



Cal Poly Academic Program Review (APR) for Centers and Institutes **Guidance for Deans, Unit Directors, and Faculty**

Purpose

First and foremost, the purpose of program review (APR) at Cal Poly is to acknowledge the strengths and seek ways of further enhancing the quality of our programs. APR provides an opportunity for us all to make better, more informed decisions, leading (it is hoped) to program improvement.

The review of centers and institutes is mandated by the CSU, and Cal Poly carries out this mandate through its regular academic program review (APR) process.

Features

- APR is intended to be a collaborative process involving the center/institute, department and/or college (as applicable), qualified reviewers, the Office of Research and Graduate Programs, and the Office of Academic Programs. It is intended to be *formative* and to lead to program improvement. It is not intended to be punitive in its consequences.
- The entire APR process takes place over a period of 1 – 1 ½ years, and is normally repeated every six years. [See schedule](#) (on-line) and [time-line](#) (below).
- At least two external reviewers and one internal reviewer are preferred for review of a center/institute, although a single external reviewer plus one internal reviewer may suffice when a small unit undergoes review. Where appropriate, there may be an advantage to utilizing the same team of reviewers to conduct simultaneous reviews of undergraduate/ graduate programs and a related center/institute. [See guidelines for appointment of reviewers](#).
- Centers and institutes are strongly encouraged to involve their faculty and professional staff in all stages of APR, including design of the self-study. The director of the center/institute, the department head/chair (if relevant), the dean of the college (if relevant), the Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, and the Vice Provost all sign off on the self-study proposal and the time-line for its preparation. [See guidelines for self-studies](#).
- Following a site visit (normally of 1 day), the review team submits a written report.
- The center/institute director prepares a response to the reviewers' report.
- A working meeting is held to assist in the development of an action plan for the program, typically involving the center/institute director, at least one other faculty member, the department head/chair (if relevant), the college dean or designee (if relevant), the Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, and the Vice Provost.

- The action plan is completed and submitted via the appropriate responsible administrator to the Vice Provost. Normally, a final “adoption” meeting follows, involving all of the faculty who play a significant role in the center/institute.
- The center/institute director reports annually via the appropriate responsible administrator to the Dean of Research and Graduate Programs and the Vice Provost on implementation of the action plan and resulting outcomes.

Time-Line

∅ *The time-line for a particular center/institute is set at the beginning of the review process. Depending on the unit’s size and the complexity of its operations, the review may extend into the fall of the second year or it may be completed in a single year. The following chart gives an example of a time-line extending into the fall (regular font) with optional target dates for an accelerated schedule (italics). The summer may also be used to make progress on a review.*

∅ *Once a time-line has been set, the approval (with sufficient justification) of the Vice Provost or designee is needed to adjust target dates.*

∅ *Some events may occur concurrently.*

∅ *In the following chart, mention of College Dean should be taken to signify also Department Head/Chair, if relevant.*

Target Date for Completion (Example)	Activity	Responsibility (Named Individual or Designee)
End of prior spring quarter	Units scheduled for review are selected and announced, and an overall time-line is set.	College Deans, Dean of Research & Graduate Programs, Vice Provost
Oct Wk One	Nominations for internal reviewers are submitted to Senate Chair.	Unit Director
Oct Wk One	Nominations for external reviewers are submitted to Vice Provost.	Unit Director, College Dean (if relevant), Dean of Research & Graduate Programs
Oct Wk Two	Senate selects/approves internal reviewers.	Senate Executive Committee
Oct Wk Three	Appointment of all team members is confirmed; external members are formally invited by College Dean or Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, as appropriate; chair is designated.	Vice Provost, College Dean or Dean of Research and Graduate Programs
Oct Wk Three	Content/theme of self-study, and time-line for its preparation, are proposed, negotiated, and approved.	Unit Director, College Dean (if relevant), Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, Vice Provost
End of Oct - Jan	Unit conducts self-study and compiles report.	Unit Self-Study Team
Feb Wk Two <i>Jan Wk Four</i>	Unit submits self-study via College Dean and/or Dean of Research and Graduate Programs to Vice Provost.	Unit Director, College Dean (if relevant), Dean of Research and Graduate Programs

Feb Wk Three <i>Feb Wk One</i>	Following review of accuracy of university-related information, Vice Provost submits self-study to Review Team.	Vice Provost
Mar <i>Feb</i>	Review Team reviews self-study.	Review Team
Apr <i>Early Mar</i>	Site visit (normally 1 day)	Review Team, Unit Director
Apr-May Within 21 days from site visit <i>Late Mar</i>	Review Team submits draft report to Vice Provost, who immediately distributes copies to Unit Director, College Dean (if relevant), and Dean of Research and Graduate Programs.	Review Team, Vice Provost
Within 10 days from receipt of draft report (allowing extra time for holidays, as needed)	Unit Director notifies Review Team, Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, and Vice Provost of any significant errors or omissions.	Unit Director
May-Jun Within 45 days from site visit <i>Mid-Apr</i>	Review Team submits final report to Vice Provost, who immediately distributes copies to Unit Director, College Dean (if relevant), and Dean of Research and Graduate Programs.	Review Team, Vice Provost
Jun Within 60 days from site visit <i>Early May</i>	Unit Director prepares response to report and submits it to Vice Provost, who immediately distributes copies to College Dean (if relevant) and Dean of Research and Graduate Programs.	Unit Director, Vice Provost
Oct Wk 1 <i>Mid-May</i>	Vice Provost arranges working meeting with Unit Director, at least one other faculty member, College Dean (if relevant), and Dean of Research and Graduate Programs to discuss report and begin developing action plan for program improvement.	Vice Provost
Oct Wk 4 <i>Late May</i>	Unit Director submits written action plan via College Dean and/or Dean of Research and Graduate Programs to Vice Provost.	Unit Director, College Dean and/or Dean of Research and Graduate Programs
Nov <i>Early Jun</i>	Provost, Vice Provost, Dean of Research and Graduate Programs, College Dean (if relevant), Unit Director, and Affiliated Faculty meet to bring closure to review.	Vice Provost, Unit Director
Subsequent Jun and annually until next review cycle begins	Unit Director prepares and submits via College Dean and/or Dean of Research and Graduate Programs to Vice Provost annual progress report on implementation of action plan and resulting outcome(s).	Unit Director, College Dean (if relevant), Dean of Research and Graduate Programs

Further Reading

Task Force on Institutional Accountability and Learning Assessment, [Report on Institutional Accountability: Academic Program Review](#), Nov 21, 2000. (This 11 page document laid the foundation for the current review process.)

[Senate Resolution on Academic Program Review AS-552-00/IALA](#) (In addition to adopting the Task Force Report, this resolution provides rationale and background information.)

For More Information

Contact [Valene Mathews](#) in the Office of Academic Programs