



# Academic Program Review

<b>Policy Number</b>	4-407.1
<b>Responsible Authority</b>	Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
<b>Initiating Authority</b>	Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
<b>Effective Date</b>	1/31/2024
<b>Date of Origin</b>	12/12/2019

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## APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

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This policy applies to all UCF degree programs represented in the Florida Board of Governor's academic program inventory.

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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A university's core function is to educate and train students, and UCF is committed to providing high-quality undergraduate and graduate education in executing its mission to unleash the potential within our students and to propel the many communities we serve toward broad-based prosperity. Fulfilling this mission requires strategic identification of program need, followed by the thoughtful design and delivery of curriculum to address the needs. It also requires engaging in continuous self-reflection, evaluation, and improvement.

The university employs a variety of mechanisms to regularly review the overall health, quality, and relevance of its various degree programs. Academic program review is one mechanism by which UCF addresses institutional and programmatic accreditor expectations for the continuous review and improvement of academic programs. Consistent with good practice, these reviews typically occur once every seven years. The usefulness of the academic program review depends heavily upon the genuine engagement of all stakeholders including program faculty members, staff members, and students, as well as academic leadership at the program, unit, college, and university levels. The perspectives of discipline experts external to the university are also highly valued and essential to the undertaking. Whenever feasible, the university also seeks input from industry, alumni, and other stakeholders.

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## PURPOSES

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The purposes of the academic program review are to examine the overall health, quality, and relevance of the university's degree programs and to develop recommendations leading to program improvement. While the academic program is the primary unit of analysis, the review also examines the environment and infrastructure that support student learning and institutional goals.

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## DEFINITIONS

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**Degree Program.** For purposes of this policy, degree program is defined as each unique entry represented in the Florida Board of Governor's official academic program inventory for which active enrollments were reported during the most recent reporting cycle, provided the program has not received Board of Trustees approval for termination.

**Program Review Council.** The Program Review Council is an advisory group to assist in carrying out the purposes of academic program review as described above. Members are appointed by the provost or designee who is the vice provost for Academic Affairs. The Program Review Council is chaired by the vice provost for Academic Affairs. At minimum, other council members include the vice provost and dean of the College of Undergraduate Studies, the vice president for Research, the vice provost and dean of the College of Graduate Studies, the vice provost for Faculty Excellence, and the assistant vice president of Academic Program Quality, or their respective designees. Additional members may be added at the discretion of the provost or designee.

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## POLICY STATEMENT

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Every seven years, each UCF degree program will undergo a comprehensive formative review and assessment of the:

- mission and purpose of each program within the context of the university mission and the Board of Governors' strategic plan;
- appropriateness of faculty teaching, research, and service activities relative to program, department/unit, college, and university goals;
- extent to which program objectives are being met and student learning outcomes are being achieved as well as how the results of these assessments are used for continuous improvement;
- sufficiency of program resources and support services;
- lower-level baccalaureate program prerequisite courses to ensure that the program is in compliance with state-approved common prerequisites;
- and
- other indicators of program health, quality, or relevance as determined by UCF academic leadership.

Reviews are informed by:

- institutional data,
- self-studies,

- specialized accreditation reports, if applicable,
  - external discipline expert review, and
  - other sources.
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## **PROCEDURES**

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### **A. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Academic Program Quality**

The Academic Program Quality unit provides general oversight and facilitation of the academic program review process on behalf of the provost. Its specific responsibilities include the following:

- establishes and maintains a schedule for the review of all academic degree programs, taking into account the efficient and effective use of resources required to implement the review and maximize strategic gains (e.g., college-wide strategic planning and allocation of limited resources)
- develops and distributes a timeline for the upcoming review cycle
- provides an orientation for programs scheduled for review in the prior spring term
- facilitates the external consultant selection process with input from the Program Review Council and the applicable college
- consults with appropriate stakeholders to develop self-study and consultant report templates, which include analyses of program strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- collaborates with other central units on campus to provide stakeholders with relevant institutional data to inform reflection and evaluation (e.g., UCF Libraries, Institutional Knowledge Management, Division of Digital Learning, Operational Excellence and Assessment Support).
- works with the college and/or program to coordinate the site visit when required (see B below)
- provides appropriate stakeholders with access to review materials (e.g., Program Review Council members, consultants)
- collects reports of major program changes since the last review from all applicable programs undergoing review
- acquires completed consultant reports and distributes to appropriate stakeholders
- compiles input from the Program Review Council and college to finalize action recommendations for program improvement
- electronically maintains the complete set of program review reports (self-studies, consultant reports, and final recommendations)
- facilitates follow-up on recommended actions resulting from the review

#### **The Applicable College Dean (or Designee):**

- submits nominations for external consultants with input from program faculty members to Academic Program Quality for Program Review Council review
- meets with external consultants during the site visit
- reviews self-studies, consultant reports, and other review materials to inform recommendations for program improvement

- offers input at appropriate times throughout the review process, as to the overall assessment of program health, quality, and relevance, and toward developing actions for program improvement
- provides ongoing oversight for implementation of recommended actions for program improvement and facilitates updates to Academic Program Quality upon request

#### **Department Leadership and Program Faculty Members:**

- engage program stakeholders throughout the review process
- nominate external disciplinary experts to serve as external consultants for the review
- complete thoughtful self-studies to evaluate program health, quality, and relevance and recommend possible actions for improvement
- submit reports of major changes since the last review to Academic Program Quality
- compile supplemental review materials requested by academic affairs, the college, consultant(s), and/or the Program Review Council
- participate actively in the preparation for and execution of consultant site visits
- undertake companion processes (e.g., graduate faculty re-nomination in accordance with Graduate Council policy)
- implement the action recommendations resulting from the review and provide associated status updates to academic leadership upon request

#### **Program Review Council**

- selects program review consultants from the nominations submitted by the college and requests additional nominations if members deem necessary
- meets with external consultants during the site visit, in either group or individual settings, where appropriate and applicable
- reviews self-studies, consultant reports, and other review materials
- provides evaluative input to the Academic Program Quality unit to inform development of the final recommendations for program improvement
- utilizes insights gleaned from program reviews to inform the council members' primary and other institutional duties, including their associated roles in executing the institution's mission

#### **Provost or Designee**

- appoints additional members of the Program Review Council as determined appropriate
- meets with external consultants during the site visit
- approves the final recommendations for program improvement
- utilizes insights gleaned from the program reviews to inform institution-wide strategic and curricular planning efforts and resource allocation, as appropriate

### **B. Acceptable Deviations from the General Policy**

1. **Seven-year Cycle Exceptions** – Programs may be reviewed earlier or slightly later than the standard seven-year cycle for sound business reasons (e.g., to align a review with a specialized accreditation cycle; to align reviews within a college or unit). Adjustments must be approved by the Academic Program Quality unit.
2. **Potential Streamlined Review for Programs with Discipline Accreditation or Equivalent** - Discipline accreditation (also called programmatic or specialized accreditation) or certification reports may substitute for portions of the academic program

review self-studies if the provost or designee determines that they sufficiently address the elements considered under the program review process. In such instances, the accreditation or equivalent process will normally have included a site visit by one or more discipline expert(s). At the discretion of the provost or designee, programs that achieve initial accreditation or reaffirmation by the specialized accreditor may forgo a program review site visit by an external consultant. The site visit waiver shall normally be granted only when the discipline accreditor grants the maximum period of accreditation allowed by the agency, unless the provost or designee determines that requiring a program review site visit in addition to the discipline accreditor review would not add value.

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## RELATED DOCUMENTS

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[Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement](#)

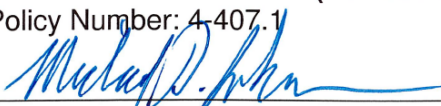
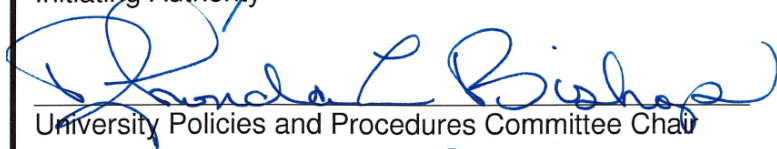

[UCF Graduate Council policy on Graduate Faculty and Graduate Faculty Scholars](#)

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## CONTACTS

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[Academic Program Quality](#), 12424 Research Parkway, Suite 220, Orlando, FL 32826-0022.  
Phone: (407) 823-6197.

POLICY APPROVAL (For use by the Office of the President)	
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