A Model of Academic Program Review for Program Improvement

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(Abstract)

The purpose is to develop a model of academic program review for program improvement and determine the implications of this model for institutionalization at Turkmen higher education institutions. The study builds on the communalities in institutional approaches relative to designing, conducting and using program review at selected public universities in the United States. The study is primarily concerned with institutional approaches that are oriented towards improving academic programs.

Communalities in improvement-oriented academic program reviews share earlier findings in the research. In the reviewed documents, the key role belonged to the program individuals. Other characteristics included facilitating faculty participation in all aspects of the review process, using primarily academic criteria, involving diverse group of constituents, inquiring about program’s self-direction and correction, and linking review results for institutional decision-making.

It is suggested that program review can be integrated into current administrative practices in higher education institutions in Turkmenistan. The proposed model views the both process and results of review as essential contributions to program improvement. The implications of the proposed model are diverse. These implications involve institutional environment, its size and structure, communication mechanisms, and leadership of key personnel. The study proposes relevant strategies to address these implications. Major proposed strategies include collaboration stimulated by leadership, management training, and instituting new mechanisms of communication for continued dialogue among key constituents.
A Model of Academic Program Review for Program Improvement

CONTENTS

1. Problem Statement
   1.1 Introduction
   1.2 Statement of Problem
   1.3 Rationale for Study
   1.4 Summary of Research Questions
   1.5 Theoretical Framework
   1.6 Significance of the Study

2. Literature Review
   2.1 Contextual Analysis of Academic Program Review
   2.2 Conceptual Models of Academic Program Review and Program Improvement
   2.3 Types of Academic Program Reviews and Program Improvement

3. Project Design
   3.1 Methodology
   3.2 Research Procedures and Research Population
   3.3 Instrumentation

4. Presentation of Results and Major Findings
   4.1 Description of the Academic Program Review Process
   4.2 Selection of Programs, Scheduling and Main Steps in Program Review
      4.2.1 Selection
      4.2.2 Scheduling
      4.2.3 Main Steps in the Review Process
   4.3 Selection of Criteria for Review
   4.4 Self-Study Policies and Procedures
      4.4.1 Brief Description of Policies and Procedures
      4.4.2 Discussion of Information Basis in Self-Study
   4.5 Selection and Role of External Reviewer
   4.6 Development of Recommendations and Decisions Pursuant to the Evaluation
   4.7 Summary of Major Findings

5. Application
   5.1 Current Context of Educational Institutions in Turkmenistan
   5.2 Higher Education Institutions
   5.3 Proposed Model of Academic Program Review
   5.4 Major Implications of Implementing Proposed Model

6. Conclusion

Appendices
   A. Study Instrument for Analysis of Official Academic Program Review Documents and Guidelines
   B. A Copy of the Request for Official University Policies and Procedures
   C. Sample Frequency of Review
   D. Sample Review Team Calendar
   E. State University Program Review Self-study Format and Self-study Standards
   F. Proposed Information Basis of Academic Program Review

Literature
1. Problem Statement

1.1 Introduction

Within the years of independence, the government of Turkmenistan showed increasing attention to improving the contribution of higher education institutions to accommodating the need for renewed intellectual resources of the country. In the early 1990s, this call for improvement resulted in an expansive movement towards reengineering higher education institutions of the country. Reengineering efforts in this period focused mainly on management issues such as restructuring departments and programs, and improving academic planning at the state level. Another major focus of this period was promoting research by faculty at established universities and institutes, shifting it from the centralized Academy of Sciences. Under this emphasis, early and mid-'90s witnessed several notable changes. These changes included dramatic cut back, sometimes elimination, of duplicates of undergraduate programs in varying specialties and opening of several new programs, and at some cases institutions, in such fields as agriculture, military, international relations, business management and languages.

This phase of reengineering relieved reigning anxiety to meet the challenges of the day for specialists that were not normally prepared in the country during the years of Soviet rule. At the end of the 1990s, another wave of calls for reform swept higher education institutions across Turkmenistan. This time emphasis of reengineering expanded to include the development of enriching student-centered academic programs, improvement of curriculum implementation processes and college teaching practices. In
addition, the government developed guidelines tightening admission standards and improving the selection criteria.

Consequently today higher educations institutions of Turkmenistan face the challenges as well as opportunities of the new millennium. As seen from the preceding brief contextual account, among critical challenges facing higher education institutions in my country are improving academic planning, facilitating program renewal and improvement. From higher education management perspective, one of the most promising solutions to this academic management problem lies in institution-based collaborative, systematic and comprehensive review of academic programs.

The stimulus for, and a model of realization of this management approach to improving academic program management are likely to be found in longstanding international academic program management experience, in particular, that of the United States. Academic program review is a separate higher education management process that has long been credited in the US and elsewhere to provide with structure, processes and policies that facilitate continuous improvement of university and college academic programs (Barak, 1982; Barak & Breier, 1990; Mets, 1997; 1995; Hoey, 1993; 1995; Frye, 1997). Although at times academic program review is associated with meeting increasing accountability pressures of State Governing or Coordinating Boards, regional accrediting agencies and the public, a majority of the studies found that academic program review has had considerable effects for academic program renewal at the institution level (Lee, 1991; Mets, 1995; Barak, 1990; Conrad & Wilson, 1985; Creamer & Jonosik, 1998).

However, an attempt to develop a model of academic program review for Turkmen higher education institutions to help them improve their academic programs immediately
faces a series of challenges. One of the challenges is finding out the similarities in institutional approaches in policies, procedures and structure with regard to designing, conducting and using academic program review for program improvement purposes because the approach to these practices vary in the United States from one institution to another. Accordingly, my task is to identify the communalities in the structure, policies and procedures. Then, based on these policies, procedures and structure I need to build a theoretically sound and practically promising academic program review model for Turkmen universities. For this task, I will have to analyze the institutional approaches of selected US higher education institutions that conduct improvement-oriented academic program review.

As I proposed, my analysis into current institutional practices covers the structure, policies and procedures in designing, implementing and using academic program review for predominantly program improvement. In order to accomplish a reliable and valid analysis, I am going to develop points of reference, which will serve as my research instrument. These points of reference will come from the literature review part of this project. The literature review focuses on the context of evolution, conceptual models and types of academic program reviews, and possibility of academic program review for program improvement. So, my first task will be solved when I have established common characteristics of processes, policies and procedures of selected institutional approaches in designing, conducting and using improvement-oriented academic program reviews.

A second challenge is identifying and studying the implications of various contextual factors in Turkmenistan that could foster or impede institutionalization of a new management process – "academic program review." I have found this task realistic because I have 3 years of experience as a junior faculty member at one of the established
institutes. In addition, domestic and international press has published considerable amount of analytic materials on higher education institutions and their environment in Turkmenistan (cf. Chronicle of Higher Education, www.chronicle.com; Turkmenistan.RU, www.turkmenistan.ru, Analyst: Central Asia and Caucasus, www.cacianalyst.org; Turkmen Press; wwwtmplpress.gov.tm, Johnson, 2001; Freitag-Wirminghaus, 1998). This contextual analysis will inform my choice of policies, procedures and structure from a pool of institutional approaches of selected US universities and colleges. Based on my findings, a generic model of academic program review will be suggested. Finally I will identify major implications of this proposed model for institutionalization and consider the solutions.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Current approach to improving academic programs of Turkmen higher education institutions is centralized. Centralized approach to improving academic programs overlooks vital information about the strengths, capabilities and needs of higher education institutions. Higher education institutions can develop their own systematic and comprehensive program improvement approaches. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop a model of academic program review that is primarily oriented towards improvement and relevant for institutionalizing at Turkmen higher education institutions.

1.3 Rationale for Study

Current emphasis of our government on reengineering higher education institutions requires collaborative, systematic and comprehensive approaches to managing academic programs. Such a need necessitates establishment of a new higher education management
mechanism. Historically similar mechanisms existed at few higher education institutions in the former USSR around 1960s and '70s. However, these practices were dominated by political motives of the Communist party. The emphasis then was placed on assuring the coherence of academic programs to existing ideology of the Communist Party and centralization of academic program to large scale development plans of the government, which were oriented building a communist society (Consider for example: Bryk, 1978; Gataulin, 1979).

Such an experience is not applicable to current conditions of Turkmenistan. Today higher education institutions in Turkmenistan need completely different approaches in meeting different academic and management challenges. Higher education institutions in my country face the task of improving academic planning and facilitating program renewal and improvement. The most promising solution to this academic management problem lies in institution-based collaborative, systematic and comprehensive review of academic programs. Given non-existence of applicable experience and management models within the country, this study will result in an academic program review model that is primarily oriented towards improving the quality of academic programs.

Similar attempt yet necessitates a thorough investigation of current institutional practices in conducting academic program review for program improvement purposes. Although considerable research has been done in this area, common characteristics of academic program review approaches, the primary purpose of which is program improvement, have not been established (Frye, 1997; Mets, 1995; Hoey, 1995; Michael, 1998). Bulk of the research done in this area concentrates in the design, implementation and use of academic program reviews (Barak, 1982; Barak & Breier, 1990; Mets, 1997;

1.4 Summary of Research Questions

This study focuses on developing a model of academic program review that is primarily oriented towards improvement and relevant for institutionalizing at Turkmen higher education institutions. The primary research question is: What are the common characteristics of academic program reviews in terms of structure, policies, and procedures at public higher education institutions? The second research question is: Given these communalities, can academic program review be used to address current need for improvement, and what elements and processes will constitute the model?

The first primary question involves the following guiding questions: How are the programs selected in these selected institutional approaches? How are the criteria developed, and what do they measure? How do they approach this function? Who are involved in conducting academic program reviews and who are making the recommendations for improvement? Do these approaches make use of student evaluations of faculty, academic programs and resources? What aspects of program delivery are the institutional procedures likely to emphasize? What do recommendations for improvement look like? What follow-up activities are common?
The second research question involves the following guiding questions: What contextual factors are likely to impede and foster institutionalization of a model of academic program review at Turkmen higher educational institutions? Can it be modified to address current call for improving the quality of program content, delivery and management? Who in the government are likely to help universities institutionalize academic program review? Who in the university administration are likely to get closely involved in the institutionalization process? Given institutional approaches in the US and contextual analysis of Turkmen higher education institutions, what model or approach may best fit the needs for a new management process? To what extent is possible to build a model? What are implications and how can they be solved?

1.5 Theoretical Framework

Academic program review is referred as ‘program evaluation’ – one of the three processes of academic program management: academic program planning, development and evaluation (Barak, 1987, p.218). According to R. Barak, program evaluation falls into program approval and program review. While program approval refers to a process of examining potential value of newly proposed academic programs, program review is distinguished as “a conceptual framework for assessing academic programs already in existence” (Barak 1987. p. 218). This study focuses on the latter form of program evaluation – program review. From this perspective, two definitions of academic program review are helpful in further clarifying its theoretical framework. Craven, one of the scholars of academic program evaluation forwarded the following definition of academic program review, which is often quoted by the scholars of academic program management:
Academic program review refers to the process of defining, collecting, and analyzing information about an existing program or noninstructional unit to arrive at a judgment about the continuation, modification, enhancement, or termination of the program or unit (1980: p.434).

Seeley suggested a similar definition of academic program review (Seeley, 1981, p. 45). He wrote:

“Program review is essentially a management and learning process of systematically identifying and collecting information about a set of related activities [elements that come together to form an academic program] that have been developed to accomplish some end” (Quoted in Frye, 1999, p. 13).

As seen from these definitions, academic program review is agreeably characterized as a dynamic process that involves making certain judgments and evaluating the worth and relevance of certain college and university programs and as a learning process. However, its theoretical framework is not undisputed. Conrad and Wilson contend that the program evaluation theory constitutes the theoretical framework of academic program review to the extent that they shape institutional research questions, organize and focus the evaluation, and inform the process of inquiry (1985: p.20). Koon Wynter also established the program evaluation theory as the theoretical framework of academic program review. Describing the program evaluation theory, Koon wrote:

“It seems most useful to regard program evaluation theory as generalizations, including any necessary qualifications, pertaining to how one conducts an assessment of value or worth (or effectiveness or efficiency). Evaluative theory, methods and strategies must be fitted to the nature, goals, and prospective goals of that which is being evaluated” (emphasis in the original; Koon 1992 p. 1: 34).

