

I.B.5

**RESOLUTION ON CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK UNIVERSITY-WIDE
GUIDELINES FOR FORMAL, PERIODIC ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW**

Whereas, the Board of Trustees' Resolution on Academic Program Planning of June 28, 1993 endorsed "the continuation, and where needed, initiation of intensification, of campus-based planning, program review and program development activities..."; and

Whereas, the Board resolved "that all academic programs be subject to a formal, periodic review procedure, including both self-study and external assessment, to be conducted in accordance with guidelines for academic program review to be established by the Chancellor after consultation with appropriate groups and governance bodies and with the approval of the Committee on Academic Policy, Program and Research and the Board of Trustees..."; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the **City University of New York University-Wide Guidelines for Formal, Periodic Academic Program Review** be approved effective June 1, 1994.

EXPLANATION

The guidelines for University-wide use have been prepared pursuant to the Board's Resolution on Academic Program Planning and take into account the review practices existing at many CUNY colleges, as well as ideas developed by the Council of Presidents and the University Faculty Senate. The overall collegial process of consultation began with the Academic Council, the Council of Presidents, and the Advisory Committee on Academic Program Planning, all of which conducted reviews of the guidelines and recommended that the draft document be reviewed by the colleges and their governance bodies, the University Faculty Senate, and the University Student Senate.

The College Presidents (and the Chairpersons of the University Faculty Senate and the University Student Senate with their organizations), were asked to initiate a process of campus-based consultation and to elicit responses to the draft document. The Colleges, the University Faculty Senate, and the University Student Senate were asked to submit those responses to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs by April 1, 1994.

By April 13, responses were received from eleven colleges, as well as from the University Faculty Senate. Informal telephone conversations with several colleges and the University Student Senate elicited further responses. These responses were considered by the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs in preparing and submitting this final document.

I.B.5. – Academic Program Review Guidelines

City University of New York

University-Wide Guidelines for Formal, Periodic Academic Program Review

April 22, 1994

Forward

Formal, periodic academic program review is a common practice at colleges and universities in the United States. For some academic programs, particularly those in pre-professional or professional fields, such review is part of an accreditation process conducted by an external agency, usually a national professional organization. For other programs, including most undergraduate degree programs in the liberal arts and sciences, program review is a campus-based activity, initiated by campus administrators and carried out by departmental faculty as a means of monitoring program quality and identifying issues that may require college action. In both instances, an academic program review can be regarded as an audit of both qualitative and quantitative data about a particular program.

The purpose of academic program review, according to the Association of American Colleges, should be to increase the self-consciousness of faculty members and administrators about their educational practices so that they can improve the quality of teaching and learning. To some extent, of course, academic program review is (or should be) a continuous process. As faculty members teach and advise their students, they often think about the effectiveness of what are doing. In addition, much of what they learn from their students has implications for the further development of their courses. Ideally, they will also consider the implications of what they have learned for the program as a whole and discuss those aspects with colleagues. The result is a continual fine-tuning of courses and modifications of the program whenever the evidence suggests that such modification is needed. The guidelines contained in this document are intended to supplement this ongoing process by encouraging formal, systematic reviews of all academic programs on a regular basis.

Statement of Board of Trustees' Policy

On June 28, 1993, the CUNY Board of Trustees adopted the Resolution on Academic Program Planning that includes the following statement:

Resolved, that all academic programs be subject to a formal, periodic review procedure, including both self-study and external assessment, to be conducted in accordance with guidelines for academic program review to be established by the Chancellor after consultation with appropriate groups and governance bodies and with the approval of the Committee on Academic Policy, Program, and Research and the Board of Trustees.

In adopting the Resolution, the Board recognized that many individual CUNY colleges have a history of conducting academic program reviews. Among these campuses, there is wide agreement that this activity should involve substantial input from the program's faculty in preparing a self-study; a review and report prepared by external, professional peers; and shared faculty and administrative responsibility in the college's response to both the self-

study and the external review and in making future plans for the program. The Council of Presidents and University Faculty Senate also endorse these elements of academic program review.

The guidelines for University-wide use contained in this document have been prepared pursuant to the foregoing Board policy and take into account the review practices existing at many CUNY Colleges, as well as ideas developed by the Council of Presidents and the University Faculty Senate.

Guidelines

1. Responsibility for Reviews

Consistent with the provisions of these guidelines, each college shall develop procedures for the formal, periodic review of academic departments and/or programs, under the leadership of the College President and in accordance with the College governance plan.

2. Frequency of Reviews

Each college should periodically conduct full reviews of all academic departments, and/or programs, and/or clusters of departments and/or programs. These reviews may occur with whatever frequency the college chooses, but should occur at least every ten years. The only exception to this requirement, at the discretion of the Presidents, shall be those departments, programs, and clusters that are subject to formal specific program reviews by a professional accreditation body. In both cases, it would be the college's responsibility to establish a schedule, as of the effective date of these guidelines, that ensures the regular frequency of reviews for all academic departments, programs, and clusters and, where desired, of all major academic support services.

3. Programmatic Self-Study

These guidelines should be designed to produce a self-study that:

- encourages members of a department to analyze its curriculum in relation to the goals of the department, the College, and the University;
- investigates the effectiveness of its curriculum in relation to the desired outcomes as perceived by students, alumni, faculty members, and, where appropriate to the review of the program, professions, industries, and employers;
- reviews various characteristics to determine strengths and weaknesses;
- considers needed changes;
- evaluates the current levels of resources on the ongoing program;
- suggests needed changes in program, departmental organization, and resources.

Collegiate procedures may allow for the use of alternative formats to achieve the above attributes; however, all self-studies should include the following elements:

- discussion of the goals of the program in relation to the mission of the department, college, and University, as well as the perceptions and expectations of students;
- description of the curriculum, including introductory, major, and elective courses, as well as articulation and collaboration with other programs;
- discussion of measures of program activity in such areas as courses and sections offered and enrollments;
- discussion of measures of faculty activities in such areas as teaching, research, and professional service;
- discussion of the design and delivery of instruction;
- discussion of measures of resources, in such areas as operating budgets, faculty, facilities, and equipment;
- discussion of measure of program results, in such areas as retention, degrees awarded, and post-graduation experiences of students;
- discussion of program quality as reflected in such measures as student course evaluations; external recognition of the program, faculty, and students; and surveys of the alumni; and
- discussion of a plan for the future, to include such topics as curriculum development; faculty recruitment, retention, and development; and facilities and equipment development.

4. External Review

Each formal, periodic academic program review should include a site visit, resulting in a written report, conducted by a team of external peers in the discipline, cluster, or program area. This team should be selected from appropriate institutions and professional organizations. In specific instances, and for good reason, a College President may request a waiver of the requirement of a site visit through the Board Committee on Academic Policy, Program, and Research.

5. Plan of Action

Each college should make provision for a plan of action to be developed in response to the periodic reviews. For example, at the departmental level, the faculty members might prepare written responses to the report of the external peers, correcting factual inaccuracies and responding in detail to the recommendations of the external committee. At the college level, this plan of action might include written responses to the self-study and external report, as well as the preparation of an academic plan for the program, based on the external report and the program's response, with a proposed timetable, prepared by the college's chief academic officer in consultation with the appropriate faculty, chairperson, and deans.

6. Information to Board of Trustees

The Trustees' Resolution on Academic Program Planning requires that the Chancellor report regularly to the Board Committee on Academic Policy, Program, and Research on campus-based program review activities. Consistent with this, each College President should inform the Chancellor of the programs reviewed each year and also forward to the Board of Trustees, through the Chancellor, a statement summarizing the major points of the self-studies, the college's plans of action, and the external review reports; upon request, these documents will be forwarded.