate'*
4	**Ratio of transfer students to first year first time students in the program, and how that ratio compares with that of the college, and of the university**
	Undergraduate Enrollment Trends by Entry Type
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> New Undergraduate Enrollment Trends
	• *Print tab 'All Students by Cohort Type'*
	• *Print tab 'All Students by Term Entry Status'*
5	**Course offerings – information on average course size and number of course sections and course enrollments by course level over time**
	Course Offerings
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Course Offerings
	• *Print tab 'Class Size' for relevant course levels and types*
	• *Print tab 'Course Sections & Enrollments by Level' for relevant course levels and types*
6 (click here for more information on item 6 reports)	**Courses that impede student progression. Course level reports with: (1) low rates of passing grades, or (2) insufficient capacity.**
	Courses by DFW Rate and Average Grade
	REX: Home> Student Records and Enrollment> Course Enrollment> Courses by DFW Rate and Average Grade
	Grade Comparison Course to Course
	REX: Home >Student Records and Enrollment> Course Enrollment> Grade Comparison Course to Course
	Grade Distribution by Organization
	REX: Home> Student Records and Enrollment> Course Enrollment> Grade Distribution by Organization
	Grade Distribution Trends
	REX: Home> Student Records and Enrollment> Course Enrollment> Grade Distribution Trends
	Utilization of a Course – use this report to examine trends in enrollment vs. capacity and other utilization information

	REX: Home> Curriculum Management> Course> Utilization of a Course
	Course Utilization Trend for Organizations
	REX: Home> Curriculum Management> Course> Course Utilization Trend for Organizations
	Course Enrollment Capacity Comparison to Prior Year
	REX: Home> Curriculum Management> Course> Course Enrollment Capacity Comparison to Prior Year
7	**Average time to degree for undergraduate students by entry type – first time first year vs. transfer**
	Time to Degree - Undergraduate
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Time to Degree - Undergraduate - Undergraduate
	● *Print tab Entering as 'First Time First Year'*
	● *Print tab 'Transfer'*
8	**Average time to degree for graduate students**
	Time to Degree - Graduate
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Time to Degree - Graduate - Graduate
	● *Print tab 'Masters'*
	● *Print tab 'Doctoral'*
9	**Faculty profile (demographics)**
	Faculty Demographics
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Faculty Demographics
	● *Print tab 'Faculty'*
10	**FTES, FTES per faculty (student-faculty ratio data per various faculty combinations, including adjunct faculty)**
	Student Faculty Ratios
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Student Faculty Ratios
	● *Print tab Org Ratios' for data visual or 'Details' for data used to create ratios*
	For comparative data, please refer to REX: Home > Census Data > Student Faculty Ratios Select the fiscal year for the fall term you want to compare. Select Show by: Fall Term. Select Plan Objective: (Select All). Report returns the plan enrollments and FTE students per faculty categories by college. Can be expanded to show academic department by clicking the + next to each college name. The detail data used in the ratios can be shown by clicking on the + next to "Ratio Details".
11	**Faculty productivity in research, teaching, and service**
	Faculty Activity – data from Faculty Success
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Faculty Activity
	● *Print tab 'Scholarship'*
	● *Print tab 'Service'*

	Grants and Contracts Awarded
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Grants and Contracts Awarded
	• *Print tab 'PI Awards'*
	Instructional Activity
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Instructional Activity
	• *Print tab 'Credit Hours by Level & Faculty Category'*
	• *Print tab 'Total Credit Hrs Taught by Level Over Time'*
	• *Print tab 'Average Course Units by Faculty Category '*
	Instructional Data (Paginated Reports)
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Instructional Data
12	**Budget Data- departmental expenditures by fund type and account type**
	Program Expenditures by Fund Type and Account
	REX: Home> Census Data> Next Generation APR Pilot> Program Expenditures by Fund Type and Account
	• *Print page with data for most recent completed fiscal year*
Additional Resources:	
	Population Term Summary
	REX: Home> At a Glance> Population Term Summary Report gives aggregate data about a selected population for a term, allowing users to see demographic and academic data for the population and how it compares to UMBC overall. The population can be filtered by courses, plans, student groups, departments, etc.
	SEEQ Course Summary Over Time
	REX: Home> Census Data> Student Course Evaluations> SEEQ> SEEQ Course Summary Over Time
	Who Are We Teaching
	REX: Home> Student Records and Enrollment> Plan Enrollment> Who Are We Teaching
	Who Is Teaching Our Students
	REX: Home> Student Records and Enrollment> Plan Enrollment> Who Is Teaching Our Students
	Course Enrollment Trends
	REX: Home> Census Data> Course Enrollment Trends Report allows users to see the enrollment trends for courses within an organization within a college. The report returns the average enrollment in each course over the terms selected, with the enrollment counts in each term in a trend line or via expanding the course (the +). It also shows the percent of those enrollments that are "service", that is, students that are in plans that are not managed by the organization offering the course. For example, if there are 100 students taking MATH xxx, and 40 of them are Math majors, then the % service would be 60%.

Appendix B: Guidelines for Preventing Conflicts of Interest in Proposed External Reviewers

By submitting the names of proposed reviewers on Bb, the chair certifies that proposed reviewers do not have any real or perceived conflicts of interest with the program being evaluated. Real or perceived conflicts may occur if an individual has:

- a close, active association with the program or institution;
- a financial or personal interest; or
- any reason the individual cannot render an unbiased evaluation.

A close, active association includes, but is not limited to the following:

- past employment with UMBC as faculty or staff;
- current or past (within the last 7 years) discussion or negotiation of employment with UMBC;
- employment as a consultant by the institution or program within the last 7 years;
- a record of publication or research with a member of the academic unit within the past 7 years;
- attendance as a student at UMBC within the last 7 years;
- current close family relationship with a student or employee at UMBC; or
- an unpaid official relationship with UMBC, such as membership on an industrial advisory board.

Selected reviewers are also asked to certify that no conflicts of interest exist. Questions about conflict of interest may be directed to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.

Appendix C: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

A. Context: Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

The purpose of assessment is to *improve student learning* by:

- Crafting transparent student learning outcomes
- Offering scaffolded learning opportunities (curricular and co-curricular) to enable students to achieve those outcomes (typically documented in a curriculum map)
- Measuring student learning with direct and indirect measure and gathering evidence on what students are and are not learning and
- Identifying and implementing useful evidence-informed interventions to instruction or curriculum (closing the loop).
- Assessing if the changes improved student learning (double-loop analysis)

Program-Level Assessment has four steps in a continuous cycle of improvement:

1) Articulating learning goals or objectives and aligning them to UMBC Functional Competencies: What do you want students to be able to know and be able to **do** as a result of completing this program? (Courses should have course- level outcomes that are aligned to the program outcomes and appear in course syllabi.)

2) Analyzing the learning opportunities the program offers to help students achieve the learning outcomes (i.e., curriculum mapping).

3) Measuring and collecting direct and indirect evidence of student achievement of these goals.

Direct evidence requires specific measures of student learning, typically analyzed by a subject matter expert, such as:

- performance on exam questions explicitly aligned to program (or course and program) learning outcomes, not just overall grades
- performance on written work aligned to specific learning outcomes as evaluated by specific criteria or rubrics
- performance in capstone experiences, portfolios, exhibitions, presentations, internships, or creative or research experiences aligned to specific learning outcomes as assessed using specific criteria or rubrics
- scores on standardized national tests or pass rates on certification or licensure exams aligned to program outcomes. It’s especially helpful if the standardized tests have sections that allow you to see where students are achieving specific learning aims and where they are not.

Indirect evidence includes measures such as:

- surveys or focus groups of students’ or alumni perceptions of their own learning;
- surveys of employers;
- placement of graduates into jobs, or graduate and professional programs;
- department or program review data;
- student achievements such as honors, awards, and scholarships;
- exam or course grades

4) Integrate multiple measures—both direct and indirect evidence—to identify and implement closing-the-

loop interventions to improve student learning.

Double-Loop Analysis: Repeat the process in a continuous cycle of improvement as results from assessment of implemented changes become available.

B. Reporting Student Learning Outcomes as Part of the Self-Study

Educational goals, learning outcomes, and program assessment plan. UMBC's assessment program requires that at the time of the APR, departments take these three steps:

Provide in the body of the self-study a discussion of direct and indirect student learning evidence for each program (undergraduate, graduate, certificates), including closing-the-loop interventions, and follow-up (double-loop analysis), including general education courses.

- **Include a copy of each program's assessment plans in the appendix followed by the biennial reports for the APR period. The discussion should refer to the data collected over the APR period and should specify how each program closed the loop, measured the impact, and analyzed the results (double-loop analysis). (If your program has not submitted biennial reports, please use the Closing-the-Loop Template available on the CALT's website to present data from each program.)**
- **Include a text or visual curriculum map for each program documenting how students cultivate program student learning outcomes across courses and co-curricular learning opportunities. Indicate how program outcomes align to the UMBC Functional Competencies.**
- **Stipulate how programs share learning outcomes, curriculum maps, results, and interventions with students. (At a minimum, programs should document where these materials are posted on their websites.)**

For additional information and support, please contact Jennifer Harrison, CALT Associate Director for Assessment, at jharrison@umbc.edu.

C. APR-Concurrent Submissions to the GEC

The following submissions, while not a part of the APR, per se, are required as part of UMBC's Assessment Plan and are prepared in conjunction with the APR.

1) Submit to the General Education Committee (GEC) an analysis that integrates indirect and direct assessment of student learning outcomes for a sample of general education courses. Information submitted should include:

    - summary of how the course addresses the distribution area(s) designated
    - analysis with data about how the course addresses and measures each of the functional competencies designated
    - examples of learning activities and assessment criteria for measuring designated functional competencies
    - summary of assessment results on student learning outcomes regarding designated functional competencies
    - changes made or proposed to improve student learning (closing the loop)
    - assessment of changes and improvements that have been made (double-loop analysis)

2) Submit for review by the GEC all courses that have GEP designations except those that have received GEP designations in the three years prior to the APR. (Courses that fall into this latter category should be

submitted by the department for review concurrently with the Year Three Review.) Guidelines for these submissions are available from the GEC.

For questions or additional information about APR-concurrent submissions to the GEC, contact Linda Hodges at lhodges@umbc.edu.

Appendix D: Questions to be addressed in Report of External Visit

The written report of the external reviewers should address the following questions. In addition, reviewers are invited to provide advice on any areas that would benefit from improvement. A general guideline for report length is up to five single-spaced pages.

a. How are the general goals and specific objectives of the program being met?

b. What is the students' perception of the quality of the program and their evaluations of the faculty's teaching and mentoring?

c. Are the proposed directions of the program consistent with the mission and priorities of the College and the University? Please comment on the overall quality of the program relative to its aspirational peers.

d. What is the quality of the curriculum? Do teaching materials and pedagogical methods reflect state of the art within the disciplines?

e. Considering the program's assessment of student learning outcomes, discuss ways the faculty might most effectively "close the loop" by enhancing its use of the outcomes of assessment to improve teaching and learning.

f. Is the level of scholarly work by faculty members in the program suitable for this program? Does the program as operating or planned provide sufficient opportunities for continued growth in quality of scholarship, creativity of faculty, and research opportunities for students?

g. Please comment on the adequacy of program's facilities for fulfilling its goals.

h. Given your review, do you think the program resources are being used effectively? Are there other ways you can suggest for them to be used? Are there additional ways the program might generate revenue?

i. To what extent does or should the program collaborate with other units of the University?

j. With regard to any resources identified as needed in the self-study or the external evaluation, which one is most urgent and/or most likely to benefit the program and how?

Each department undergoing an academic program review is given an opportunity to supplement the generic questions above with particular questions formulated by the chair and faculty of the department. Reviewers are asked to address individually in the report each of the questions formulated by the department.

Appendix E: Guidelines on Costs of External Review

- The honoraria, travel costs, and a stipend for local expenses for reviewers are paid by the Provost's Office.

- The cost of the opening dinner with reviewers at the start of the external visit is covered by the Provost's Office.

- On-campus dining costs of faculty and staff while meeting with the reviewers may, at the department's discretion, be covered on the department's P-card. The Provost's Office does not reimburse these expenses. Costs of faculty and staff dining may not be included on the reviewers' expense statements.

Appendix F: Two Examples of External Visit Schedules

Final Visit Schedule
Physics
April 3-5, 2016

Reviewers:

Dr. George Welch	Dr. Kenneth Voss
Chair	Professor
Physics and Astronomy	Physics
Texas A & M University	University of Miami

Sunday, April 3

Hotel
The Hotel at Arundel Preserve
7795 Arundel Mills Boulevard
Hanover, MD 21076
410-796-9830

Restaurant
George Martin's Grillfire
7793 Arundel Mills Boulevard
Hanover, MD 21076
410-799-2883

5:50 p.m.	Dr. Tony Moreira, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs picks up reviewers at hotel	
6:00 p.m.	Dinner with reviewers and charge Dr. Moreira Dr. Bill LaCourse, Dean of College of Natural and Mathematical Science Dr. Janet Rutledge, Vice Provost & Dean of the Graduate School Dr. Michael Hayden, Chair, Physics department Drs. Todd Pittman and Zhibo Zhang, Graduate Program Directors	

Monday, April 4

7:30 a.m.	Pick up at hotel by Dr. Moreira	
8:00	Dr. Moreira PHYS escorts reviewers to next meeting	Admin. 1005
9:00	Dr. LaCourse	UC 116
10:00	PHYS escorts reviewers to next meeting	
10:10-11:00	Dr. Hayden gives tour of Physics	

facilities

11:00-11:45	Reviewers meet with Assistant Professors Drs. Pelton, Zhai, Meyer, Zhang, and Kestner	Room 221
11:45-12:30	Reviewers meet with Associate Professors Drs. Worchesky, Pittman, Gougousi, Takacs, Henriksen, George, Georganopoulos, Sparling	Room 221
12:30-1:30 (tour)	Lunch with selected faculty TBD	Skylight/CASTLE
1:30-2:15	Reviewers meet with Professors Drs. Shin, Martins, Turner, Johnson, Franson, Demoz	Room 221
2:15-3:00	Reviewers meet with Lecturers Drs. Anderson, Cui, Sen	Room 221
3-3:45	Reviewers meet with Staff Ms. Wimpling, Mr. Ciotta, Ms. Salmi, Mr. Crowe, Ms. Tignall	Room 221
3:45-4:30	Reviewers meet with Undergraduates John Hannegan, Philip Dang, Wei Trinh, Michael Wolfe Natalie DeNigris, Blake Hipsley, Madeline Swanson Kevin Whitley, Thomas Hyatt, Davis Wootton-Klebanoff	Room 221
4:30-5:15	Reviewers meet with Graduate students Brian Carroll, Brent McBride, Lipi Mukherjee, Dan Miller Neetika Sharma, Garret Hickman, Haixu Leng, Paul Berkins, Jaron Kropp, Brian Ute, Mary Keenan	Room 221
5:15-5:45	Reviewers meet with Dr. Hayden	Room 218
5:45	PHYS escorts reviewers to 1001 Administration	
6:00	Transport to hotel by Dr. Moreira Reviewers dine on their own	Admin. 1001

<u>Tuesday, April 5</u>

8:00 a.m.	Dr. Moreira picks up reviewers	
8:30	Reviewers draft report	The Commons Room 332
11:30 p.m.	PHYS escorts reviewers to Skylight Room	
	Debriefing lunch with Dr. Hayden and Drs. Zhang and Pittman	Skylight Room
	PHYS escorts reviewers to Admin. 1005	

1:00-2:00 p.m.	Exit interview with Dr. Philip Rous, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Moreira, Dr. LaCourse, and Dr. Rutledge	Admin. 1005 UMBC
	UMBC Provost's Office provides transportation for reviewers	

Final Visit Schedule
Modern Languages, Linguistics, and Intercultural Communication (MLLI)
Academic Program Review
October 20-22, 2019

Reviewers:

Michael Horswell	Andrew Byon
Professor, Spanish & Latin American Literature	Associate Professor
Dean, Dorothy Schmidt College of Arts & Letters	Korean Studies
Florida Atlantic University	University at Albany
	State University of New York

<u>Hotel</u>
The Hotel at Arundel Preserve
7795 Arundel Mills Blvd.
Hanover, MD 21076
410-796-9830

<u>Restaurant</u>
George Martin's Grillfire
7793 Arundel Mills Blvd.
Hanover, MD 21076
410-799-2883

<u>Sunday, October 20</u>

5:45 p.m.	Escort from hotel to dinner by Dr. Sarah Shin, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs	
6 p.m.	Dinner with: Dr. Shin Dr. Ana Oskoz, Chair, MLLI Dr. Ed Larkey, former Graduate Program Director Dr. Scott Casper, Dean, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Dr. Janet Rutledge, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School	

<u>Monday, October 21</u>

7:30 a.m.	Escort from hotel to campus by Dr. Shin	
8:00 – 8:50	Dr. Shin	Admin. 1006
8:50	MLLI escorts to Dr. Casper's office	
9:00 – 10:00	Dr. Casper	FA 429
10:00 – 10:30	Dr. Oskoz	FA 454

10:35 – 10:50	Dr. Nicoleta Bazgan Graduate Program Director	FA 447
10:55 – 11:25	Area Language Coordinators Dr. Bill Brown (Chinese), Dr. Samir El Omari (Arabic) Dr. Zakaria Faith (French), Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom (Japanese), Dr. Ana María Schwartz-Caballero (Spanish), Professor Susanne Sutton (German), Dr. Steve Young (Linguistics and Russian), Dr. Kyung-Eun Yoon (Korean)	FA 424
11:30 – 12:10	Focus on research Dr. Haniyeh Barahouiepasani, Dr. Nicoleta Bazgan, Dr. David Beard, Dr. Zakaria Fatih, Dr. Irina Golubeva, Dr. Erin Hogan, Dr. Omar Ka, Dr. Renée Lambert-Brétière, Dr. Ed Larkey, Dr. Tania Lizarazo, Dr. Thania Muñoz, Dr. Sara Poggio, Dr. Chris Tong, Dr. Kyung-Eun Yoon, Dr. Steve Young	FA 459
12:15 – 12:55	MLLI part-time faculty (101-201 courses)	FA 459
1:05 – 2:00	INCC meeting and Lunch Dr. Nicoleta Bazgan, Dr. Irina Golubeva, Dr. David Beard, Dr. Renée Lambert-Brétière, Dr. Omar Ka, Dr. Ed Larkey, Dr. Tania Lizarazo, Dr. Thania Muñoz, Dr. Chris Tong, Dr. Sara Poggio, Dr. Erin Hogan	FA 459
2:15 – 2:45	MLLI staff Ms. Fontella Bateman, Administrative Assistant II Ms. Carolyn Good, Administrative Assistant II Ms. Shakeara Lynch, Accounting Associate	FA 464
2:50 – 3:25	Focus on teaching and pedagogical research Professor Sean Carmody, Dr. Marie DeVerneil, Dr. Tomoko Hoogenboom, Professor Maria Manni, Professor Catalina Shorkey, Professor Susanne Sutton, Professor Vira Zhdanovych	FA 404
3:30 – 4:00	Graduate (INCC) students	FA 404
4:00 – 4:30	Undergraduate Students	FA 427

4:30 – 5:00	Tour of facilities	
5:15	Dr. Oskoz	FA 454
5:45	MLLI escorts to Admin. 1006	AD 1006
6 p.m.	Dr. Shin escorts reviewers to hotel for dinner on their own	

<u>Tuesday, October 22</u>

8:00 a.m.	Dr. Shin escorts reviewers to UMBC	
8:30 -11:30	Reviewers prepare draft report	Commons 327
11:30-12:30	Debriefing lunch with Dr. Oskoz & Dr. Nicoleta Bazgan MLLI escorts to Admin.	Skylight Room
1:00-2:00	Exit meeting with: Dr. Philip Rous, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Drs. Moreira, Shin, Rutledge, and Casper Provost's Office escorts to transportation	Admin. 1005

Appendix G: Guidance for Reviewers on Meetings

Past reviewers have indicated that guidance on campus meetings would be helpful. We recommend the following principles:

- Meetings with faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, and others are for the benefit of the reviewers in their development of a comprehensive picture of the program.
- Reviewers are encouraged to initiate, guide, redirect, or close discussion topics in meetings in ways that ensure that the reviewers gain the maximum benefit of information and perspectives in the limited time available in each meeting.
- Reviewers are encouraged to ask questions, if they so choose, that elicit comments from all meeting participants.
- Reviewers are encouraged to mind the time allotted for each meeting. If the reviewers would like to have more time than is scheduled to talk with an individual or group, they are encouraged to make the request of the department chair or Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.
- Reviewers are encouraged to request to see relevant documents (e.g., course syllabi, planning documents, etc.) that will aid their efforts to gather information about the program during the visit.

Appendix H: Technical Instructions for Preparing & Posting Documents: Self-Study, Tables, Attachments, and C.V.s

Prepared by Susan Mocko August 9, 2018

The Academic Program Review Self-Study is prepared in two stages:

- *Draft Self Study* – Posted in Word (Narrative) and Appendices as individual files in PDF formats on Blackboard in "Preparing for Self-Study" folder for review by Dean and Associate Provost Academic Affairs.

- *Final Self Study* – Posted in PDF format (one document that includes narrative, tables, attachments, and C.V.s) in "Final Documents" folder after final changes have been made, based on comments received from Dean and Associate Provost Academic Affairs

<u>The draft version should be posted by the date shown in the Timeline and Responsibilities</u>. The documents – posted in Word and PDF -- should be posted and shown on Bb in the order they will appear in the final version of the self-study, i.e., narrative, tables, C.V.s and appendices.

