

Program Review Handbook

Definition

Program review is a collaborative process designed to provide an in-depth, comprehensive study of departments and programs at Carroll College. This effort involves administrators, staff, faculty and occasionally external consultants in:

1. Gathering information about a department/program
2. Reviewing and analyzing that information
3. Evaluating overall department/program quality
4. Evaluating and assisting a department/program with outcomes assessment
5. Identifying department/program areas for improvement and areas of strength
6. Monitoring the progress of a department/program in achieving its goals for improvement

Purpose

Program review serves the primary purpose of providing an opportunity for focused reflection, study, and the gathering of information to support ongoing and systematic development and improvement. It is intended to provide a fair and consistent means to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, and effectiveness of a department/program in meeting the College's mission, core themes, and strategic goals. Such mission-aligned reviews also serve external purposes of satisfying the Northwest Commission on Colleges and University standards and other professional accreditation standards.

Review Cycle

The College has established a five-year cycle of program review (see Administrative and Academic Program Review Calendar).

PRAC Membership

The College has established a standing committee, the Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC) to undertake the task of providing feedback to programs and departments who submit program reviews. The Faculty Handbook describes the composition of the PRAC:

3.2.1 PRAC Membership

Director of Institutional Effectiveness (Chair), three elected faculty members, representative from Academic Affairs (designated by the Vice President for Academic Affairs), representative from Student Life (designated by the Vice President for Student Life), representative from Finance and Administration (designated by the Vice President for Finance and Administration), representative

from Institutional Advancement (designated by the Vice President for Institutional Advancement), Ad hoc Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

PRAC Responsibilities

1. Review and analyze program information, including:
 - a. material contained in the Academic and Administrative Program Review and TracDat;
 - b. the previous Program Review and/or Program Prioritization Report for the program;
 - c. data provided by the Registrar's Office, Office of Institutional Research and other sources;
 - d. professional accreditation reports, external evaluations and/or advisory board reports.
2. Complete a **PRAC Summary Report** for each program.
3. Share all reports with the program director/chair and appropriate Vice President.
4. Maintain and update the review schedule and all templates/rubrics.
5. Provide assistance to programs and departments during review and non-review cycles.

Process and Schedule

1. The chair of the Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC) will distribute a list in the fall to all departments and programs (hereafter, programs) under review during the current and following academic years. Program reviews are to be submitted annually by Nov. 1.
2. The PRAC chair will schedule an early fall workshop for chairs and directors of all programs under review in the current year, and a late spring semester workshop for reviews due the following year.
3. All faculty and staff in the program, or as many as reasonably can, should participate in the review process and/or be involved in preparing and revising the written report (see *Purpose* above).
4. Programs may request and should expect timely help from the Registrar's Office and the Office of Institutional Research concerning data pertinent to the review.
5. Throughout the review process, PRAC will openly communicate with program chairs and directors. Opportunities will be made available for program chairs and directors, along with other faculty and staff who wish to participate, to address the PRAC during their respective program's review and/or before the PRAC Summary Report for their program is finalized.
6. Programs that undergo major external review by accrediting agencies may submit that review to the PRAC in lieu of the normal Carroll review. They must, however, address any items in the Carroll review guidelines that are not covered in the external review and they must complete the Program/Department Assessment Cycle by entering and/or updating previously-entered data in the TracDat system.
7. PRAC will consider the program's review materials and produce a PRAC Summary Report containing its conclusions by March 1 of the following spring semester. The PRAC Summary

Report will be sent to the program chair/director, the appropriate Vice President, and the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. When the program receives PRAC's Summary Report, there are three further steps to be taken:

- a. The program chair/director should read the PRAC Summary Report for errors of fact. Error of fact correction requests should be submitted to PRAC within two weeks. PRAC will review the corrections and make changes as necessary before the PRAC Summary Report is distributed to the community.
 - b. Faculty and staff in the program should meet and discuss the PRAC Summary Report. They should address, point-by-point, any issues identified by the PRAC. All members of the program must sign the PRAC Verification Form acknowledging that they have read the PRAC Summary Report. The signed PRAC Verification Form should be returned to the PRAC by May 1.
 - c. The appropriate Vice President should schedule a meeting with the program chair/director before November 1 of the following academic year. That meeting should focus on the main points of the program review, especially the PRAC's Summary Report, and any additional program needs and future planning that can be identified. Every effort should be made to find a consensus about the future direction of the program and then to obtain a specific commitment of institutional resources sufficient to support progress towards achieving the agreed upon goals. The appropriate Vice President will submit a written report of the meeting to PRAC with specific notes regarding the steps that will be taken to improve or sustain program efforts.
8. The written record produced as a result of 7 (c) must be filed with PRAC no later than Nov. 1 of the fall academic semester following the issuance of the PRAC's Summary Report to the program. The next program review cycle must address this material directly.
9. Programs, in consultation with the appropriate Vice President, will be responsible for submitting any proposals or recommendations that emerge from the review process to the appropriate governance committee (e.g., Curriculum Committee, Core Committee, Budget Committee).

Use of Results

Results of the ongoing program review will provide evidence of the quality and strength of Carroll's academic and non-academic programs and allow for decisions to be made regarding program development, enhancement, and continuation. Findings will also contribute to the following efforts:

1. *Program and institutional planning*: To identify program needs and provide a foundation for strategic planning and budgeting at the institutional level.
2. *Quality assessment and assurance*: As a mechanism for identifying and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of a program and establishing agreement on programmatic goals, academic priorities, and consistent quality measures.

3. *Academic profile and data synthesis*: To maintain an accurate and consistent academic profile for each degree program and allow for the identification and analysis of relevant trends.

4. *External evaluation*: To meet regional and professional requirements for a continuous, systematic evaluation process to assess the strength of our programs and use results to foster program improvement.

5. *Accountability*: To provide data that are clear, relevant and easily accessible to students, faculty, parents, alumni and other stakeholders.

Instructions for Preparing the Program Review

To be in good-standing with PRAC each program (both academic and administrative) must complete all three parts of the Program Review. Academic minors and service programs need complete Part II only. Professionally accredited programs should work with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to identify which components of Part I and II are required as an addendum to their professional program accreditation materials.

Part I: Complete the Program/Department Assessment Cycle by entering and/or updating previously-entered data in the TracDat system. This includes the identification of outcomes, measures, timelines, thresholds, and data/findings/analysis, along with supporting documents and evidence of assessment for prior academic years. NOTE: All supporting evidence/documents should be stored in the “Documents” section of TracDat.

Part II: Prepare a narrative, NOT TO EXCEED 5 PAGES IN LENGTH, which corresponds to the format outlined below. Part II should be completed by both academic (majors and select minors) and administrative programs. Upon completion, please upload your narrative into the “Documents” folder of TracDat.

A. Mission

- (1) Introductory paragraph describing the value of your program to the College.
- (2) Any additional evidence (beyond what is entered in TracDat) that speaks to the program’s support for the mission of the College.

B. Program Quality

- (1) Beyond the information entered in TracDat, describe any innovations that enhance teaching, learning, services, retention, and/or future enrollment.
- (2) Describe interrelationships and collaboration with entities outside of your program, and discuss perceptions of quality by entities outside of your program.
- (3) Discuss faculty/staff credentials (years of service, honors, professional growth, skill sets, cross-training, research productivity). Discuss perceived personnel strengths and weaknesses.

(4) DATA REVIEW (Academic Departments ONLY):

- (a) Analyze the institutional and academic metrics for your program;
- (b) Discuss cost per credit hour, instructional FTEs, average student credit hour production, class sizes, numbers of majors, retention rates, internal/external demand for program, and advising loads;
- (c) If necessary, define your strategies to improve/adjust any of the above data sets.

C. Planning for the Future

- (1) Program Development Plan: Describe the plans you have for your program in the next seven years. In particular, consider changes and activities that would attract new students, create efficiencies, energize current students, faculty, and staff, and improve the quality of graduates or services. What is your rationale for proposed changes? How do they derive from your assessment results? What are the current opportunities and challenges? What other offices/programs need to be involved in your plans?