Koon further advocated that the basic tenet of the program evaluation theory is the design of control systems, which will help the members of an organization to set and achieve appropriate objectives of the given program most effectively (Koon, 1992, p. 1: 34). He expanded the program evaluation theory and named it “The Elements of the
Evaluative Act” (Koon, 1992). He argued that neither program evaluation theory nor the evaluative act theory alone was fit to explain the nature of program evaluation in higher education setting, including academic program review, as it was previously advocated (Koon, 1992, p. 1: 9). Accordingly he suggested to view the theoretical framework of academic program review in higher education setting as consisting of various sub-fields (Koon, 1992, pp. 1: 34 – 1: 36; 2: 1 – 2: 430). Consequently he developed a theory called “the Theory of The Elements of the Evaluative Act” (Koon, 1992). In this regard he wrote:

While our primary concern is to develop theory that is requisite to the comprehensive, fair and effective assessment of the criteria for evaluating academic programs, and of the effectiveness of the various aspects of program delivery, some of the deficiencies in existing theory affect evaluations of other types of complex, adult-oriented human-services programs as well and, hence, some of our proposed resolutions or reformulations of theory should be viable beyond of the subfield of primary concern. (Koon, 1982, 2: 2)

If earlier program evaluation theory basically concerned with designing control systems that are coherent with the nature of the program under evaluation and supportive of the objectives of the program at best, Koon’s modifications to the evaluation theory advanced the inevitability of considering socio-cultural conditions, including programs’ history, needs and values served by a program to the larger society and potentials of the program (Koon, p. 2: 2). Koon’s modifications to the theory explain that evaluation can allow for reconsidering the mission the institution or the program. They show that the programs need to select and weight the criteria to illuminate both present and future concerns. Based on this premise, he developed a theoretical framework of academic program review that included the following acts:

- Selection of the Object(s) of for Evaluation
- Selection of the Criteria
- Alignment of Weight to Each Criterion
Under this theoretical framework, academic program review is viewed as a comprehensive and systematic process. Koon contended that this theoretical framework would facilitate a greater understanding of how values, attitudes, and perceptions, as well as measures and measurements typically are integrated into the larger process of academic program review.

In conclusion, this study accepts that both the program evaluation theory and recent modifications as the theoretical framework of academic program review. Such a theoretical framework explains that program evaluation in higher education setting, including academic program review, should be designed in accordance with the nature, goals and objectives of the program under review. It allows us to consider the socio-cultural conditions, including programs’ history, and particularly the needs and values served by a program, together with potentials, technological or otherwise, of the particular society and the needs and values served by the program (Koon, 1992). Finally this framework explains in greater detail how values, attitudes, and perceptions, as well as measures and measurements typically are integrated into the larger process of academic program review.
1.6 Significance of the study

This study has primarily practical significance. It will bring considerable contribution to improving management of academic programs in Turkmenistan. Given current need for academic program renewal and improvement, higher education administrators, government officials and faculty of higher education institutions will be interested in the results of the study. On the other hand, the study will contribute current understanding of the practice of academic program reviews in the United States. Despite accountability pressures, growing number of institutions are interested in conducting academic program review to improve the quality and efficiency of existing academic programs. I hope that common characteristics of structures, policies and procedures of improvement-oriented program reviews at selected institutions will attract attention of those who are seeking to redirect their own efforts towards program improvement.
2. Literature Review

Literature review is primarily concerned with a) identifying the forces influencing academic program review, b) analysis of conceptual models of academic program review, and c) practicality of this process to improve academic programs.

2.1 Contextual Analysis of Academic Program Review

Multiple internal and external forces influence the shaping of academic program review as a legitimate evaluation practice at universities and colleges. This part of the literature review discusses available works that identify the role of higher education environment including both external and internal forces that have shaped academic program review, their inter-relationship, and implications for institutionalization.

Academic program review stands for a dynamic process that involves making certain judgments and evaluating the worth and relevance of certain college and university programs. The concept of “evaluation” is central to this process. Perhaps it is not by accident that Conrad and Wilson traced academic program review back to the early practices of academic program evaluation (1985, p. 1). However, it does not seem that academic program review is a mere replacement of traditional program evaluation approaches. Apart from widespread interest in maintaining and improving the quality of higher learning within and outside academe, which is a traditional concern in higher education evaluation practices, among major driving forces of the growth of academic program review Conrad and Wilson cited the following:

- New academic management techniques (strategic approaches to academic program planning);
- Resource constraints on higher education caused by declining enrollment, increased costs and overall shrinking of financial support;
- External demands for institutional and programmatic accountability;
Demands from governing boards and campus administrators for more effective and efficient use of limited resources (Conrad & Wilson, 1985).

Seemingly Conrad and Wilson indicated a number of environmental forces that have emerged within and outside the institution. Steve O. Michael also explored today’s environmental forces that have shaped academic program review and suggested similar findings. He distinguished three main forces: “shift in ideology, the nature of higher education system in the United States, and resource constraints” (Michael, 1998). The first of these three main forces – shift in ideology – is characterized by decreasing public and government support for academic autonomy. Michael suggested that this decreasing support resulted in shifting locus of power. One apparent example is waning immunity of colleges and university to responsibility and accountability. I think Michael has somewhat rightfully noted that decision-making power within colleges and universities over how and what to review, which programs to enhance, consolidate or terminate is shifting from “inside to outside the university” (Michael, 1998).

According to Michael, the shift in ideology is also characterized by public’s attitude towards higher education and higher education institutions emphasis on income generation and revenues. In my opinion, these two forces are reciprocal. Michael rightfully argues that public and government’s viewing of higher education as personal asset rather than a societal one resulted in tighter resource constraints. Accordingly, Michael suggests that this brought about increased accountability requirements for the remaining state allocations. What Michael undermines is how such conditions force higher education institutions for extra revenue. Certainly, competition among the colleges and universities should be pushing the drive for revenues from public funding. However, I speculate that large portion of this drive should be coming from the concern to stay
stable in the face of diminishing fiscal support. Michael also includes several other "shifts" in explaining the shift in ideology (Michael, 1998).

The concept of "shift in ideology" explains current context of program review in very important ways. First of all, it explains why there are as many program reviews at state level or state-mandated reviews as institutional ones. Secondly this concept elucidates how concerns for efficiency and productivity are becoming central to program reviews as well as the concerns for quality of programs. From this contextual perspective, it also becomes obvious that emphasizing efficiency and productivity alone over quality would not bring about desirable improvements in college and university program offerings. I speculate the reason is that the more higher education is viewed as personal asset the more selective would become parents and potential students. Parents and students would be concerned with the quality of programs as much as they do about cost since they will want to make sure that what they are receiving is worthy. Higher education institutions will be hard pressed to demonstrate the quality of their programs in some legitimate ways. And this strategy is more likely to remain academic program review.

According to Michael, the next shaping force is the nature of higher education system in the United States. Competition among "multiple buyers and service providers" is central to Michael's this concept. Competitiveness encourages, and sometimes compels institutions to continuously generate, add and upgrade their program offerings. What I really appreciate about this concept is that it allows one to understand how academic program review results slowly from market forces within and among colleges and universities. Competition influenced academic program review in a way that it allowed to identify new prospects of growth and emerging societal needs for new programs.
Influenced by such prospects, competition-shaped program review is focused on improving quality indicators and adding new programs.

In my opinion, Michael’s third concept of resource constraints is complementary to the shift in ideology and competition. However, there is something unique about resource constraints shaping academic program reviews. And it is the fact that governments are compelled to call for or mandate the review of existing programs because of rising costs of social programs in general. In this regard, Michael has been able to point to another important force that is worth considering. This concept is also instrumental in explaining another reason why “politicians” tend to mandate academic program reviews and how academic program review turn up “strategic choice for state governments” (Michael, 1998).

These above considered environmental forces of shift in ideology and resource constraints and the market forces within and among colleges and universities and other service providers in industry have certainly influenced academic program review. It can be rightfully concluded that these forces turned traditional program evaluation practices, which were primarily concerned with program improvement, into a distinctive management tool. The three forces fully explain Barak’s findings about the growing trend in using academic program review in the 1980s and his predictions that this trend would remain growing (Barak, 1982: p. 34).

Explanations about what contextual factors have affected the shaping of academic program review as management process are also explored in Creamer and Janosik’s analysis of this process in the US and in selected foreign countries (1999). For example, Creamer and Janosik suggest that current practices have been largely influenced by the involvement of state higher education agencies due to their new responsibilities. The
authors argue that multiple challenges in higher education environment such as integration of technology into delivery systems, market pressures and instability in state government leadership have necessitated new responsibilities for state higher education governing agencies. According to the authors, re-structuring of academic program review is part is the large efforts to “correct some structures that were designed for earlier times” (Creamer & Janosik, 1999).

This analysis suggests that academic program review in its current shape is the product of larger concerns for accountability for efficiency, productivity and quality assurance. These forces have reshaped earlier program evaluation mechanisms into a distinctive, wide spread management process. The context of academic program review in the United States is dynamic and full of controversies. This analysis also suggests that external forces primarily shape academic program review. It is my speculation that although slowly, internal dynamics driven by competition and calls of higher education are gaining momentum. Attention is moving more towards the quality improvement and institutions are very likely reformulate their practices regarding academic program review. The important message this analysis conveys is that higher education leaders and managers are continuously faced with external forces in using academic program review and they have to be able to consider and address these forces to benefit from academic program review as management tool.

2.2 Conceptual Models of Program Review and Academic Program Improvement

This part of the literature review discusses currently available literature that examines the conceptual models and types of academic program review. Conrad and Wilson (1985), Steve O. Michael (1998) and Creamer and Janosik (1999) have developed varying
models of academic program review. It is apparent that the authors’ approach to model building comes from various perspectives. The attention to the program improvement purpose of academic program reviews varies from one author to another as well. The literature review examines this literature from a unique perspective. Literature about conceptual models of academic program is reviewed to find out whether any of these models can indeed provide for program improvement at colleges and universities.

2.2.1 Creamer and Janosik

Creamer and Janosik conducted a study at the request of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) (1999). The study was primarily concerned with developing policy alternatives for SCHEV, which was seeking a more decentralized approach in its academic program approval and review practices. The study examined base-line information about current academic program approval and review practices in all 50 states and in addition, in eight foreign countries.

The authors distinguished five conceptual models: 1) State Regulatory Model, 2) Collaboration Model, 3) Accreditation Model, 4) Quality Assurance Audit Model and 5) Modified Collaboration Model (Creamer and Janosik, 1998). In State Regulatory Model, a state-level agency develops and implements regulatory requirements for program approval and review. Creamer and Janosik characterized the Collaboration Model as “[a] consolidated model for institution and state agency cooperation characterized by jointly developed and administered program approval and review procedures by institution and state agency” (1998). The Accreditation Model was characteristic of the eight foreign countries selected for study. This model is conceptualized as a process in which state and consulting agents from outside the institution develop and implement standards and
guidelines for program approval and review or cyclical audit. In addition to these three models the authors further developed the Quality Assurance Audit Model and Modified Collaboration Model. The authors write that three main elements characterize the Quality Assurance Audit Model:

- Delegation of appropriate state agency authority to institutional governing boards;
- Development and application of institutional-level quality assurance policies and procedures (referring to policies and practices that include quality, duplication, and productivity issues), and
- Cyclical or triggered state-level audit of these policies and procedures (Creamer and Janosik, 1998).

In contrast to the Quality Assurance Audit Model, the Modified Collaboration Model is a centralized model of program approval and review. In this model, the state level agency shares the authority to develop and implement authority over the academic program review procedures. That is “[the] Quality Assurance Audit Model places the agency in a policy/coordination role that enables the agency staff to provide broad oversight for the process of quality assurance state agency would be integrally involved in process development and management but would leave the implementation of the process to its respective institutions.” As the authors describe, the Modified Collaboration Model results in cyclical reviews by state-level agency mainly to evaluate mission-relatedness whereas Quality Assurance Audit Model is more concerned with quality and resource issues of academic programs (Creamer & Janosik, 1998).

This discussion suggests that it is not possible to single out any of these five models as facilitating academic program renewal. The conceptual frameworks illustrating
centralized approaches to academic program review show that they are more likely concerned with evaluating the university program from mission-and-cost related perspectives. The conceptual models that describe shared and less centralized approaches to academic program review show that these practices are concerned with quality issues. However, the authors do not discuss whether these centralized or less centralized approaches have to do anything with improving existing academic programs.

2.2.2 Steve O. Michael

Steve O. Michael developed a generic conceptual framework based on different program review and discontinuation models available to higher education administrators at both state and institutional levels. In his study, the author also discusses the policy implications of each model in the framework. Based on this framework, the author then, suggests useful recommendations to higher education scholars, institutional leaders, and public officials (Michael, 1999). Michael’s discussion of models is centered on the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure I.

This framework reveals the ultimate relationship between the environment of higher education institution and the processes of academic program discontinuation. As seen from this framework, changing environment and increasingly competitive higher education environment may lead to various models of academic program discontinuation, which eventually affects decision-outcomes. In his study, Michael analyzed these various models, and investigated their implications.

The framework reveals that first coming alternative with regard to a conceptual model to arrive at a particular decision about program discontinuation include traditional models. In traditional models, the initiative lies within the institutions. They eliminated or
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Academic Program Discontinuation Decisions

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<th>Reasons for Intervention</th>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional autonomy (re-program creation)</td>
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<td>Close proximity of many institutions with substitutable programs</td>
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<td>Low mobility of institutional resources</td>
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<td>Increasing costs of higher education</td>
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<td>Changing environment - shifting ideology; - changing public attitude; - increasing government intervention;</td>
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<td>Increasing pressure on public funds</td>
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<td>The X-factor</td>
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<th>Decision Outcomes</th>
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<td>Inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration</td>
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<td>Reduced Program Duplication</td>
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<td>Program Consolidation</td>
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<td>Enhanced Institutional Responsiveness</td>
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<td>Reduced costs</td>
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Michael consolidated certain academic programs to prevent systems overload. He distinguished three ways in which this process occurred:

First, academic programs may be discontinued at the initiation of concerned faculty. Second, academic programs have been discontinued through faculty attrition. Third, academic programs have been discontinued for lack of demand. In the third case, Michael writes that enrollment statistics play an important role in making decisions whereas the first two have to do with faculty.

Michael further discusses other models of program discontinuation. In his opinion, the cost model involves comparative cost analysis and cost-benefit analysis. In general, the cost model has to do with developing a rational method of decision-making. Cost model of program discontinuation seems to inhibit a number of problems because of the non-quantifiable nature of higher education benefits. Market model is also a single-criterion model that basically involves consideration of historical, current or future enrollment statistics. Within the market model another tendency is differentiated. It is called 'market share computation model'. The market share computation model is based on the growth rate and relative market share – a process through which higher education administrators can calculate a system wide growth rate and determine a specific academic program share of the market. Michael finds that the market model is free from politics but narrowly focused. Decision outcomes on such models may undermine the unique mission and goals of certain programs although free from politics. In contrast, the political model seems to come into play when cost-related or market share-related information does not fit.

Michael also opens an interesting discussion about the use of employment or placement data about graduates. Such data constitute the basis of another version of the market model – the employment model. The decisions through the employment model
are based on the analysis of either employment forecast or employment efficiency approach, or both. He finds that the employment model is even more limited that it may reveal nothing more than institution’s capability for career placement. He writes:

"Forecasting labor demand and regulating academic program offerings convey an image of efficiency. But experience gleaned from countries with planned economies has shown that this approach is superior because of the regulatory environment surrounding higher education. In rapidly changing societies typical in market economies, attempts to forecast employment are often fraught with difficulties" (Creamer & Janosik, 1998).

The two models seem to be institution-based: the academic model and the quality model. Based on the institutional response to the need to downsize, the academic model occurs in four ways: "(a) across-the-board cuts, (b) early retirement program, (c) consortium and/or mergers, and (d) strategic or large scale planning." Michael characterizes the academic model as slower in its effects. He finds though it as "the most acceptable to the academic community." In this regard he writes:

"By relying on the judgment of faculty and institutional leaders to target discontinuations, society exhibits confidence in its academic leadership. However, the academic model requires strong institutional leadership. Institutions are generally fragmented communities. Issues like program discontinuation can easily be polarized; and unless faculty involvement is ensured at every stage, change efforts can be circumscribed and thwarted. Open communication, participative leadership, and an atmosphere of trust are necessary to implement the academic model effectively in higher education" (Creamer & Janosik, 1998).

According to Michael, the quality model produces information on the strengths and weaknesses of programs under review. However, these strengths and weaknesses have to do with how the institution is going to offer rather than the program quality or effect. Thus the quality model examines the institutions capacity to offer academic programs usually by comparison with other institutions. Michael writes:

"The quality model requests institutions to demonstrate not only the need for academic programs under review but also the institutional capacity to offer them."
The capacity to offer an academic program is, therefore, compared institution by institution” (Creamer & Janosik, 1998).

The remaining models are the eclectic models and the X - Factor that are primarily context-specific. While the eclectic models are built on the combination of two or more models, the x-factor model is built on any “latent or less understood” factors.

As mentioned in the beginning, Michael study focused on the models of academic program discontinuation. For the purpose of this review, it is suggested that it is not possible to conclude whether any of the conceptual models could facilitate academic program improvement. Such a conclusion however does not at all undermine the study’s valuable findings and recommendations.

2.2.3 Conrad and Wilson

Conrad and Wilson distinguished four conceptual models of academic program review (Conrad & Wilson). These four models are:

- Goal-based model,
- Responsive model,
- Decision-making model and
- Connoisseurship model (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p.20).

As the authors noted, these conceptual frameworks are seldom made explicit in academic review documents. At best, the guidelines and reports developed by central review committees or other responsible bodies reflect the conceptual framework of a given model. Moreover, these conceptual models are found in combination with each other.
The essence of the goal-based model is centered on the question whether the given program achieves its intended goals. Under this framework, academic program review is designed in way that first program goals, objectives and certain standards of performance are identified, and various tools to measure the performance are selected and applied, and then, the stated objectives and standards are compared against the collected data. This framework certainly involves making judgments whether there are undesirable discrepancies. When designed under the influence of this conceptual framework, academic program review acquires certain important features. One of them is developing criteria to determine relative success or failure (ibid). Another feature is that academic program review tends to be predominantly summative.

In contrast to the goal-based model, Conrad and Wilson distinguished “goal-free” or responsive model. This model provides a conceptual framework of academic program review in which the effects of a given program is judged by the effects of the program rather than by its stated goals and objectives. Under this model, program reviews are centered on the concerns and issues of the stakeholders such as administrators, students, program faculty, and faculty from outside the program (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 23). All aspects of program under review that are related to identified concerns and issues, and are taken into account. Often the review design is not complete at the start-up.

Conrad and Wilson found that most of the academic program reviews were based on one of the above conceptual models or a combination of the two. However, the authors wrote that when there are decisions to be made with regard to resource allocation and program continuation, another model is often used, which is called “decision-making model” (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, 26). Academic program review under this model looks into specific kinds of information for making certain decisions. These kinds of
information are obtained through evaluating the context, inputs, processes and products relative to the program. Generally, academic program review produces a foundation for allocating and reallocating resources and quality indicators and relative information about programs or departments.

The least influential framework seems to be the connoisseurship model. The essence of the connoisseurship model is that a given program or department is judged by a connoisseur or an expert who uses his or her standards or criteria that are primarily based on his/her experience as professional and from the collective experience of the profession.

From this brief discussion, responsive model seems to be more likely to facilitate improvement of academic programs. Conrad and Wilson also attributed program improvement effects to this model:

"Thus defined, responsive evaluation can serve many different purposes: to serve as a tool for decision-making, to improve understanding, to facilitate program improvement, and so on. (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 24)"

According to Conrad and Wilson, the origin of the responsive model belongs to Scriven who designed "a goal-free" model of evaluation (1985, p. 23). Scriven emphasized "side-effects" of programs over predetermined goals and objectives (Scriven 1972, 1973, Conrad & Wilson, 1985). From this perspective, Conrad and Wilson wrote, "Scriven’s goal-free model of evaluation was aimed at judging and the effects of programs independent of what the effects were intended to be" (1985, p. 23). Based on such premises, Stake developed a program evaluation approach, which he called "a responsive model" (Conrad and Wilson 1985, p. 23). This model was further developed by a number of other evaluation scholars such as Guba and Lincoln (1981), Parlett and Deardon (1977), and Gardner (1977).
I would like to continue my discussion of this model to provide a more in-depth description of this model because of its potential use in developing "points of reference" in analyzing current models of improvement oriented academic program reviews. In this discussion the following quote is very useful:

"To emphasize evaluation issues that are important for each particular program, I recommend the responsive evaluation approach. It is an approach that trades off some measurement precision in order to increase the usefulness of the findings to persons in and around the program... An educational evaluation is responsive evaluation if it orients more directly to program activities than to program intents; responds to audience requirements to information; and if the different value perspectives present are referred to in reporting the success and failure of the program (Stake 1975, p. 14 quoted in Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 24, emphasis in the original)

According to Conrad and Wilson, responsive evaluation constitutes the basis of a conceptual model of academic program review in which the evaluation is shaped by concerns expressed by different audiences. As I already emphasized, among others concerns, academic program improvement could become the focus. Because the responsive model conceptually predicts active involvement of various audiences, within the institution, the faculty and administrators and students as well, can push academic program improvement as the focus. To argue this point further, the responsive model of academic program review allows for the discussion of academic program review results in the light of the issues and concerns of the audiences (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 24). Another point further supports the fact that program improvement is possible through this conceptual model. And that is the point that this conceptual model has a potential to address all the aspects of the program as the central concern of academic program review process. The goals and objectives of the program may or may not be the central concern. As Gardner (1977) wrote, "no single element (whether goals, resources, processes, or
participants) is preconceived as being necessarily more important to the evaluation than another” (Quoted in Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 24).

Current discussion of literature review reveals that conceptually not all of the models of academic program review lead to program improvement. However, program improvement is possible through the responsive model of academic program review. It is possible to conclude that the responsive model of academic program reviews can facilitate program improvement.

2.3 Types of Academic Program Review and Academic Program Improvement

Over the last two decades, program review researchers and practitioners alike have suggested that academic program review takes place in various types (Barak, 1982; Mets, 1995; Creamer & Janosik, 1999, Michael, 1998). Based on the above-mentioned conceptual models, in the academic literature, the types and models of academic program review are usually distinguished according to the level of initiation and application.

Conrad and Wilson (1985), Barak (1982), and Creamer and Janosik (1999) identified and described three types of academic program review according to the levels of initiation and application. Although the authors differed in naming the types, they basically distinguished state-level, multi-campus system reviews and institutional reviews (Conrad & Wilson, 1985; Barak 1982, Creamer & Janosik, 1999).

This review investigates the pooled literature from a unique perspective. And that is: If from a conceptual framework perspective “Responsive Model” is more likely to facilitate program improvement, what types of academic program reviews are available? And what type of academic program review is more likely to support and facilitate
program improvement? These questions will be explored first by discussing the types of academic program review according to place of initiation as described by each of the three authors and then building on that an integrated research instrumentation.

In the literature, three types of academic program review are distinguished according to the levels of initiation and application. Because the types of academic program review slightly differ from one author to another, I would like to separately discuss the classifications of Barak (1982), Conrad and Wilson (1985) and Creamer and Janosik (1999). After a brief discussion of these three author’s classifications, a generic type of academic program review that is likely to facilitate academic program improvement will be identified. Following that is a tool to analyze selected institutional practices concerning academic program review.

2.3.1 Discussion of Barak’s Classification

Robert J. Barak classifies types of academic program reviews on the basis of the level of initiation (1982). From this perspective, they distinguished three types of academic program review:

- Internal Academic Program Review
- System-Level Academic Program Review

In Barak’s classification both system-level and state-level program reviews share predominantly the same characteristics. In this regard Barak wrote that at system level actions about academic program review originate from the system board or its staff. At the state-level, the state coordinating boards played a large role in the initiation of academic program review (Barak, 1982, pp. 40-50). According to Barak, in most
instances, program review serves as a means of pressuring the institutions “to take corrective action” (Barak, 1982, p. 50). He also found that at the systems tended to exercise academic program review more on tradition than on legal authority (ibid). Another similarity is in the implementation of program review results: more centralized systems tended to exert stronger influence. At the state level, State Governing Boards had to put academic program review into place because of unwillingness of making such decisions. According to Barak, system-level program reviews put emphasis on the such reasons as to encourage better institutional planning, elimination of unnecessary spending caused by program duplication, identification of programs that do not meet minimum criteria as a basis for deciding whether to eliminate or strengthen them.

As seen from this brief description, system level or state level academic program reviews are hardly to result in academic program improvement. The major reason is that institutions exercise predominantly limited access to decision-making (Barak, 1982, p. 58). However, according to Barak, internal program reviews are more likely to effect improvement of academic programs (Barak, 1982, pp. 33-47).

Internal program reviews are normally initiated within the institution (Barak, 1982, pp. 33-34). Internal academic program reviews appeared in a growing trend. In this regard Barak wrote:

In 1975, the Carnegie Council speculated that institutional administrators would be relying much more heavily on program and course review in the future (Glenny et al, 1976). Their predictions were overwhelmingly accurate. Approximately 76 percent of the institutions we surveyed initiated their present policies after 1970... Today the trend is still growing... More and more colleges and universities are undertaking internal reviews or are planning to do so in the near future (Glenny et al, 1976)...” (Barak, 1982, p. 34).
According to Barak, the purposes of internal academic program reviews may vary. However, the internal review is more likely to be conducted to facilitate program improvement. He wrote:

“When asked why they decided to involve themselves in internal program reviews, the surveyed institutions mainly indicated that they wanted to improve their academic programs. Many pointed out that without knowing a program’s strengths and weaknesses, such improvements are virtually impossible” (Barak, 1982, p.39)

In internal academic program reviews, improving academic programs is not always the main purpose. Secondly most cited reason was to redistribute resources and reduce programs (Barak, 1982, p. 34). Barak further added that this second reason was most frequently cited by institutions undergoing sever enrollment declines and retrenchment (ibid). However, it is important to remark here that internal program reviews facilitated predominantly program improvement. It would be fit to conclude this Barak’s classification with the following quote:

“By and large, the vast majority of the recommendations coming out of academic program reviews focus on program improvement. Mostly they address concerns about program faculty and suggest ways to improve the program’s operation” (Barak, 1982, p. 47).

Barak found that majority (82%; n=882) of the institutions he surveyed had formal program review process, although some of the processes were limited to budget or regional accreditation reviews (1982, p. 34). One of the interesting findings he emphasized was that most of these institutions had internalized their state’s review procedures as their own. And this finding supported another tendency that public institutions, except majority of community colleges, were less inclined to conduct previews unless they were the members of systems or districts that encouraged program
reviews (ibid). The institutions that had policies about program reviews had a tendency to expand the scope of program review within the institution.

Barak also found that internal reviews were characterized by usage of multiple review indicators (1982, p. 36). These indicators included program-costing information and sophisticated outcome measures including employer and alumni surveys. Another characteristics of internal program review procedures was wide distribution of the results of program reviews and usage. Barak indicated that the results were distributed to a number of administrative offices such as academic planning office, budget office, and office of institutional research. Barak also found that the recommendations resulting from internal program reviews focused on program improvement (1982, p. 46).

Barak’s findings indicate that internal program reviews whether originally mandated or not, can facilitate academic program improvement. Based on this discussion it is possible to distinguish the following characteristics of internal program review:

1) Institutions conducting internal programs reviews develop their own formal processes;
2) Institutions conducting internal programs reviews use multiple program review indicators;
3) Institutions conducting internal programs reviews encourage wider distribution of review results;
4) Recommendations focus on program improvement

2.3.2 Discussion of Conrad and Wilson’s Classification

Conrad and Wilson also distinguished three types of academic program review:

1) State-level reviews
2) Multi-campus system reviews
3) Institutional reviews (Conrad & Wilson, 1985)

Conrad and Wilson indicated retrenchment and accountability in higher education have been driving forces behind state-level academic program reviews. The authors found that
majority of the state higher education boards were involved in approving new academic programs. They supported the tendency forwarded by Barak that state higher education agencies were increasingly involved in reviewing existing academic programs. The authors wrote that majority of the states had some sort of reviewing process however the process was greatly varying.

According Conrad and Wilson state agencies approach to program review in two ways: 1) by sharing the responsibility with individual institutions and 2) by assuming the major responsibility for the academic program review. In the first case, Conrad and Wilson describe that the responsibility for doing the academic program review rests largely with the institution. Another tendency with these kinds academic program reviews is that state may conduct reviews across all institutions for in a particular discipline or a cluster of disciplines (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 7). In the second case, state agencies conduct academic program reviews relying on outside consultants and agency staff. In general, Conrad and Wilson found that state-level academic program reviews are conducted to fulfill the regulatory responsibility of state higher education agencies.

According Conrad and Wilson, multi-campus system reviews became common around 1980s. The governing boards of the systems that are engaged in multi-campus system reviews are concerned with the effectiveness of existing academic programs (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 8). These types of academic program reviews tend to be comprehensive (ibid). Another tendency with multi-campus system review is that the systems limit their responsibility to monitoring state-level or institution level reviews.

With regard to institutional program reviews the improvement purpose seems to have prominent quite recently. According the authors, in early stages, around 1970s, academic program review at the institutional level was concerned with quality and
effective use of scarce resources. Academic program improvement as the major purpose of program reviews, seem to become prevalent around 1980s. Although Conrad and Wilson supported that today major purpose of academic program reviews was to improve academic programs, they indicated a number of other driving forces. Among them are to meet state-mandates for reviews, to demonstrate institutional responsiveness to constituencies and to provide a foundation for allocation and reallocation of resources. The authors noted varying patterns of program selection, program reviewers and review criteria. They found that these patterns depended on the major purpose of academic program reviews (Conrad & Wilson, 1985, p. 12).

Seemingly academic program reviews at the state or system level are less concerned with improving academic program review. They are more concerned with fulfilling the responsibility for regulating or assuring the effectiveness. From this discussion it is also possible to come to conclusion that institutional review provide with some structure and procedures to improve academic programs.

### 2.3.3 Creamer and Janosik’s Classification

Don Creamer and Steven Janosik classified more recent approaches to review of academic programs (1999). Their main purpose was to illustrate how state agencies were involved in academic program reviews, identify basic patterns or models and based on that make recommendations. Although it mainly focused on the patterns of state agency approaches to academic program review, the study provides some interesting points with regard to types of academic program review.

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1 This article is available online; page not available.
The authors distinguished three types of academic program depending on how the state agency exercises its authority about conducting academic program review:

1) Independent Institutional Review

2) Interdependent Institutional Review

3) State-mandated Review (Creamer & Janosik, 1999).

According to the authors, independent institutional reviews are the type of academic program reviews in which the state agency delegates the authority to conduct academic program reviews to the institution. In this type of academic program review, the state agency does not exercise any supervision. They distinguished interdependent institutional reviews because in this type of academic program reviews the state agencies provide guidance. The independence of the institution is limited to the extent that they can determine the program review processes and the criteria to be used in consistency with the context of and the characteristics of the institution. The main distinction here comes in the fact the institution submits the report to the state agency. Interdependent institutional review reports include the following types of documents:

- Descriptive program information,
- Year of last program review,
- Documentation of continuing need,
- Assessment information related to expected student learning outcomes and the achievement of the program’s effectiveness,
- Plans to improve the quality and productivity of the program, and
- Program productivity indicators (Creamer & Janosik, 1999).

Based on these documents, then, state level agency makes recommendations. Such recommendations may range from minor modifications to consolidation, or even to elimination of the programs (Creamer & Janosik, 1999).

State-mandated reviews greatly differ from both of the above described academic program reviews. In contrast to them, here the state agency determines the processes and
procedures including the criteria and commissions the review of selected programs. Basically this type is similar to what has been discussed as “state level review” in the earlier part of the literature review. However, Creamer and Janosik also distinguished other associated types of academic program review at this level apart from the cyclical review. Creamer and Janosik called them “productivity reviews”. These types of reviews are focus on programs that are under the minimum standard of efficacy. One of the important contributions of this study is a generalized model of how the state-agency may conduct academic program review (Fig. 2) model successfully explains the process of

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 2. State Agency Program Review Model**

state agency academic program review. It is visible that programs selected on cyclical basis or productivity basis, are reviewed by the state agency. A peer review may be used as precursor to state agency review. Depending on the recommendations of the state agency, there are several options.
However, Creamer and Janosik's classification leaves the discussion whether any of these types of academic program review provides for program improvement. The only indication is the mention academic program improvement is in superficial discussion of internal program review, which they found hard to distinguish from external program review with regard to undergraduate programs. One of the contributions of this study is a thorough analysis of state-agency level academic program review. Based on this thorough analysis it is possible to state that state-mandated academic program reviews do not target academic program improvement.

This review of literature confirms that not all of the types of academic program reviews are oriented towards program improvement. The types of academic program reviews at the state or system level are less concerned with improving academic programs. They are more concerned with fulfilling the responsibility for regulating or assuring the effectiveness. From this discussion it is also possible to come to conclusion that institutional review can provide some structure and procedures to improve academic programs. An improvement-oriented model of academic program review could be designed using institutional academic program review type. Yet this type of academic program review may vary in its primary purpose from institution to institution from a program to another. Our knowledge about what type best fits, and what policies and procedures facilitate program improvement is not complete.
3. Project Design

3.1 Methodology

The project has collected, compared and analyzed institutional academic program review structure, policies and procedures at selected US universities and colleges. Case study method was used to analyze the structure, policies and procedures that constitute academic program review practices, and to identify communalities among them. The project was drawn from the theoretical framework of academic program review and academic program review literature regarding contextual analysis, conceptual models and practical types of academic program review. The researcher developed a six-item study instrument to conduct the analysis of official documents and guidelines. This research instrument is drawn from Koon’s modifications to the program evaluation theory (1992), and models of academic program review discussed in the works of Barak (1982), Conrad and Wilson (1985), Conrad and Wilson (1985), and Creamer and Janosik (1999). The research instrument is presented in Appendix A.

3.2 Procedures and Population

During the study official institutional academic program review documents regarding the structure, policies and procedures were collected from selected US universities and colleges. The sample of four public universities was drawn using homogeneous and criterion sampling (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996, p. 232-233). The sample represents the population of public universities practicing academic program review for program improvement. The two criteria for selecting the samples were 1) that the educational institution is a four-year public university and 2) the main purpose of doing academic
program review is program improvement and is explicitly stated in the policies and procedures.

A letter of request for official policy documents and guidelines were sent via e-mail to Vice-Presidents for Academic Affairs, Associate Provosts, Assistant Provosts and Assistant Vice-Chancellors (See a copy of the letter in Appendix B). The researcher received replies via electronic mail, from the institutions official website, and snail mail will be used in the project. The four of the universities included in the study responded and showed availability for future cooperation. Respondent anonymity was maintained.

3.3 Instrumentation

A six-item Study Instrument for Analysis of Official Academic Program Review Documents and Guidelines guided the analysis of key aspects of program review. In Item #1, the official policy documents and guidelines will be analyzed to indicate the communalities in the structure of the academic program review process. This item also involves an analysis of the major elements in review. Item #2 is developed to identify communalities with regard to selection of programs, scheduling and the main steps in conducting program review. Item #3 analyzes the existence and use of criteria for reviewing programs. In Item #4, self-study procedures, and in Item #5, the policies with regard to participation of external reviewers will be discussed. The patterns of procedures and development of recommendations will be reviewed in Item #6. Here study will look at the procedures involved in producing decisions and actions pursuant to the findings of the academic program review.
4. Presentation of Results and Major Findings

4.1 Description of the Academic Program Review Process

In all of the selected universities, program review is described as an improvement-oriented descriptive and valuative process. The purpose of program review is primarily to improve programs through a systematic, cyclical review process. The results of such reviews cover major aspects of the program, measured in terms of faculty, students, resources, curriculum, facilities, and reputation. The review should result in action and contribute to the improvement of the program and department. The documents also stress that the review process should serve the betterment of the university. The documents describe program review as an internal, objective process using primarily academic criteria. The process is coordinated with other external reviews.

In the case of University A, the use of review results are emphasized. The official institutional policy document states that curriculum review results should be used in strategic planning, programmatic planning, and the institutional budgeting process. Further the documents states that the gathered information provides critical internal data about size and stability of program, current and future resource needs, market demand, equipment and space needs, strengths and weaknesses, and how the program contributes to the mission of the institution and the higher education Master Plan within the state. The policies also valued the external perspective. Accordingly, assessment results should provide a mechanism for demonstrating accountability, and assist in efforts to build financial, philosophical, and political support.

One of the important characteristics is attention to program review as process. All of the university policies and guidelines emphasized that the value of the program review rests on its process as well as its outcomes and its usefulness. Because the process and
outcomes are developed for purposes of improving educational opportunities, curriculum quality, and program relevance, it is essential that the University should make appropriate use of the results. Among the individuals or groups that are involved in the process are the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and/or other appropriate vice-chancellors, the appropriate dean, the unit chair and faculty, the review committee, the students in the program, and other key constituents (business, industry, governmental or other representatives). The results are reported to the Chancellor, the appropriate vice-chancellors and deans, and the unit, and are made available to the university bodies involved in the planning, assessment, and budgeting processes.

Major common elements in the structure of academic program review process include the Program Individuals, Academic Program Review Committees/Councils, the Review Panel, Self-Study Committees and Standing Committees. Although varyingly called, the composition of the two elements and the procedures for makeup are nearly the same.

Program Review Individuals

The analysis revealed one of the major common characteristics of program oriented academic program reviews. As the policy documents and review guidelines demonstrated, the role of faculty is central to the review process. At one of the universities, it is especially formulated and the role of individuals received special emphasis. The policy states that the element of program individuals includes all faculty members. Alternatively, the review process may also involve only a subset of all faculty members in the program undergoing review. According to the document, if the "subset" option is selected, at least three full-time faculty members within the program, one of whom is the chair/director, must participate.
The individuals from the program has the following responsibilities:

- Recommend individuals to serve on the Program Review Evaluation Team (Review Team);
- Develop the program review self-study
- Implement key aspects of the review process including site-visit calendar and agenda, interviews with key individuals, access of the Review Team to the self-study and other key documents, program response to the Review Team report.

This list of responsibilities demonstrates that the academic program review polices give substantial voice to faculty in all major aspects of the review process. This is one of the characteristics of improvement oriented program review model. Attempts to give faculty a significant portion of the responsibility are also apparent in the examples of other selected universities. For example, in the case of University A, the policy documents and guidelines explicitly state that faculty constitutes one of the key constituents in the review process. The same policy document states that the major purpose of the review process – to improve educational opportunities, curriculum quality, and program relevance – would not possible otherwise.

Program Review Committees/Council

The following is description of a typical makeup of Program Review Council. It consists of 15 senior faculty members. The Provost appoints the members of the Council. One of the major responsibilities of the Council is assisting the Office of Academic Affairs with the oversight and coordination of the program review process. The Council also advises the Provost on all aspects of the review process. According to the policy documents, the Council is also responsible for the design of the review process and format, as well as for the selection of the review panels for each program review.
As already mentioned, the Provost appoints the members of the Council. Yet the majority of the members of the Council are selected from a slate of nominees submitted by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee with input from the Graduate Council and other appropriate faculty bodies. Deans, department chairs, or faculty provides other nominees. The composition of the Council is coordinated so that each of the broad disciplinary areas of physical sciences and engineering, life sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities is represented. From these three broad disciplinary areas, three representatives are selected for staggered, five-year terms.

Program Review Team

The responsibility to actually review programs belongs to the Program Review Evaluation Team. At some selected universities, it is called Program Review Panel. According to the policy documents, the Review Team or Panel is responsible for reviewing the self-study materials, completing a site visit, interviewing key individuals (including faculty, current students, recent graduates, employers of graduates, members from advisory committees or other community organizations, administrators, etc), and creating a report which identifies program strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for change.

The policies and guidelines provide special provisions regarding the composition and makeup of the Review Team. The following is one of the examples of a typical policy document that determines the criteria of selection of Program Review Team. According to this document, the Review Team must consist of three to five members who meet the following criteria:
• At least two [university] faculty from outside the college/school of the program being reviewed (preferably faculty who are not in their first year of appointment at the university);
• At least one faculty member from outside university. This person may be from within or outside the state, or may be part of a professional accreditation team.
• Other individuals (staff, community members, alumni, etc) may be invited to serve on the Review Team.

Review Team members are also required to disclose all conflict of interest issues prior to being approved to serve on the team. At one of the universities, the issue of conflict of interest has been taken seriously. Individuals who have been invited to serve on a Review Team are expected to decline to serve in the evaluation of programs where they have, or where it might reasonably appear that they have, a conflict of interest. Potential evaluators are expected to disclose possible conflicts or appearances of conflict to the Program and the Dean. In this policy document, conflict of interest was defined and examples were provided.

Self-Study Committees
Self-study Committees are found in almost all models of academic program review. Like in other models, it consists of program or unit faculty members. Its major responsibility is to prepare self-study documents and responses, and coordinate the review activities within predetermined schedule. The Self-Study Committee works closely with other committees and panels and follows the schedule developed in collaboration with the Office of Academic Affairs.

The Self-Study Committee prepares the documents required or proposed in the self-study format or outline. In a typical case, the Review Council develops the format and the Self-study Committee prepares all the relevant documents. This has varied little
from university to another. At one of the universities, the required documents from the Self-Study Committee included:

1) Clearly defined mission statement;
2) Departmental Goals and Strategic Plan of the Department
3) Procedures for assessment of the established goals.

The discussion on the self-study outline gives a fuller description of the work of the Self-Study Committee. The policy requires that the departmental self-study should be a candid assessment of program efforts past and present and provide a significant portion of the basis for the program review. It is also the responsibility of the Self-Study Committee to ascertain that self-study covers all aspects on the department’s programs.

Program Review Standing Committee

Program Review Standing Committee is primarily an administrative committee. According to the policy documents from the University B, it consists of the Deans’ Council (seven academic deans; university librarian, chair of the Faculty Senate, Academic Vice president, Provost, Associate Provost), seven additional full-time faculty members (one each from the academic colleges), and a representative of the Office of Institutional Research. The Provost is the chair of this committee. The Provost, Associate Provost and Institutional Research representative are ex-officio, non-voting members. The faculty members representing academic colleges serve on three-year, staggered terms.

The Standing Committee is responsible for reviewing and responding to such documents as the executive summary of the self-study, Review Team report which identifies program strengths, weaknesses and recommendations, program response to the Review Team report, and Deans’ response to the Review Team report and the Program
response. As seen from this description, the Standing Committee has basically coordinating and administrative role in the review process. The composition of the Standing Committee suggests that that program reviews that are oriented towards improvement are more likely to have a diverse group of constituents in the coordinating and administrating core.

4.2. Selection of Programs, Scheduling and Main Steps in Program Review

4.2.1 Selection

Academic programs are selected on a cyclical basis, and from this perspective, it is similar to other models of program review. Like other models, the frequency of review in selected universities ranged from 5 years to 10 years. The longest lapse between program reviews is at the University A, which is ten years. At University B the cycle of review is seven years. The documents from the University C indicate that the program review is conducted on a five-year cycle.

In the selection of programs, the main role belongs to the Office of Academic Affairs. It determines the review schedule with input from the academic deans. The policy document and guidelines also describe possible exceptions. At University B, exceptions can be provided in two cases:

1) If the prior review determines that the subsequent review should occur sooner than seven years, and
2) If the review coincides with a professional accreditation process.

The provisions to eliminate duplication of the review process are also offered in the policy documents and guidelines of other selected three universities. Exceptions can be made on the grounds other than coincidence with accreditation reviews. For example, at the University A, the following factors can affect the lapse between two reviews:
a) Length of time since the last review;
b) Financial problems;
c) Major curriculum changes;

A typical selection approach appears in Appendix C.

4.2.2 Scheduling

The scheduling responsibility and length of review period varied from one institution to another. The locus of responsibility for scheduling belonged to the Office of Academic Affairs at all of the selected universities. What differed was the variety of input for scheduling. At one of the universities, the scheduling process involved the Academic Deans and in another, Office of Institutional Research and Planning. In the case of University A, there are provisions to facilitate the participation of key constituents of the process during the makeup of Program Review Councils and Panels. According to the policy document, the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and/or other appropriate vice-chancellors, the appropriate dean, the unit chair and faculty, the review committee, the students in the program, and other key constituents from government, industry and businesses. The length of the program review varied from 12 months to 2 years. At one of the universities, during the first year self-study was prepared. The year is when the review takes place. Program review is typically scheduled A typical scheduling approach appears in Appendix D.

4.2.3 Main Steps in the Review Process

The analysis of the documents indicated that the selected universities shared several communalities. A typical program review consisted of several steps scheduled as a whole or divided into years (for example, University B divides the steps into 2 parts).
One of the communalities regarding the main steps is the program review begins with consultation between the department chairs and the Office of Academic Affairs. According to the documents, normally these consultations take place one year in advance. Departments and units are notified and then can request a specific review schedule to precede or coincide with other reviews.

Another communality is the makeup of department or unit Self-Study Committees. After the Self-Study Committee is formed, Program Review Council arranges a self-study orientation for the unit to provide an overview of the process, materials, and expected outcomes.

The period of preparation of self-study for review continues normally 12 months. Within this period, departments compile all relevant program data, complete the self-study document with an executive summary of the findings, and submit these documents to Dean. Dean’s comments and recommendations are shared within the unit prior to submission of the final version of the self-study to the panel and the deans. After this, the site visits and external review take place. The Review Team/The Program Review Panel reviews all relevant materials, and interviews key individuals including faculty, current students, recent graduates, employers of graduates, members of advisory committees, and so forth.

The program review panel summarizes its findings and recommendations in a written report. It is described as a two to four page report of program strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for change. Copies are provided to the unit to review for accuracy and to prepare written comments. The Dean also receives a copy of this report. Then, the program prepares its written response and forwards a copy to the Dean. After this exchange, the dean prepares a one to two page response to the Review Team report and
the reviewed program response, and sends the dean’s response to the Program response. The dean forwards the executive summary of the self-study, the Review Team report, the Program response and the dean’s response to the Standing Committee. One of the important characteristics of this process is that the individual faculty members get an opportunity for comment. The design of the process clearly demonstrates commitment to collaboration and cooperation between the key constituents.

The program review panel will submit the final report with recommendations as a package to the Provost. In the case of University B, this package includes (1) the written report, (2) the unit’s and any individual faculty's responses, (3) the dean's comments, and (4) the review panel's written evaluation of the unit's and any faculty's response and the dean's comments.

This process leads to the next step – agreements for future unit development in response to recommendations. After reviewing the report and comments, the Provost meets with unit representatives and the deans to determine future action in response to the recommendations. The Provost’s package constitutes the institutional response concerning program review and identifies the need for any interim progress reports and anticipated date of the next review. According to the program review guidelines at one of the selected universities, the unit submits recommendations and comments about the review process within eighteen months of review completion. Within this period, follow-up sessions are arranged. Such a design suggests that the process of review benefits from inputs on the side of the Provost and Deans’ not the faculty members within the program. As seen from this description, the communication pattern is frequent and multilateral. The process allows Dean and Provost to express their leadership.
Final step in the process is arrangements for use of program review findings and recommendations. These results are reported to the Chancellor, the Provost, the appropriate vice chancellors and deans, and the unit and are made available to the university bodies involved in the planning, assessment, and budgeting processes.

4.3 Selection of Criteria for Review

In the selected universities, the responsibility for developing criteria for review belonged to the Program Review Committees. However, interestingly enough, there are not prescribed criteria for evaluating the self-study findings and the program outcomes. The process of judgment is purely academic. It seems to me that the academic criteria is formed as the documents are exchanged between the key constituents. The judgment about the program weaknesses and strengths is reciprocal in the sense that the program faculty members get an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the issues related the reports submitted by the external reviewers and responses from the committees. The policies and guidelines demonstrate that improvement-oriented academic program reviews mostly employ flexible criteria.

4.4 Self-Study Policies and Procedures

4.4.1 Brief Description of Policies and Procedures

According to the policy documents, the basic components for the program review self-study are similar to that of other models of program review. The policy requires that the departmental self-study be a candid assessment of program efforts past and present and provide a significant portion of the basis for the program review. According to the policies, self-study covers all aspects on the department’s programs. Accountability is
also one of the concerns in the policy documents. Units and departments are asked to pay significant attention to measures of quality and outcomes. Participation of all faculty members during self-study is encouraged through use of subgroups to examine various aspects of the review. In all of the selected universities, the policy documents require that the results of the self-study are made available to all program faculty, staff, and students.

As said in the description of main steps, self-study begins following the consultation and meeting with the Office for Academic Affairs. Here time and minimizing duplication of efforts seem to be of concern. Accordingly, if the units have both graduate and undergraduate programs, then, both can be assessed during the same review. All of the universities proposed some sort of format for self-study. At two universities, the proposed formats served as reference points and outlined major aspects of the program for review. At one of the universities, the program review documents require that the departments follow the proposed format because it was the baseline format also used for the Board of Regents' reviews and for the internal programmatic reviews.

Also, in the guidelines, the availability of documents and data for preparation of self-study is indicated. The Office of Academic Affairs can help the programs and reviewers to obtain full or partial data through data base access or in hard copy. This is done in cooperation with the Office of Institutional Research. In some cases, where partial data is indicated, the unit will is responsible for accuracy.

4.4.2 Discussion of Information basis in Self-study

The following discussion is based on the policy document obtained from the University A. Since this University is representative of the other selected universities, I will provide
a comprehensive discussion of required information basis. According to the policy
document, the information provided in the program review process should provide
critical data about size and stability of the program, current and future resource needs,
market demand, equipment and space needs, strengths and weaknesses, and how the
program contributes to the mission of the institution and the statewide Master Plan. The
Program Review Council requires three major categories of information:

   a. Brief history of the academic unit
   b. Institutional programs
   c. Program future

In the first category, “Academic Unit”, the document requires information
regarding the programs offered by unit, description of academic unit, and role, scope, and
mission of the department, the college or School. Also a brief summary of the
accreditation status is required. In the second category, Instructional programs, I have
found nine subcategories of information.

   In the Instructional Programs category of information, a given academic unit
should provide information in the following sub-categories of information:

   1. Program objectives
   2. Program structure
   3. Need
   4. Students
   5. Personnel
   6. Curriculum
   7. Information resources, facilities and equipment
   8. Community service
   9. Internal mechanisms for assessment

Each of these nine sub-categories is divided into two to five areas. Now let me to
synthesize those areas. The first subcategory of information about Program Objectives
address three information needs: objectives of the program, the relationship of the
program to the institutional mission and “strategic plan” of the program to achieve its
objectives. The department is also required to submit the strategic plan of the program in
the review process.

In the Program Structure subcategory, three types of information are sought. First of all, the academic program is asked to provide the rationale behind the sequence of courses, examinations, and other required parts of the program. Secondly, the Review Council asks for information about the breadth of the coverage of the field. The academic unit is also asked to list the sub-fields and the number of faculty active in each. Also, the Review Council asks for special emphasis in the courses and unique resources of the unit. Information about the external relationships of the unit with industry, government and other agencies outside of the academic community constitutes the third areas of information needs within the Program Structure category.

In the third subcategory, Need, four types of information needs are indicated: similar programs nearby, relationship with other programs, justification for program continuation and outside interest in the program. Of special interest was also to see what kind of information the Review Council is looking for to justify program continuation. The Council asked to indicate the need for graduates by specifying the area in which they will be needed, and by citing any studies or data. The categories of information have become more clear-cut. In this subcategory, the academic unit is also asked to provide specific information about outside interest in the program. The unit is asked to indicate any interested local groups, industry, research centers, other educational institutions, or state agencies. Also included here is the nature of contact made with these groups with these groups and the results of these contacts.

The subcategory Students lists three areas including enrolment, degrees granted and admission policies. They academic unit is asked to provide enrolment statistics for
the past five years, present status of enrolment and projections for the future. Required information about the admission policies consisted of the geographic areas from which the students come, special body of students the program seeks to serve, the number of students applied and accepted, and special provisions for minorities and women. The unit is asked to provide the representative information for recent years. Within this Student sub-category, the Council also seeks for information in:

- Retention and graduation rates;
- Advisement and counseling;
- Financial Support
- Follow-up and student placement
- Enrolment capacity
- Anticipated changes

The next sub-category, named Personnel, inquires about the faculty and staff involved in the program. The academic unit needs to provide information about the faculty using the System Standard Biographical Data Form for each member of the faculty. The information about the faculty should also include the average teaching load. Other information sought in this area is as following:

- Information on the policy, practices and procedures of granting tenure. Included here should also be sabbatical arrangements.
- Information on staffing changes that have occurred in the last five years and plans for future. Here the unit is also asked to indicate changes in the numbers of faculty members and their impact on the direction of the program. In general, information provided should cover the recruitment and retention.
- Information on the size and nature of graduate teaching responsibilities;
- Information on the size and nature of the undergraduate teaching responsibilities;
- Information about the support and advisory faculty;
- The number, positions, and titles of current support and staff used in the program and finally,
- Information on special competencies of existing faculty. The academic unit is asked to provide to indicate areas of specialized competence of faculty members as demonstrated by research or prior experience.
The sixth sub-category inquires about Curriculum. The first two areas of information needs include: 1) desired student learning outcomes, and 2) course listings in the past five years, in the present and projected new courses. Other areas of information inquires about 3) the service and general education courses taught by the department, 4) strengths and unique features, 5) unit deficiencies and planned remedies, and 6) use of technology and projected increase in the use of technology. The Review Council really encourages providing as much information as possible about the future of course offerings at the department or in the program. I have especially paid attention how the review process necessitates information about projections in distance learning.

The subcategory Informational Resources, facilities and equipment has five subcategories:

1) Library resources
2) Current facilities and capital equipment
3) Needed additional facilities
4) Needed additional equipment
5) Correcting resources deficiencies

One of the interesting points here is that in the Curriculum subcategory there is an item asking information on how the department eliminates possible deficiencies. And here also we have an item asking for information how the department solves resource deficiencies. I think it is one of the characteristics of improvement-oriented program review is that department is encouraged to provide information on how it corrects its deficiencies.

Information needed in the Community Service subcategory includes information on current activities and major service program outcomes. Specifically the academic unit is asked to describe major service-related programs, identify the needs such service-
related activities are designed to meet, and the effectiveness of the programs in meeting these needs.

I have noted that this review document pays a lot of attention to self-direction. Another vivid example of this is a whole sub-category of information on how the unit organizes internal mechanisms for assessment. There are four areas to this subcategory:

1) Evaluation procedures including information on how the unit assesses program outcomes in teaching, research and service activities. Here the unit should also provide information on how it measures its effectiveness of curriculum and cognitive, behavioral or attitudinal learning outcomes of students, and efficiency of resources.

2) Information on assessment measure tied to each outcome (e.g. student learning outcomes assessment measures may include student licensure rates, GRE scores, acceptance into graduate schools, etc.).

3) Information about findings from the assessment measures. The unit asked to describe what has been learned about the graduates and the program. The type of information is not very clear for me. However, I think it is related to the lessons learned from using the assessment and evaluation measures in the department.

4) Information about use of results. By this item, the Review Council requires information on how the unit is reporting and using results from assessment and evaluation in decision-making. The unit should provide examples of improved program quality using assessment and evaluation results.

The last category of information in this review is about the future of the program or the department. The unit is required to describe immediate and the long-range challenges and opportunities for development. The information categories provide a solid background for evaluation of programs. An example of actual self-study outline is provided in Appendix E.

4.5. Selection and Role of External Reviewer

Selection

Although the responsibility to approve the external reviewer lies within the Office of Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, department chairs are consulted to
determine the appropriate reviewer names. The selection of the External Reviewer reflects the aspirations for improvement: the person needs to be from a high quality institution with a solid and well-respected program in the area of review. It is also required that the External Reviewer works at the department chair or dean level to ensure broad experience in the discipline and some understanding of university wide procedures and processes. In most of the universities, the policy documents encourage that this reviewer is located within the state. Before his/her visit, the External Reviewer receives all relevant documents including the self-study report prepared by the program undergoing the review.

On-Site Visit
The Reviewer visits the department offering the program under review for one day. Prior and after his/her visit to the department, the reviewer is scheduled to talk with the Vice Chancellor, Associate Vice Chancellor, and Director of Institutional Research and Planning on the day of the visit. The policy documents also require that the program provides time for meetings with faculty, with several students in a group, opportunity to examine any documents that may not have been sent along with the Self-Study, and time to review resources, including computer facilities, labs, library holdings, and facilities.

Report of External Reviewer
Within three weeks after the visit, the External Reviewer submits a report addressing strengths and weaknesses of the program, and recommendations to changes for improvement. The copy of the Reviewer report is sent to the Chair of the Department. Based on the reviewer's report and the Departmental Self-Study, the department prepares
a departmental plan indicating how it will address over the next three to five years the recommendations of the Reviewer and the findings of the departmental self-study.

4.6 Development of Recommendations and Decisions Pursuant to the Evaluation

Recommendations and decisions about the program pursuant to review are arrived at after extensive exchange of responses and reports. The policy documents and guidelines provide for participation of every key constituent during this process. The Provost specifically plays an important role: meets with unit representatives and the deans to determine future action in response to the recommendations. According to the documents, the Provost prepares a package that constitutes the institutional response concerning program review. This package also identifies the need for any interim progress reports and anticipated date of the next review.

According to the program review guidelines at one of the selected universities, the unit submits recommendations and comments about the review process within eighteen months of review completion. Within this period, follow-up sessions are arranged. Arrangements are made for use of program review findings and recommendations. These results are reported to the Chancellor, the Provost, the appropriate vice chancellors and deans, and the unit and are made available to the university bodies involved in the planning, assessment, and budgeting processes.

4.7 Summary of Major Findings

The analysis of the academic program review procedures and policies at selected US public universities focused on finding the communalities in five areas:

1) Major Elements of the Program Review Process;
2) Selection of Programs, Scheduling and Main Steps; 
3) Selection of Criteria for Review 
4) Self-Study Policies and Procedures; 
5) Selection and Role of External Reviewers, and 
6) Development of Recommendations and Decisions Pursuant to the Evaluation

Based on the previous sections, improvement-oriented academic program review can be characterized as:

**Results in action towards improving the program.** Official policies and procedures obtained from the selected universities indicated that the primary task is to design and conduct academic program review so that it results in action. The action is improving all aspects of the program under review and at the same to contribute the improvement of the School and University. Specifically, the documents targeted student learning outcomes, curriculum, program delivery approaches, faculty performance, resources and facilities, the need for the program, and the future of the faculty. In order to facilitate this process, the policies and procedures involved faculty at all stages. Individuals of diverse interests are included to serve on committees and panels. The recommendations for change are the result of multiple engagements in interaction and feedback through multiple channels. Another way this emphasis emerged is preparation of specific plans of the department to institute the recommendations of the external reviewer and those of other reviewers.

**Facilitates faculty participation in all aspects of the process.** The role of individual faculty members is central to the process. The policy documents and guidelines explicitly offer provisions to involve faculty members in the selection and nominating the review teams and members of committees. Faculty members are also essential in the self-study and review process. They are given opportunity to voice their response and receive constructive feedback from all the other key constituents: the Academic Program Committee, the Review Team and the External Reviewer. In the development of
recommendations, the Provost’s package is complete only after receiving and considering the faculty member’s responses.

*Uses primarily academic criteria that are flexible and formed within the review process.* Although at one of the universities baseline standards are offered, at all other universities the criteria are formed within the process. Academic program review documents and guidelines suggested that the criteria are academic, and based primarily on the judgment and evaluation of colleagues and professionals. The academic criteria are referred to provide a mechanism to improving educational opportunities, curriculum quality, program relevance and space and equipment needs. Because the process of criteria development is ongoing, that is there is not predetermined criterion-referenced list of framework, the essence of usefulness lies within the process. The usefulness of process – the process on-going interaction and feedback – is highly emphasized in the obtained documents.

*Involves a diverse group of constituents.* Academic Program Review documents indicate that program review purposes would not feasible without proper involvement of a diverse of stakeholders. First of the composition of Program Review Council shows that the representatives from various disciplinary areas are represented in the decision-making process. A number of other key universities are also involved in the Council a non-voting ex-officio capacity. Similarly, the process of academic program review also brings together the program faculty members with an experienced faculty member from the same school, but from a different department and two other external reviewers. Academic program review documents also show that at selected universities program are encouraged to get feedback form key constituents such as students, industry,
governmental representatives, and report on the programs’ relations with business, industry and government.

Policies on self-study outline provides for comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of program under review. The most significant and critical data in the academic program review process are derived within self-study. At selected institutions, self-study outlines are comprehensive, and address all aspects of the program. A typical program review consists of three parts: about the program/department, the instructional program and the future of the program. Each of these three categories is further divided into subcategories. Not only quantitative, but also qualitative data are sought and indicators vary from listing of capstone courses to examples of student learning to curriculum integration.

Inquires about program’s self-direction/correction. Academic program review documents revealed that the process itself is of significant self-assessment. One of the communalities that run through all of the policies and procedures is self-assessment of how the program addresses resources deficiencies and engages in self-correction. The outlines for self-studies encouraged the programs to submit the program strategy in correcting existing deficiencies.

Links the review results to strategic planning, programmatic planning, and the institutional budgeting process. Academic program review is viewed to be of significant use in the strategic planning, programmatic planning and the institutional budgeting process. One of the key factors in this process is involvement of Office of Institutional Research and Development, Office of Academic Affairs and other key administrators. Analyzed program review documents recapitulate that review results are reported to the Chancellor, the Provost, Vice-Chancellors, Deans, and the unit, and are made available to the university bodies involved in the planning, assessment and budgeting processes.
5. Application

5.1 Current context of educational institutions in Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan is located to the southeast of the Caspian Sea, and neighbors with Iran, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan. In October 1991, as the result of the dissolution of the former USSR, Turkmenistan became an independent state. It stepped into a new period in its history taking the opportunity to build a civil society based on the will of the Turkmen people considering their culture and the principles of democracy. Every effort of the representative government has been directed to make this transition stable and productive.

The national education system received a considerable heritage from the former Soviet system of education. The system had shaped a free public education from kindergarten to university with the principles of equity disclaiming any prejudice to any ethnic group. A wide spectrum of pre-primary, primary, secondary, post-secondary education together with a number of research institutes, a national academy was the heritage to the new national education system. In the process of building the foundations of the new society, creating an adjusted national education system was one of the major priority issues of the government.

A new educational policy was declared May 3, 1993. The basic principle of the policy was to develop an educational system that would reflect the cultural, historical heritage of the Turkmen people in the realm of the new ambitions for the future. The most part of the goals of the new educational policy has been realized by now.
5.2 Higher Education Institutions in Turkmenistan

Institution Types and Credentials

The higher education sector consists of four types of higher education institutions: 1) Universities, 2) Institutes, and 3) Academies, and 4) Conservatoires (UNESCO, WHED, 2000). Credentials conferred by the higher education institutions include the Diploma of Specialist, the degrees of Kandidat Nauk ("Ylymlaryn Kandidaty") and Doctor Nauk ("Ylymlaryn Doktory"). These credentials are awarded in various specialties, but they do not cover all spheres of social and economic activity. So, the country keeps educational, specialist training, professional development programs relations with the USA, Turkey, Russia, Germany, France and China.

At a typical university, the Rector, who is normally appointed by the president of the country, administers the institution. The two Vice-Rectors, one is for academic affairs and research, and the other – for student affairs and counseling assist the rector. Among offices, I would like to mention the Office of Rector, Academic Affairs of Office and Committee on the Youth. The employees in these offices are appointed, and normally most of them are young and hard working. And, there are five to eight faculties, which could be analogues to the US colleges or schools at large universities. The Deans that are appointed by the Rector and the Vice-Rectors administer the faculties. Depending on size, a faculty may house three to five departments, led by Chairs, which are also appointed by the Rector and the Vice-Rectors.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for higher education and serves as the accrediting agency. The matrix of accountability of higher education institutions is very heavy. Institutions are kept strictly accountability for content, performance, funding, and quality by the government through the Ministry of Education mechanisms. Higher
education institutions are dependent on funding to the central government, and are very sensitive to economic condition of the country. Higher education is free to public, and admission is very competitive.

**Reform of Higher Education System**

Since independence, thanks to increasing attention of Turkmen government, higher education institutions have undergone considerable changes. As the result of independence, our society gained an opportunity to explore new options to mobilize the resources in the country in building a renewed social and economic structure to benefit all the people. Whether its usage of the country’s oil reserves or development of skills of human resources, the need for renewed role of higher education became apparent. Higher education institutions became responsible to prepare specialists in new areas of activities. New patterns of foreign relations, economic infrastructure and political and social reform in the country desperately needed knowledgeable and skilled people. The government of our country increasingly paid attention to the capacity of higher education institutions to cope with these new needs. Our government began viewing higher education as one of the priority areas of development.

In the early 1990s, reform of higher education resulted in an expansive movement towards reengineering higher education institutions of the country. Reengineering efforts in this period focused on mainly management issues such as restructuring departments and programs, and improving academic planning at the state level. Another major focus of this period was promoting research by faculty at established universities and institutes shifting it from the centralized Academy of Sciences. Under this emphasis, early and mid-'90s witnessed several notable changes. These changes mainly included dramatic cut
back, sometimes elimination, of duplicates of undergraduate programs in varying specialties and opening of several new programs, and at some cases institutions, in such fields as agriculture, military, international relations, business management and languages.

This phase of reengineering relieved reigning anxiety to meet the challenges of the day for specialists that were not normally prepared in the country within the years of Soviet rule. In the end of the 1990s, another wave of calls for reform swept higher education institutions across Turkmenistan. This time emphasis of reengineering expanded to include the development of student-centered academic programs, improvement of curriculum implementation processes and college teaching practices. In addition, the government developed guidelines tightening admission standards and improving the selection criteria.

Consequently today higher educations institutions of Turkmenistan face the challenges and as well as opportunities of the new period. Among critical challenges facing higher education institutions in my country are improving academic planning, facilitating program renewal and improvement. In higher education institutions, strategy for self-renewal and improvement in its teaching, research and service is the most unexposed and undetected. In currently existing evaluation process of academic programs, the faculty members submit reports about the fulfillment of their academic plans including teaching and research, and the summary of their educational and counseling work with students. The academic and research component goes to the Academic Affairs Office, where the Office of Academic Affairs reviews it. Additionally, Associate Deans for Academic and Counseling Affairs at the Faculties review the second part. How comprehensive and appealing this may sound, the process just does not work.
The amount of feedback is small. Administration and faculty of the program little opportunity for comprehensive make use of them.

5.3 Proposed Model of Program Review

Taking into consideration current context of higher education institutions and using the experience of higher education institutions in the United States, a model of academic program review is proposed. This model of academic program review is presented as a new management tool in administering academic programs at higher education institutions in Turkmenistan. The main purpose of this management tool is derived from current critical challenges facing higher education institutions – to improve academic programs.

The proposed model of academic program review appears in the Figure 3. The model begins by taking into consideration the priorities in government politics and current socio-economic strategies. These are presented in the Figure 3 as the government and environment. As a country in transition, Turkmenistan heavily relies on higher education institutions and sets priorities for the higher education sector.

In the proposed model, the review process is initiated by the university administration. The university administration selects the Review Council. The Review Council includes faculty, university administrators and representatives from other university administration divisions, and representatives from the faculties. It is the major authority that develops policy guidelines and procedures of conducting academic program review. It is the responsibility of the Review Council to build a foundation of academic program review that is fair, comprehensive and accurate. The Review Council collaboratively selects the programs, and determines the schedule of review with input
Figure 3. A Model of Academic Program Review
from a diverse group of key constituents. The Review Council also prepares the
guidelines for selecting Self-Study Committees, Review Panels and External Reviewers.
Another function of the Review Council is to determine the institutional structures and
procedures for use of the results.

Using the developed the policy guidelines and procedures, the Review Council
notifies the program and confirms the schedule. The department then selects the Self-Study Committee. The Self-Study Committee is composed of program faculty members
selected using appropriate procedures. The major responsibility of the Self-Study Committee is preparation of the program materials and data for review. It is critical that the program allows for the Self-Study Committee to consume time sufficient to produce relevant data.

Self-study is the most critical period in the review. It is critical because it needs to prepare all the relevant information for review. A tentative outline for information needs is proposed. Not only the comprehensiveness of the information basis is sufficient. It is also necessary to increase the usefulness of preparation process. The Review Council should coordinate the interaction between faculty, students, and external constituents so that the process avoids chaos and frustration on the side of the Self-Study Committee and others.

Once the program self-study is over, the Review Panel evaluates the program. Also, one external reviewer visits the program. The Review Panel and External Reviewer evaluate the program in terms of quality of the curriculum, the quality and efficiency of delivery of the program and availability of facilities and resources. Using academic criteria and professional judgment, the Review Panel and external reviewer develops their recommendations and forwards them for university and the program for consideration.
This process is very critical because the interaction between the review panel and external reviewers is most productive part of the review process. The university administration, the Dean, and the program prepare their responses collaboratively. Recommendations are developed using inputs from variety of constituents including faculty, administrators and students. Major areas of improvement should include at least curriculum, program support and relevant aspects of delivery.

In the proposed Model, the use of results is the major aspect of program review. As already mentioned, this model views the process itself as critical. Yet the review should result in action and use of recommendations. Involvement of faculty, divisions within the institutional administration and government representative should increase probability of use. Use of results can also be strengthened by follow-up activities.

In summary, this model builds on the best experiences of program review and takes into consideration major contextual factors. The Review Council should carefully consider collaboration, leadership, and financial support while developing policies and procedures. The Ministry of Education can affect the review process. Cooperation between the governmental representatives can be solved positively if the mission of the university and its contribution to the development of the country are viewed essential.

5.4 Major implications of implementing proposed model of academic program review

Major implications cover the institutional structure, environment, administrative leadership and the character of communication within the organization. These implications, especially structural and institutional call for profound re-examination and subsequent transformation of institutional decision-making processes. These implications
call for reconfiguration of institutional relations with central government structures, specifically with the Ministry of Education. I would like to highlight the following implications as the most insightful, useful and relatively feasible to examine for institutionalizing academic program review:

- Academic program review design, procedures and processes should fit the environment of the institution;
- Institutional administration should approve and continuously support academic program review;
- New mechanisms of open communication should be designed;
- All interested parties should be able to voice their concerns.

**Fit to Institutional Environment**

One of those implications refers to the environment of institutions and the design of program reviews. It is necessary that the design of program reviews should fit the unique environment of the institutions. Considering the emerging societal needs, fiscal constraints and availability of experience abroad, higher education leaders and managers should give attention so that academic program review has the following characteristics:

- Will be used in decision-making within the institutions and relative branch of government;
- Focuses whether this program addresses the immediate need for specialists;
- Checks whether this program is responsive to changing opportunities for growth in the economy and life of people by modifying the program;
- Provides timely information on the program and available human and material resources to maintain this program;
- Has established clear policies and procedures;
- Has acquired support from government and academia;

In this framework, I have followed the implication under discussion that the design is used to curb on of the shortcomings of current program evaluation practices: use of findings. The design also makes sure that program review timely informs about the program responsiveness to needs in the economy and people’s life. The design highlights
higher educations unique mission: their responsiveness to the betterment of people’s life.

Under this framework, some of the questions would be:

- In what area does the program prepare specialists for? What are the recent modifications in the program to address new needs of these specialists?
- Is there demand for this program? Does this program satisfy the needs for specialists in this area? What relations and partnerships does this program maintain with relevant organizations and industries?
- Are there adequate human, fiscal and material resources?
- Is this program offered elsewhere in the country? If yes, how does this program differ in quality, resource consumption and success of graduates?
- How can this program be improved in quality of its offerings for learning and practice?
- How does this program contribute to undertakings in this area in the country?
- What are the program’s challenges in its operation and growth? How does this program internally address these challenges?
- How does the program administrators and faculty member use the experiences with similar programs in the developed countries?

Further research is needed in identifying specific implications of current societal transformation on higher education. Considerable attention should be given to changes in the political relations, to the need for new skilled generation, to new patterns of growth of postsecondary knowledge industry. Extensive research is needed to identify new roles of higher educations in the society in general, the roles of specific institutions in the relevant field in particular. Subsequently the mission and goals of higher education institutions should address the findings from this extensive study. In addition to research basis, under suggested framework, program review requires from the government to increase the institution’s autonomy, provide for training of leaders and managers and allow for exchange of professionals with knowledge and skills. The main approach here is to build the ability in the institution to evaluate its own environment and internal decision-making processes to effectively realize program review and its findings.
Institutional Administration

Another set of implications includes the support and approval of program review initiatives on the side of government and university. The main solution could be to design focused training programs for administrative leadership in conducting program reviews, in using program review findings to apply to improve the quality of academic programs and linking program review to other decision-making processes. It is also important to train unit leadership to address quality and effectiveness measure and to carry out open communication about the program review outcomes and follow-up measures with the administration and the campus community. It should be ensured that unit leaders are able to encourage participative decision-making at various levels of review design and implementation.

New Mechanisms of Communication

With regard to devising new mechanisms of open communication, the experiences from abroad can be integrated. As already mentioned, communication is not limited to effectively collecting information and data. It involves creating a structure for and maintaining a sustained dialogue among involved parties. Effective program review will depend on how thoughtfully the Academic Affairs Office at the universities or other involved responsible parties devise these mechanisms to address key issues such reporting of results and updates, follow-up on recommendations and continuously checking on the implementation process.
Involvement of Constituents

Another central question to institutionalizing academic program review is related to encouraging involvement all interested parties. The analysis of critical factors of successful academic program review implies that participation of all interested parties increases the implementation of program review findings. How can an institution totally funded by government enhance participation at the same incorporating contradicting interests of all parties? How can this participation be made meaningful? The answer is not simple; it involves examination of decision-making processes and the distribution of power within and far outside the institution. The general solution can be seeking and finding ways, by negotiating with the Ministry of Education, to involve departmental administration, faculty members and represents of other service areas early in the design processes.
6. Conclusion

Based on the experience of selected US colleges and universities, the patterns of academic program review practice have been described. The focus of study was institutional approaches to program review. These approaches are primarily concerned with program improvement. It has been possible to portray their distinctive features and propose a model of academic program review for Turkmen higher education institutions on the basis of those features.

The first primary question intended to identify the common elements and processes in the improvement-oriented program reviews in the selected US public universities. The identified communalities share earlier findings in the research (Arns & Poland, 1980; Dibiasio, 1982; Hoey, 1993, Larson, 1985). Among the common elements, the individuals in the reviewed program received the key role. Other communalities in the major elements are the Program Review Council, Review Panel, Self-Study Committee, and External Reviewer. The communalities in the process included six characteristics:

- Results in action towards improving the program;
- Facilitates faculty participation in all aspects of the review process;
- Uses primarily academic criteria formed during the process;
- Involves diverse group of constituents;
- Self-study outline provides for comprehensive evaluation;
- Inquires about program's self-direction and correction;
- Links review results for institutional decision-making

The second primary question is two fold: the possibility of using academic program review as a management tool to improve academic programs in the context of Turkmen higher education institutions, and extent of the elements and processes to be included in the design. Firstly, it has been suggested that program review can be integrated into current administrative practices in higher education institutions in Turkmenistan. This model of academic program review is presented as a new
management tool in administering academic programs at higher education institutions in Turkmenistan. The main purpose of this management tool is derived from current critical challenges facing higher education institutions – to improve academic programs. The proposed model of academic program review allows for more collaboration among key constituents. Secondly, the major elements in the proposed model can include: Review Committee, Review Panel, and Self-Study Committee, and one External Reviewer – much similar to the improvement-oriented program reviews found the study. The common processes in the proposed model also share communalities:

- Review of all key aspects of the Program,
- Responsiveness of the program to social and economic opportunities,
- Collaborative makeup of Committees and Panels,
- Attention to self-direction and correction, and
- Links to decision-making.

Major aspects of program delivery are given emphasis in the proposed model. Improvement-oriented recommendations are collaboratively developed. It views the both process and results of review as essential contributions to improvement.

The implications of academic program review model are diverse. These implications broadly involve institutional environment, its size and structure, complexity of relevant policies and decision-making structures, communication mechanisms within the organization and with the outside constituencies, and leadership of key personnel. The solutions to these implications have been explored and relevant strategies have been suggested. Among major proposed strategies are collaboration stimulated by leadership, training, and continued dialogue through new communication mechanisms.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Item Name</th>
<th>Item description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Description of the Structure of the Academic Program Review Process</td>
<td>What elements/combination of processes constitute in the academic program review process? Where is does main responsibility lie within the institution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Selection of Programs, Scheduling, and Main Steps in Program Review</td>
<td>How academic program selected for review? Are programs selected on cyclical basis? If programs are selected on triggered basis, what is the rationale for academic program review? To what extent does department/program voice concerns with regard to program review selection and purposes? What are the major steps in conducting academic program review?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Selection of the Criteria for Reviewing Academic Programs</td>
<td>What office/position/personnel responsible for selection of criteria? Do faculty members get chance to contribute in developing criteria? What are these criteria? How are these criteria understood in terms of data collection and interpretation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Self-Study Policies and Procedures</td>
<td>What are the policies and procedures about self-study? How does the process proceed? What are the major categories of information collected during the self-study process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Selection and Role of External Reviewers</td>
<td>What is the pattern of external reviewers? Who visit outside the institution? Who participate outside the program/department?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Development of Recommendations and Decisions and Actions Pursuant to the Evaluation</td>
<td>How are the recommendations developed? How are the agreements reached? According to the documents, how are the decisions and actions reached? What is the pattern of follow-up?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on: Koon (1992), Barak (1982), Conrad and Wilson (1985), and Creamer and Janosik’s (1999)
Your university has been chosen to be included for a study of academic program reviews. In this study, I am interested to learn if the policies and procedures of program reviews differ when the main reason for doing them is improvement. Studies in general have shown that program reviews can identify curriculum reform agenda, reinforce program mission and goals, and provide forum for strategic thinking and change. Yet little information is available to students of higher education administration on how policies and procedures are formulated and may differ in improvement-oriented academic program reviews.

Your institution has been chosen for this study because the policies and procedures, which I could locate in Internet, indicated that the main reason for doing academic program review is improvement of academic programs. A very small sample of four public universities has been chosen for this study.

In this study I will review institutional program review documents named Campus Procedures for Academic Program Review and Guidelines to Departments for Academic Program Review. I will describe selection of programs/departments for review, choice of review criteria and reviewers, provisions for participation of various constituencies, self-study procedures, development of recommendations and follow-up activities. I will point to some common elements that do not receive emphasis in other models of program review. I may ask some clarifying questions about the documents. I will keep the identity
of the institutions confidential. Executive summary of the study will be made available to you upon your request.

If you decide to participate in the study, please send me a copy of university document and/or guideline regarding academic program review. If you would like to submit them in electronic form, you are welcome to do so. My e-mail address is amuradov@educ.umass.edu. Otherwise, you can mail relevant documents to my address shown top of page.

Your contribution is essential to this study. I would like to take this opportunity and thank you for your cooperation.

Azat A. Muradov
Master’s Candidate
Center for International Education,
University of Massachusetts

1991-2001 Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Participant, Turkmenistan
FREQUENCY OF REVIEW

All academic programs at This State University will be reviewed on a seven-year cycle (see appendix). The review schedule will be determined by the Office of Academic Affairs with input from the academic deans. Exceptions to the seven-year cycle may occur for the following reasons:

- programs whose prior review resulted in a determination that the subsequent review should occur sooner than seven years; or
- programs whose program review is coincident with a professional accreditation review, and the professional accreditation process has a different review cycle length.

Source: “Academic Program Review Process”
University B*.

* Due to followed confidentiality procedures, the actual name of the University is not revealed.
**Review Team Calendar**

Program reviews take place over two academic years. The first year is a year of self-study preparation; the second year is the year of review. All programs undergoing review should make every effort to adhere to the dated guidelines, which follow. Exceptions to these guidelines will be made to coordinate program review with professional accreditation review.

| Year One: Year of Self-Study Preparation |  |
|----------------------------------------|  |
| **by Dec 15**                          | The dean, in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs, orients the PROGRAM to the purpose and format of the review and the PROGRAM responsibilities for the review. |
| **by Mar 15**                          | The PROGRAM makes recommendations for membership of the REVIEW TEAM to the dean, following the guidelines noted earlier in this document. At least two individuals must be recommended for each REVIEW TEAM position. |
| **by Mar 15**                          | The PROGRAM compiles all relevant program data which are required for the current review, completes the self-study document with an executive summary and submits this to the dean for review and approval. |
| **by May 1**                           | The dean, in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs, finalizes the REVIEW TEAM membership and notifies the PROGRAM of the approved membership. |
| **by May 1**                           | The dean, after consulting with the Office of Academic Affairs, notifies the PROGRAM of the status of the self-study documents. |
| **by Aug 1**                           | The PROGRAM contacts the approved REVIEW TEAM members, confirms the participation of each member, finalizes site visit dates and travel arrangements, and sends self-study materials to all REVIEW TEAM members, the dean and the Office of Academic Affairs. |

*(Continued)*
### Year Two: Year of Program Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by Oct 8</td>
<td>The dean, in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs, orients REVIEW TEAM members to their role and responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Oct 8</td>
<td>The REVIEW TEAM conducts the site visit, reviews all relevant materials, and interviews key individuals (including faculty, current students, recent graduates, employers of graduates, members from advisory committees or other community organizations, administrators, etc).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Oct 15</td>
<td>The REVIEW TEAM writes a brief (two to four page) report of program strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for change and submits this report to the PROGRAM, with a copy to the dean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Nov 1</td>
<td>The PROGRAM prepares a written response to the REVIEW TEAM report and forwards this response to the dean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Nov 15</td>
<td>The dean prepares a one to two page response to the REVIEW TEAM report and the PROGRAM response, and sends the dean’s response to the PROGRAM. The dean forwards the executive summary of the self-study, the REVIEW TEAM report, the PROGRAM response and the dean’s response to the STANDING COMMITTEE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Feb 1</td>
<td>The STANDING COMMITTEE notes concurrence or disagreement with the program review documents and findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Mar 1</td>
<td>The provost formulates an institutional response concerning the program review which identifies the need for any interim progress reports, as well as the anticipated date of the next review for this program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Mar 15</td>
<td>The PROGRAM, dean and provost review the institutional response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Apr 1</td>
<td>The provost submits a summary document to the University Board of Trustees, which outlines the programs, which have undergone program review this year and the institutional responses to each of these reviews.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Academic Program Review Process

University B*

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* Due to followed confidentiality procedures, the actual name of the university is not revealed
STATE UNIVERSITY PROGRAM REVIEW

Self-study Format
and
Self-study Standards
(Draft 06/10/99)

- Cover Sheet -

STATE UNIVERSITY
(year-year) PROGRAM REVIEW

DEPARTMENT OF ___________________________________________

(date self-study completed) ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-STUDY FORMAT</th>
<th>PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW PROCESS</td>
<td>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and affiliation of Program Review Team (REVIEW TEAM) members (place resumes in appendix)</td>
<td>Note: There are no standards for the cover sheet or the description of the review process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief description of procedure followed:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/process of self-study completion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of site visit, interviews with key individuals, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to professional accreditation review (if applicable)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(source: program records)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-STUDY FORMAT</th>
<th>PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Program Mission Statement</td>
<td>A. Program Mission Statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| State and include date mission statement was revised (source: program records) | A clearly written mission statement must exist and must be periodically reviewed and revised as needed. Mission statements often answer the following questions:  
- Where is the program located; with whom is it affiliated?  
- Whom does the program serve?  
- What is the philosophy of the program?  
- What were the special/unique features of the program?  
- What results are anticipated?  
The program mission statement must be appropriate to and support the mission statement of University. |
| SELF-STUDY FORMAT | PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS |
| B. Student Learning Outcomes | B. Student Learning Outcomes |
| (source: program records) | |
| Cognitive/psychomotor/affective behaviors of graduating major/minor students. Data collected on student learning outcomes, including how/when data was collected. Program changes made as a result of outcomes data. | Student learning outcomes must be identified which are appropriate for each degree program. Outcome statements have the following characteristics:  
- Linked to the institutional and program mission statements  
- Expressed as outcomes rather than processes  
- An appropriate level of detail  
- Challenging, but achievable  
- Precise and measurable  
- Represent different domains (cognitive, affective, psychomotor, performance)  
- Represent different levels of achievement (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, syntheses, evaluation)  
A plan for assessing student learning outcomes which identifies when and how each outcome is assessed must be developed and implemented. Data on student learning outcomes must be used to improve the program. |
| SELF-STUDY FORMAT | PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS |
| C. Curriculum Overview | C. Curriculum |
| (source: program records) | 1. The curriculum for each degree program and for general education/service courses offered by the program must be the result of thoughtful and ongoing curriculum planning processes. |
| 1. Types of degrees offered (major/minor/emphasis/certificate).  
2. General education/service courses (compare departmental effort for major/minor vs. gen-ed/service).  
3. Course rotation by year for past three years and next three years. | 2. The curriculum must be consistent with the program’s mission.  
3. There must be an appropriate allocation of effort |
4. Involvement with University Online, Davis Campus, etc.
5. Unique aspects of curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-STUDY FORMAT</th>
<th>PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D. Teaching and Learning (source: program records)</td>
<td>D. Teaching and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of departmental teaching standards. Contract and adjunct teaching pedagogy. Measures used to determine quality of teaching for both contract and adjunct faculty.</td>
<td>Teaching and learning processes within each degree program must be systematically monitored to assess their effectiveness, and they must be revised to reflect new objectives and to incorporate improvements based on the evidence of theory and practice. For both contract and adjunct faculty, there must be evidence of: effective creation and delivery of instruction, ongoing evaluation and improvement of instruction, innovation in instructional processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-STUDY FORMAT</th>
<th>PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E. Academic Advising (source: program records)</td>
<td>E. Academic Advising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals and process used to advise major/minor students. Data collected on quality of advising, including how/when data was collected. Advising changes made as a result of data collected.</td>
<td>Programs must have a strategy for advising their major/minor students which is continually assessed for its effectiveness. Students must receive assistance in planning their individual programs of study. Students must receive assistance in making career decisions and in seeking placement, whether in employment or graduate school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-STUDY FORMAT</th>
<th>PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F. Liaison With The External Community (source: program records)</td>
<td>F. Liaison With The External Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the role and organization of the liaison mechanism between the program and the external communities of interest (summarize here and list individual names and employers in an appendix). Contribution of the liaison mechanism to curriculum, equipment, faculty, and budget.</td>
<td>There must be a liaison mechanism between the program and the external communities of interest. The liaison mechanism must have a clearly defined role and evidence of its contribution to the program (curriculum, equipment, faculty, budget).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-STUDY FORMAT</th>
<th>PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and Staff (source: program records and Office of Institutional Research)</td>
<td>Faculty and Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headcount and instructional contract/adjunct</td>
<td>Faculty and staff size, composition, qualifications, and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SELF-STUDY FORMAT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Admission standards or procedures (if applicable), including data on the number and percent of applicants accepted for each of the past five years. Student profile, including a demographic profile of majors/minors, number of student credit hours, student full-time equivalents, student/faculty ratios, majors, minors, and graduates per year for each of the past five years (summarize here and list in appendix in a table). Possible reasons for enrollment trends (need/demand for program).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Support</td>
<td>Sources and adequacy of funds which support the program (legislative, student fees, private donations, grants, applied technology education, etc). Adequacy of facilities and equipment. Adequacy of library resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Summary</td>
<td>Program summary</td>
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</table>

### PROGRAM REVIEW STANDARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>The program must recruit, attract, retain and graduate students consistent with its mission. The program must demonstrate an effort to achieve diversity in its student enrollment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Support</td>
<td>There must be evidence that funding resources are adequate to meet the mission and objectives of the program. B. Library, facility, equipment and other instructional resources must be adequate to meet the mission and objectives of the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Summary</td>
<td>Program summary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of previous review recommendations and action taken on the recommendations (include previous accreditation reviews, if applicable). Future directions for the program (five to seven years), including goals and activities, and resources needed to achieve goals. Note: the self-study ends at this point (except for appendices); the following material is provided at the conclusion of the site visit.

The program must be responsive to prior review processes. Program plans must reflect a careful analysis of the program mission, student learning outcomes, curriculum, teaching and learning efforts, academic advising, external community liaison, faculty, staff and students.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Program strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for change as reported during this review.

Note: this section is completed by the REVIEW TEAM.
- List program strengths.
- List program weaknesses.
- List review team recommendations for action.

PROGRAM response to the review team recommendations as well as other PROGRAM concerns.

Note: this section is completed by the PROGRAM.

Dean’s response to the PROGRAM response.

Note: this section is completed by the DEAN.

Institutional response and program recommendation (program satisfactory to be evaluated in next cycle, or progress report requested in one or two years)

Note: this section is recommended by the Provost, in consultation with the dean, the PROGRAM and the STANDING COMMITTEE, and reviewed by the University Board of Trustees.

APPENDICES

Review Team Resumes
External Community Liaison Mechanism
Student/Faculty Statistical Summary
Contract/Adjunct Faculty/Staff Profile

APPENDIX 2

External Community Liaison Mechanism
Name
Employer

APPENDIX 3

Department of _______________________

Student and Faculty Statistical Summary

(data provided by Institutional Research)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>20xx-xx</th>
<th>20xx-xx</th>
<th>20xx-xx</th>
<th>20xx-xx</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Credit Hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student FTE</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Majors</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Minors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Graduates</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Demographic Profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Demographic Profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjunct FTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract FTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total FTE</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student/Faculty Ratio</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**APPENDIX 4**

Department of ______________________

**Contract/Adjunct Faculty Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Tenure Status</th>
<th>Highest Degree</th>
<th>Yrs. of Teaching Universt/Other/Total</th>
<th>Areas of Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

**Contract Staff Profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Yrs. Employment Universt/Other/Total</th>
<th>Areas of Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>

Source: Academic Program Review Process
University B*  

* Due to followed confidentiality procedures, the actual name of the university is not revealed
### Information Basis of Academic Program Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Major Categories</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of the Program/Department</strong></td>
<td>Description of the academic unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programs Offered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mission and Goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Programs</strong></td>
<td>Program Objectives</td>
<td>Statement of objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program Structure</td>
<td>Relationship to existing institutional mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Strategic plan of the department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td>Desired Learning Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informational resources, facilities and equipment</td>
<td>Library resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community service related to program goals</td>
<td>Facilities and equipment</td>
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<td>Internal mechanisms for assessment</td>
<td>Needed additional facilities and equipment</td>
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<td>Future of the Program/Department</td>
<td>Correcting resources deficiencies</td>
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<td>Immediate and Long-range challenges</td>
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<td>Opportunities for development</td>
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<td>Alumni Relations</td>
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Literature


