

PALO ALTO COLLEGE COLLEGE PROCEDURES

Procedure Number: A 23.0
Procedure Title: Program Review and Unit Planning Processes
Relevant Board/SACSCOC Policy: Standard 7.1 Institutional Planning
Originating Unit: Institutional Research and Planning
Maintenance Unit: Institutional Research and Planning

- I. Purpose: To outline Palo Alto College's program review, unit planning, and unit evaluation processes. This procedure identifies key components of PAC's Institutional Effectiveness processes in place to facilitate the program review , unit planning, and unit evaluation annual cycle in alignment with the College's mission and strategic plan.

II. Procedure statement:

The ability to demonstrate institutional effectiveness is a critically important component of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) accreditation process. In accordance with section 7 of SACSCOC standards, Palo Alto College engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated, research-based planning and evaluation processes that focuses on institutional quality and effectiveness and incorporates a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. Outcome-driven Program Reviews and Unit Plans are used as decision-making tools for pursuing new opportunities, developing strategies, and allocating resources to competing priorities in support of the College's mission and strategic plan.

A. Program Review Process

1. Program Review is an essential element of Palo Alto College's Institutional Effectiveness Program. In conjunction with strategic planning, unit planning, budgeting, and assessment of student learning, program review brings into focus academic and technical instructional programs, as well as student and administrative support services. Instructional programs and student and administrative support services will undergo program review on a five-year cycle. This review cycle provides each area with an opportunity to set long range goals which are aligned with the college's strategic plan.
2. Faculty and/or employees of the discipline/program area are charged with submitting a program review report. Each area up for review forms a Program Review Team consisting of 3-5 members to conduct the required research, write

the program review, and collectively submit their assessment of the discipline/program under review to the respective chairperson or director.

3. The Program Review process is designed to incorporate assessment and evaluation from many different perspectives, the process necessitates the involvement of several different college representatives. A summarization of the role for each participant in program review process can be found in the Program Review Process and Guide (Attachment A).

B. Program Review Report

1. The Program Review document is designed to promote continuous quality improvement and alignment of academic and support service programs to the College's mission through a process that is both reflective and analytical. Program reviews are faculty and staff-directed, data-driven, and should produce clear plans of action. Program Reviews provide a comprehensive look at long-term practices and achievements, while identifying areas for development and continuous improvements.
2. The following three criteria are essential components of a Program Review:
 - a. Overview of program's purpose, roles, and history.
 - b. Assessment of program outcomes and opportunities for improvement.
 - c. Action plans connected to one of the following items and should follow the structure outlined below:
 - i. Strategic Plan Alignment/Support: How does your action plan support the long-term goals of the institution?
 - ii. Address a specific opportunity for improvement in the historical review of the unit.
 - iii. Support a Key Performance Indicator such as enrollment, persistence, graduation, productive grade rate, etc.
 - iv. Address a specific unit objective related to Institutional Learning Outcomes, Service Area Outcomes, and/or Program Learning Outcomes
3. Prioritization and approval of departmental Program Reviews, goals, and strategies to support the College's mission begins at the unit level, which sets accountability.
 - a. The action plans associated with these goals are designed using institutional data, including the outcomes for assessment of student learning.
 - b. The action plan detailed in Program Review document are implemented across the subsequent five annual Unit Plans with a budget that are used to track and measure Program Review goals and performance.
 - c. Annual unit planning also ties the action plans for each program to the college's budgeting process (see Procedure B.6 Budget Allocation, Adjustments, and Consolidation (Sweeps) for more detail).

C. Program Review Committee

1. The Program Review Committee reviews each submitted Program Review Report, supporting documentation, and Assessment and Recommendation Forms to conduct a collaborative assessment of each report and program, and arbitrate among possibly conflicting prior assessments before reaching a final recommendation for each program's status.
2. The findings of the program review report, as well as other factors, will be the basis for the Program Review Committee's recommendation on the status of all programs being reviewed.
 - a. Evaluation criteria will be identified prior to the review process to ensure that all programs/service units are evaluated consistently.
 - b. The Program Review Committee completes the Assessment and Recommendation Form, and forwards the report with recommendations back to program review team before submission to the College President.
 - c. The decision of the Program Review Committee may be appealed to the College President.

D. Unit Plans and Evaluations

1. The five-year Program Review goals and strategies are planned out by fiscal year as Unit Plans. Unit Plans include implementation strategies to manage systems, practices, and include strategic leadership input.
 - a. Each goal has an estimated strategies cost and includes a list of resources needed to complete each goal. Similar to Program Reviews, prioritization begins at the unit level to identify most impactful goals and gainful strategies to pursue at the departmental level in support of the College's mission.
2. Unit Plans are submitted, reviewed, and approved by the respective Vice-President.
 - a. Vice-Presidents and deans are responsible for ensuring Unit Plans match Program Reviews and continue to support the College's mission.
3. Unit Plans use actionable planning tools to track annual goal progress and evaluate performance.
 - a. The 4DX platform is used to create measurable milestones and goals by semester for the unit.
 - b. Annual staff and faculty performance plans, SMART Goals, and professional development plans are used to link and support 4DX and Unit Plans. These

tools help employees align their own core competencies with the unit's and support a successful strategy and mission.

- c. Faculty and staff can also use the Institutional Research Data Portal to gain valuable historical knowledge about their programs and identify key success factors.
4. The Unit Plan Evaluation process entails reviewing the operations, outcomes, and resource use for the previous fiscal year.

Attachments: Program Review Process and Guide

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Approved:

(signed: Katherine Doss)

Interim Vice President of College Services

(signed: Dr. Robert Garza)

President