Organize your thoughts into the following categories:

- (a) ENHANCEMENTS to include revisions, restructuring, revenue opportunities or new additions
 - (b) Elements of your program that are slated for DISCONTINUATION/ELIMINATION
 - (c) If you have developed a business plan to support your ideas, please attach it to this review.
- (2) Define the resources needed for your program to grow/improve. This should include operational, training/professional development, technology, personnel and financial needs and a justification for each in terms of priorities.
- (3) Describe the future contributions your program intends to make to strengthen the College's overall educational mission (e.g., Core, interdisciplinary, service, Catholic theology/teaching and other faith traditions, social justice.)

D. Responses to recommendations

- (1) Provide a response to PRAC's recommendations as noted on the Summary Report from the prior cycle of review or interim report AND a response to any issues addressed as part of the prior cycle follow up meeting with the appropriate Vice President. The files containing the summary of the Program/VP meetings are kept in the VPAA Office.

Part III: All program/department employees (including adjunct and part-time employees) must sign the pre-submission column of the Verification Form to indicate that they have read the program review prior to submission to the PRAC Committee. The Verification Form should be forwarded to the Office of Research, Assessment, and Planning by November 1. This form will be returned to the program/department with the PRAC Summary Report so that department/program employees can sign the post-report column of the Verification Form after

their review PRAC's Summary Report. The fully completed Verification Form will again need to be returned to the Office of Research, Planning, and Assessment by May 1.

Criteria for Program Review

The members of the PRAC will evaluate each program according to the following criteria:

Assessment

- The program's TracDat profile reflects consideration of quantitative and qualitative elements of assessment.
- Outcomes are clearly defined and program measures are related to the outcomes.
- Data and findings are relevant and the program is able to demonstrate how it is using TracDat analysis to inform changes in curriculum, pedagogy, instructional resources, and student services
- Outcomes demonstrate a link to the College's strategic goals.

Mission

- The program mission is clearly articulated and aligns with Carroll's mission and strategic goals. The program review describes how the program is fulfilling its mission and how the program's goals are linked to the college mission and strategic goals.
- The program's decisions (e.g., curriculum, enrollment, faculty, and staff activity) are mission-driven.
- The program meets college-wide curricular or co-curricular needs.
- The program strives to improve its standing within the discipline or professional organization as compared to peer programs.

Program Quality

- The program is making efforts to develop and offer a high quality education and/or services for students, faculty, staff, community, and other constituents
- Program offerings are relevant, rigorous, current, coherent, and optimally utilize available resources.
- The program systematically examines the quality of the curriculum, instruction, and/or support services in the context of helping students to achieve intended learning outcomes or helping Carroll to meet institutional effectiveness outcomes.
- The program review includes descriptions of faculty and staff contributions to quality, including teaching, research, service, and outreach excellence.
- The program demonstrates innovation in its efforts to enhance teaching, learning, services, retention, and future enrollment.
- The program has cultivated interrelationships, collaborative partnerships inside and outside of Carroll, and there is evidence of a high perception of program quality on the part of entities outside of the program.

Planning for the Future

- The program review articulates ways in which instructional and service programs might be changed or improved, both within currently available college resources and with an influx of additional resources.
- The allocation of resources and processes for planning are mission-driven, seek to improve the quality of outcomes, and respond to future challenges.
- The program review indicates an awareness and knowledge of current and future trends that could or will impact the program or department.
- Program processes address effective environmental scanning (looking at external practices, trends, comparison data, and best practices) and forward thinking.
- The program maintains effective systems for collecting, analyzing, and using institutional information.
- Feedback loops are used to support continuous improvement.

The PRAC Summary Report

The template included in this handbook as Attachment A will be used by the PRAC to prepare its summary reports.

Attachment A

PRAC Summary Report

Program:

Date:

1. Has the program adequately responded to the elements identified in the Guidelines for Administrative and Academic Program Review?

If no, note which topics were either omitted or not addressed clearly or substantially enough:

2. List the most important things (issues, trends, concerns, etc.) that are apparent from this report:

3. Does the data substantiate the conclusions and recommendations made?

If no, note the areas and manner in which data does not match conclusions or recommendations?

4. List program accomplishments and aspects for which the program should be commended.

Assessment:

Mission:

Program Quality:

Planning for the Future:

5. List suggestions PRAC may have for the program based on information in the program review.

Assessment

Mission:

Program Quality:

Planning for the Future:

6. Additional comments: