Academic Program Review Guidelines

Office of Academic Affairs

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics

Borough of Manhattan Community College
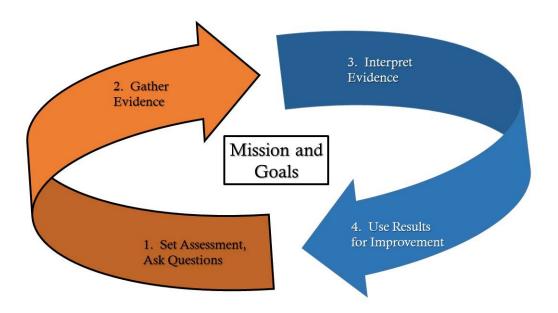
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Purpose

Consistent with its mission, Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) is dedicated to maintaining high quality academic programs for a diverse urban population. BMCC provides general, liberal arts, and career education relevant to the needs, interests, and aspirations of our students, including transfer programs to four-year colleges and universities as well as continuing education for adults of all ages. The Academic Program Review provides for the comprehensive and systematic assessment of student learning outcomes at the program level, and for the regular self-study and continuous improvement of academic programs within the context of institutional mission.

CUNY Board of Trustees policy requires that all academic programs be subject to a formal, periodic review procedure, including both self-study and external assessment. BMCC will review all degree programs not subject to additional external accreditation and academic departments that do not offer degree programs every five years according to a schedule developed by the Office of Academic Affairs (see Appendix I: BMCC Program Review Schedule). Accredited degree programs are exempt from this process and will be reviewed according to their specific accreditation standards and cycle.

Through the Academic Program Review (APR) process, faculty assess the current level of program quality, gauge program currency and relevance, assess student learning outcomes, review program characteristics and outcomes in relation to the mission of BMCC, and plan for program improvements.

As defined in BMCC's Institutional Effectiveness Plan, assessment should be seen as a recurring process of inquiry and improvement in which clearly articulated student learning outcomes and program or unit goals that support aspects of the institutional mission are measured against pre-established performance criteria. Assessment results may meet or exceed expectations, fall short in some way, or uncover unanticipated learning or unexpected outcomes. Disparities between performance expectations and actual assessment results form the basis for dialogue and possible action. Results of assessment activities should be used to bring about improvement in teaching, student learning, and the environment for student learning. The cycle then begins anew either to assess different outcomes or to check to see if the changes implemented as a result of earlier assessments have achieved the intended results.

Assessment Cycle

Evaluation also plays a role in the APR process; evaluations, which are periodic in nature and take place through the APR, provide the opportunity to make an overall judgement of effectiveness through the review of assessment results and additional information. Thus, key steps in the program review process include: 1) evaluating program-level outcomes/objectives; 2) implementing assessment mechanisms to gather evidence about the extent to which these goals are being met; 3) interpreting the evidence to see what can be discovered about student learning and program quality; and 4) using those results to change the learning environment so that student performance and program quality will be improved.

Process and Timeline

The APR process has four stages: 1) preparation, 2) self-study, 3) external review, and 4) implementation. The APR schedule allows for one semester of preparation, one year of writing, and one semester for external review; these phases can be consolidated with the mutual agreement of the department under review and the Office of Academic Affairs. Implementation of strategies for improvement occurs in the years following the external review and until the subsequent self-study. Activities to be completed in each of these stages are detailed below.

Preparation Semester

Spring semester

- The Department Chair identifies a Program Review Leader and a Review Committee to develop the Self-Study.

- The Chair, Program Review Leader and Committee convey the timeline and guidelines for program review to the entire Department and solicit feedback.

- With assistance from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics (OIEA), the Department will use College's assessment management system to store and develop APR documents. The Department Chair, Program Review Team, and OIEA will have access to the site to facilitate collaboration on the development of the self-study.

- OIEA provides an Academic Program Analytics Report for program review through the College's assessment management system. This is program-specific information that is relevant to each department for the purposes of completing the APR. The Academic Program Analytics Report will also include links to data available from OIEA dashboards. The Academic Program Analytics Report and departmental assessment results are the data foundation for the APR. OIEA will work with Department Chairs and Program Review Leaders to ensure full access to Departmental Dashboards for additional information. Review Teams are to assess the results from the supplied data and discuss the possible interpretations of the data.

- OIEA in collaboration with the Department Chair and Program Review leader will conduct at least two focus groups with students who have been within the major for at least three semesters. Focus groups will be completed before the end of April. **Each department is responsible for contacting and recruiting students to participate in the focus groups.**

Self-Study Year

Fall semester:

- The Program Review Team 1) collects additional program-specific data as needed/ available; 2) attends an orientation session for using the dashboards with OIEA, 3)analyzes data, student outcomes and other information collected; and 4) develops a detailed outline and supporting documentation.

- OIEA will facilitate a session within the department to discuss and record strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) in October-November. A SWOT report will be provided to the Department Chair and Program Review Team.

- By December 15, the Program Leader and Committee will hold a status meeting with the Director of Assessment to discuss report requirements.

Spring semester:

- By March 31, the Program Review Team develops a draft and submits it draft to the Department, Provost, and BMCC Director of Assessment for feedback. The Chair also submits names of potential external reviewers to the Provost, Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning, and the Director of Assessment; two reviewers are chosen by the Provost (one reviewer should be from another CUNY institution).

- By April 15, the Provost and Director of Assessment will provide feedback to the Program Review Team.

<u>Implementation of Recommendations</u>

Fall semester:

- The Chair and Director of Assessment schedule site visit of external reviewers and confirm the agenda.

- External reviewers conduct site visit by the end of October, including an exit conference with the Provost. External Reviewers submit findings and recommendations to the Provost, Chair, Program Review Team and Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning. External findings and recommendations are to be included in the recommendations section of the final version of the self-study report.

- In November, the Chair submits the final Self-Study Report, including internal and external recommendations, to the Provost, Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning, and the Director of Assessment.

- Provost meets with the Chair, Program Review Team and the Dean to discuss the self-study and findings and recommendations.

- The Department refines the program improvement plan and five-year assessment plan and submits them to the Provost, Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning, and Director of Assessment. These are subject to the final approval of the Provost.

- The Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) provides ongoing support, as mutually agreed upon by the OAA and the Department Chair, to implement improvement plans.

Academic Program Review Self-Study Template

Programs under review will submit a self-study that contains the following components:

1. <u>Cover Sheet:</u>
   a. Program or Department under review
   b. Program or Department Review Leader and Team
   c. Academic years covered in the Self-Study.

2. <u>Overview of the Program (including):</u>
   a. Department/program mission statement,
   b. Department goals (if any)
   c. Program learning outcomes for the degree program (or department)
   d. Identification of General Education Program outcomes addressed by the program (or department) under review.

3. <u>Enrollment, Retention, Transfer and Graduation Rates*:</u>
   a. Review of the program course requirements and scheduled offerings to confirm that the program can be completed by college-ready students in 4 sequential semesters and by most students with developmental course requirements in 6 sequential semesters;
   b. Analysis of longitudinal enrollment, retention, transfer and graduation data;
   c. Description of strategies to improve retention and graduation rates;
   d. Longitudinal analysis of student demographics;
   e. Description of recruitment strategies;
   f. Plans and strategies to increase enrollment (if appropriate)

   * Using Academic Program Analytics Report and Dashboards from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics; departments without degree programs provide an analysis of enrollment and retention only

4. <u>Curriculum:</u>
   a. Degree requirements (or any standard requirements for departments without degree programs);
   b. Analysis of curricular coherence (review of syllabi, mapping of course learning outcomes with student learning outcomes for degree, rationale for course sequencing, strategies for maintaining consistent standards across multiple sections);
   c. Analysis of curricular currency (evidence of responsiveness to changes in the field);

d. List of key gateway courses (defined by the Office of Academic Affairs and provided by OIEA) and an analysis of pass rates in key gateway and high enrollment courses

e. Description of any recent or planned curricular changes

f. Description of experiential learning opportunities available to students.

5. Instruction and Scholarship:

   a. List of all full-time faculty with rank, tenure status, date of hire, degrees (provided by Office of Faculty Appointments with exception of degrees)

   b. Key research/grants/publications (provided by OIEA)/creative work over last three years in faculty areas of expertise

   c. Discuss priorities of department for needed areas of expertise

   d. Full-time/part-time faculty ratios for department

   e. Needs for professional development and strategies to support faculty development, pedagogical effectiveness and efforts to improve pedagogy

   f. Strategies for expanding support for new faculty

   g. Strategies for expanding support for part-time faculty

   h. Evidence of use of teaching/learning technologies

   i. Trends on the number of sections per semester offered as hybrid or fully online (provided by OIEA).

6. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:

   a. Discussion of the assessment plan for the program including alignment of BMCC general education assessment to program-level assessment

   b. Copy of program assessment plan

   c. Evidence of assessment and an analysis of the results of assessment, including of general education outcomes

   d. Discuss use of results of assessment, including a description of regular processes designed to ensure continuous improvement of the program; provide evidence of how assessment results have been used for course-level or program redesign and/or improvement

7. Student Satisfaction with the Program:

   a. Aggregate summaries of student evaluations of faculty (no individual faculty data)

   b. Summaries of student experience and alumni survey results (if available)

c. Efforts to evaluate faculty role in student mentoring and advisement

d. Analysis of results of focus group sessions

e. Analysis of CUNY Graduate Survey results (if applicable)

8. <u>Partnerships and Co-Curricular Activities</u>:
   a. Description of any partnerships with other programs or departments at BMCC, with other CUNY colleges, or with external entities; including articulation agreements
   b. Description of any special programs, clubs, honors, awards, community service or study abroad opportunities;
   c. Other co-curricular activities to foster student engagement and promote a culture of excellence.

9. <u>Adequacy of Resources (Provide data/evidence that supports conclusions)</u>:
   a. Analysis of use and adequacy of budget allocation,
   b. Facilities (including labs and offices),
   c. Equipment,
   d. Library resources
   e. Student support services
   f. Administrative support
   g. Support from other College offices/services.

10. <u>Analysis of Program Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (facilitated by OIEA)</u>
    a. Assessment of strengths, weaknesses based on evidence
    b. Description of any special accomplishments and/or external recognition
    c. Specific concerns, and if appropriate any opportunities envisioned and any external threats to the program

11. <u>Recommendations and Priorities for Program Improvement</u>
    a. List of specific actions that will lead to improved student learning outcomes and the enhancement of overall program quality (use table below).

Recommendations for Improvement				
Priorities for Improvement	**Actions to be taken**	**Timeline**	**Assessment**	**Comments**
1.	1.	1.	1.	
2.	2.	2.	2.	
3.	3.	3.	3.	
4.	4.	4.	4.	
5.	5.	5.	5.	

Appendix 1: Academic Program Analytics Report

<u>Required Information by Department/Major:</u>

- Enrollment

- 1, 2, 3, and 4 Year Retention and Graduation Outcomes

- New Freshmen Placement Needs

- Student Progress:
    a. Average Credits Earned in Semester
    b. % Credits Passed in Semester
    c. Average Hours (Equated Credits) Earned in Semester
    d. % Hours (Equated Credits) Passed in Semester

- Key Gateway Courses

- Course Enrollment Grade Analysis (per fall and regular spring term)
    a. Enrollment Count
    b. Pass Rate (official and "valid" which excludes only WNs and WDs)
    c. Withdrawal Rate
    d. DFWI Rate

- Graduate Outcomes: Years to graduation and graduation GPA by gender, age, and ethnicity.

- Graduate Transfers: Transfers to CUNY Colleges and average 1st semester GPA

<u>Other Required Reports:</u>

- Internships & Field Work by Department/Student (Internships and Experiential Learning)

- Industry/Labor market Outcomes (Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics)

- Full-Time Faculty by Department (Faculty Appointments & Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics)
    a. Rank
    b. Tenure Status
    c. Date of Hire

d. Degrees
   e. Publications

- Student Satisfaction (Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics)
   a. Focus Groups
   b. Student Evaluations of Faculty
   c. Graduate or Alumni survey (if available)

Optional data

- 6 Year Outcomes: Non-CUNY Transfers by Department/Major

- Course Enrollment and outcomes for Winter and Summer Sessions by Department.

Appendix 2: Analytics Report Dashboard Details

Department Chairs and Academic Program Review Teams can always access information about their majors through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics Dashboards. Below are further details on what information is available.

Dashboard Details: User selects Department and Major(s):

- Basic Enrollment by Term, with menu options to filter or display by Full-time/Part-time, Imputed Ethnicity, and Gender.

- Basic Fall Cohorts: 1, 2, 3, and 4 Year Retention and Graduation Outcomes (by New Freshmen/New Transfers cohorts. Includes listing of changes with new major & school in Year 2 Fall only.

- Basic Fall Cohorts: New Freshmen Placement Needs

- Basic Graduates: Existing Public Graduates Dashboard, updated annually, with average and median years to graduation and graduation GPA, and breakdowns by gender, age, and ethnicity.

- Graduates APR: Transfers to CUNY Colleges within one academic year with Major Program Title and average 1ˢᵗ semester GPA

- Student Progress:
    a. Average Credits Earned in Semester
    b. % Credits Passed in Semester
    c. Average Hours (Equated Credits) Earned in Semester
    d. % Hours (Equated Credits) Passed in Semester

- Course Enrollment Grade Analysis (per fall and regular spring term)
    a. Enrollment Count
    b. Pass Rate (official and "valid" which excludes only WNs and WDs)
    c. Withdrawal Rate
    d. DFWI Rate

Appendix 3: External Review

External review visits should include, but are not limited to, the following components:

- Visit with members of faculty (including adjuncts)
- Observation of course(s) within the program
- Meeting with students
- Meeting with alumni (if available)
- Opportunity to write notes or feedback while on-site
- Exit interview with the Provost

External reviewers should be asked to identify strengths, weaknesses, and specific recommendations for improvement relative to the report as presented and observations from their visit.