



***Cal Poly Academic Program Review (APR) for University Centers and Institutes***

**Guidelines for Self-Studies**

*“First and foremost, the purpose of academic program review (APR) at Cal Poly is to acknowledge the strengths and seek ways of further enhancing the quality of academic programs.”*

University centers and institutes are academic units within the university formed to provide enhanced support for the teaching, research, and/or public service activities of faculty members who participate in them. A center or institute can enhance professional development opportunities for faculty, build links with industry and the community, provide identifiable campus entities for practitioners, foster interdisciplinary work, aid in obtaining external support, and complement the instructional program.

In the case of university centers and institutes, the goal of program review is achieved by reviewing the unit’s mission and goals as they relate to the mission of the institution; the activities through which the unit’s mission and goals are pursued; the extent to which the program is achieving its objectives; the quality of the faculty and staff and their contributions to achieving the unit’s mission and goals; the quality of the infrastructure supporting the unit; and the way in which the unit’s activities complement or enhance the educational mission of the University.

To support the review, all centers and institutes are expected to include in their self-studies:

1. General information about the unit, e.g., data on faculty, staff and student participants, facilities, etc.
2. A statement of the intended objectives of the unit.
3. The results of a *focused* inquiry addressing issues of particular interest/concern to the unit itself, in the context of what is currently important to the disciplinary field, the college (if applicable), and the university. (These issues should be identified in a short self-study proposal and timeline, submitted for approval before the self-study itself is conducted.)

4. For reviews of centers and institutes, items of special importance to the university include:
- Evidence of professional activities, including publications, presentations, special projects, professional recognition, etc.
  - Evidence of financial viability, through external support for the activities of the unit (for example, grants and contracts)
  - Evidence of student participation in the unit (for example, as research assistants) and the benefits that result (senior projects, theses, employment opportunities, etc.)
  - Evidence, if appropriate, of interdisciplinary collaboration.

The administrator to whom the unit director reports, the college dean (if appropriate), and the vice provost all sign off on the self-study proposal and the time-line for its preparation. ***The Office of Academic Programs and the Office of Research and Graduate Programs are available to provide consultation and assistance, as feasible, at all stages in the process.***

*For more information, contact the Office of Academic Programs ([acadprog@calpoly.edu](mailto:acadprog@calpoly.edu)) or the Office of Research and Graduate Programs ([research-gradprogs@calpoly.edu](mailto:research-gradprogs@calpoly.edu)).*