

COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AT KSU (updated 2006)

Kennesaw State University is committed to the periodic, systematic, and in-depth examination and evaluation of all educational programs and related academic research and service centers. Comprehensive Program Review (CPR) at KSU serves a dual purpose of not only improving individual programs, but also strengthening the university's portfolio of educational endeavors as a whole. The reviews are comprehensive in that they analyze and evaluate a wide-range of quality and productivity indicators, assess the comparative strengths and viability of each program, and lead to plans for improvement and investment. KSU's model for CPR yields insights and perspectives about the "big picture" of the university's academic landscape that are valuable for program planning and budgeting.

CPR Requirements

Systematic program review has been a long-standing requirement of institutional accreditors, including SACS/COC. The current *Principles of Accreditation* of the Commission on Colleges calls for systematic reviews of programs and services in Core Requirement 2.5.

In 2000, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia adopted a new policy on Comprehensive Program Review and issued detailed procedural guidelines for CPR that are published in the University System's *Academic Affairs Handbook*. KSU's plan to implement that policy and those guidelines was approved in 2001 and has since been modified and improved with each successive cycle of CPR activity. The updated plan for CPR at KSU is outlined here. An electronic archive of key CPR documents is maintained on the Web site of the Center for Institutional Effectiveness.

CPR Schedules

CPR at KSU takes two years to complete and is repeated every six years. All undergraduate programs are reviewed in the same two-year cycle followed by a second two-year cycle for the review of all graduate programs and the academic research and service centers. Completing the reviews of all programs within the same time period generates opportunities to examine the total portfolio of KSU's academic commitments and establishes an institutional context for judgments about each program's quality, productivity, and viability.

Each two-year cycle includes the following steps: 1) completion of a standardized self-study during the fall semester of the first year; 2) completion of an "external evaluation" of the self-study by the University Program Review Council in the spring semester of the first year; 3) administrator consultations and actions on the results of CPR during the summer term of the first year and extending into the second year; 4) submission of a follow-up report of improvements made as a result of CPR at the end of the spring term

of the second year; and 5) finally, submission of a summary report to the System Office on the program's CPR in the summer of the second year (for degree programs only).

The most recently completed and the next cycles of comprehensive program review are listed below:

Group of Programs	Last CPR	Next CPR
All Undergraduate Degree Programs General Education Program University Studies Programs	2001-2003	2007-2009
All Graduate Degree Programs Continuing Education Centers Academic Research & Service Centers	2002-2004	2008-2010

CPR Self Studies

The CPR self-study is an important case statement which reflects the academic unit's in-depth assessment and self-evaluation of its program on a prescribed common set of indicators of productivity, quality, and viability. Quantitative and qualitative assessments are encouraged. A common outline for preparing self-study reports and a standard set of quality and productivity indicators, inclusive of the factors suggested in the USG's implementation guidelines for program review, are identified in detailed self-study guidelines which are issued at the onset of each new cycle of program reviews. In addition, common trend data for some indicators are maintained and published on the Web by KSU's Offices of Institutional Research and Information Management to facilitate the self-study and evaluation processes.

External Evaluators

The Regents' guidelines for program review call for institutional consideration of the judgments of external evaluators in addition to the self-evaluations by faculty and staff associated with a program or center under review. KSU satisfies that requirement by subjecting all program review self-studies to an independent evaluation by a campus-wide panel of deans and senior faculty members who collectively constitute the University Program Review Council. The chief academic officer participates in the UPRC deliberations, as well. The Council functions as an external evaluator in that most members are affiliated with colleges, divisions, and departments outside the program's or center's home college or division and can evaluate the program from a peer and university-wide perspective. The UPRC is chaired by the Director of the Center for Institutional Effectiveness.

Each self-study report includes the program's or center's self-evaluations of its strengths and weaknesses on a standard array of quality and productivity indicators. Program viability, model status potential, investment potential, and improvement plans are also part of this self-evaluation. After considering the contents of the self-study report and the

larger university context, the University Program Review Council makes an independent evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the program or center on each of the common indicators of quality, productivity, and viability. The Council's evaluations and observations are contrasted with the program's or center's self-evaluations on the feedback forms which include constructive suggestions for quality enhancement and program improvement. The Council's deliberations and evaluations are also useful for helping refine budget priorities.

Triggered/Below Threshold Programs

The Board of Regents “triggers” programs for early or special review when certain minimum thresholds of productivity are not met. This typically occurs for programs with low enrollment of majors or low degree productivity over a three-year period. Special attention to such deficiencies and corrective action are expected.

Follow-Up Reports of Improvements

The fundamental goal of CPR is to foster continuous improvement of all programs and services. The CPR process highlights specific aspects of a program's quality, productivity, or overall viability that can be and/or should be improved. Action plans and priorities for achieving such improvements are expected to emerge from these major assessments. Achieving planned improvements "closes the loop" and demonstrates that the results of these assessments were used to guide improvements in the quality, productivity, and viability of KSU's programs and services. Follow-up reports are vehicles for collecting and reporting the evidence that program assessments have resulted in substantive and continuing improvement.