- The documents should be paginated. This will help when comments are provided by the Dean and Provost for editing
- Prior to posting the documents, please make sure to preview them to ensure that they print properly

<u>The final version should be posted by the date shown in the Timeline and Responsibilities.</u> After the comments from the Dean and Associate Provost for Academic Affairs are incorporated into the self-study, the final documents (self-study, tables, C.V.s and any other documents that are to be included in the final self-study) are converted to PDF and then combined.

- A cover page is also recommended
- Please make sure to prepare a table of contents for this final document
- Please make sure to paginate the document for ease of use for the reviewers
- If the self-study was prepared by multiple individuals, it is important to edit it so the formats and fonts are the same throughout the documents.

The department is responsible for posting the documents in the proper formats and folders.

- Departmental administrative staff should have or develop knowledge in using the Word, Excel and PDF applications <u>well in advance of the due dates for preparing and posting self-study documents</u>
- Tutorials for Adobe Acrobat are included below
- The Provost's Office can provide technical advice on this, but it is the department's responsibility to format and post the documents properly
- Adobe Acrobat (the application) can be downloaded free of charge by going to my.umbc.edu, guide, computing & technology, software downloads, faculty & staff, adobe creative cloud. If you have any problems downloading the software, please contact the Technology Support Center at 53838.

If the department is using a Mac version of Adobe Acrobat, Word, or Excel, it is the department's responsibility to test the transferability of the documents to the PC version.

Please visit the link below to learn more about Adobe Acrobat DC. If you need help with downloading the application or have questions, please put in an RT Ticket with the Technology Support Center.

Adobe Creative Cloud help: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat.html

Appendix I: Instructions for submitting names of proposed reviewers

It is very important that the department follow these instructions for proposing names of potential reviewers to read the self-study, visit the campus and program, and submit a written report.

- Two reviewers will be selected to visit. A total of at least six proposed reviewers is required.

- Proposed reviewers should be paired and the pairs prioritized resulting, in most cases, in three ranked pairs of potential reviewers.

- The ranked pairs, and all of the following information about each proposed reviewer, MUST be listed in a Word document that is posted on Bb, in the area marked "preparing for the external visit—proposed reviewers".
  - Name
  - Rank and title
  - Complete business address
  - Business phone number
  - Email address
  - Link to either the individual's C.V. or a biographical sketch about the individual that includes their current university affiliation and position and past affiliations and positions.

  Example of correct way to post reviewer information in the Word document:
  Susan Smith, Ph.D.
  Professor and Chair
  Department of Computing Science
  Oklahoma State University
  500 Main Street
  Oklahoma City, OK 12345
  700-999-8888
  Susan.smith@OK.edu
  Link to CV or Bio Sketch

- Chair's certification

  In the same Word document with the ranked list of pairs and the information on each reviewer, the chair is required to include the following statement with their name and the date:

  "*I certify that that the department's faculty and I have selected this list of proposed reviewers in light of the guidelines in Appendix B**: Guidelines for preventing conflicts of interest in proposed external reviewers,** and that there are no conflicts of interest posed by the appointment of any of these proposed reviewers*."

- Post all of this information in a Word document on Bb, as described above.

Appendix J: Financial Support for Graduate Students

	Pre Review Data		Current Academic	Post Review Projections		
	Year2	Year1	Year	Year1	Year2	Year3
Research Assistants						
Graduate Fellowships						
and Dissertation Awards						
Teaching Assistants						
Gradership						
TOTAL						
* Information provided by the Graduate School						

Appendix K: Assessment of Physical Facilities and Support Facilities

	Very Adequate	Adequate	Inadequate	Very Inadequate
Facility				
1. Office Space				
a. Faculty Space				
b. Administrative Space				
c. Graduate Student Space				
2. Library				
a. Periodical Holdings				
b. Book Holdings				
c. Department-based Holdings				
3. Computing Facilities				
a. Central Computer Server(s)				
1) Hardware				
2) Software				
b. Department-based				
1) Hardware				
2) Software				
4. Other Research Facilities				
a. Laboratories				
1) Space				
2) Electric Power				
3) Water and Sewer				
4) Lighting, Heat				
5) Ventilation				
b. Equipment				
1) Faculty Research				
2) Teaching				
3) Student Research				
5. Other				

Note: For each rating of Inadequate or Very Inadequate, attach an explanation with an estimate of your needs. Use the ‘Other’ category for special facilities such as machine shop, vivarium, studio, and so on.