Guidelines for Graduate Program Review at John Jay

Policy ID: **GS.006 – Self-Study Instrument for Academic Program Review**

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1. Overview

Academic program review (APR) is the process of regular, systematic review and evaluation of all graduate academic programs offered at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. All graduate academic programs are to be reviewed every 5 years.

The primary goal of an academic program review is to examine all aspects of the degree program in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses and develop a guide for the program's future. Program review is critical to John Jay's goal to promote and maintain academic excellence. Good program review should assess program quality and currency, improve student learning, reflect on the alignment of program goals and learning outcomes with the college's mission and strategic plan, and provide data and evidence to support institutional planning.

Academic program reviews are most effective when they engage multiple faculty teaching in the program, students in the program, and relevant administrators, from the development of the self-study, to the external evaluation, to the action steps agreed to by the Dean of Academic Programs and the program leadership.

2. Components of the Academic Program Review Process

The academic program review process has three major components:

I. Program Self-Study

> This is a comprehensive report addressing every aspect of the academic program. It should contain the program's mission and goals, and make recommendations for improvement and development based upon an overall analysis of the program. The self-study allows the program to tell its own story to the external review team and Academic Affairs leadership.

II. External Review

The external review team provides an objective outsider's perspective on the quality of the program. After reading the self-study and making a campus visit, the external review team will compile a report that provides an evaluation of the program.

III. Action Plan

The Dean of Academic Programs or their representative meets with the program leadership (Directors and/or Deputy Directors) to create the action plan. The action plan structures the implementation of the recommendations in the self-study and the external review report according to a reasonable timetable. There is a follow-up meeting 2 years after the development of the plan to review accomplishments.

3. Academic Program Review Timeline

Typically, the APR follows the timeline outlined below, but changes can be made based on program needs:

DATE	ACTION
Semester Before the Review	
March-May (one semester before scheduled APR)	The Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness contacts the program to discuss expectations and procedures for the following year's review. All programs in the review process attend the following sessions with: a. the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness and the Director of Outcomes Assessment to understand the purpose and expectations of the self-study. b. the Director of Outcomes Assessment to review the past five years of outcomes assessment for their program and to begin to shape the narrative of the self-study. The program begins updating webpage information (faculty profiles, course descriptions, etc.), if necessary. The program begins discussing their list of 5 external reviewer nominees they will be submitting to the Dean of Academic Programs.
March- August	The program plans and holds meeting(s) and/or retreat(s) to discuss and plan the self-study and external reviewer nominee list.
Review Year	

September 10	List of 5 nominees for the external review team due to the Dean of Academic Programs. (Lists submitted after this date, will negatively impact the ability to obtain a reviewer (or reviewers) from the program's list.)
October 15	First draft of the self-study due to the Dean of Academic Programs.
Early November	The Office of Academic Programs schedules a meeting with the director(s) to discuss the self-study and offer suggestions for revision.
Mid November	Self-study is revised
December 1	Final draft of the self-study is due to the Dean of Academic Programs on behalf of the Committee on Graduate Studies (CGS).
December	Program faculty present the self-study to CGS at its December meeting.
Mid-December – Early January	Program revises self-study in response to feedback from CGS.
Last January – February	Self-study is adopted by CGS.
March 1	The self-study is sent to the external review team.
March-April	The external review team visits the campus, usually for two days.
April – May	The Dean of Academic Programs receives the external reviewers' report within four weeks of the visit and forwards it to the program.
May-June	The program leaders and the Dean of Academic Programs meet to formulate an action plan that includes a timetable for implementation. The program may submit a separate response to the external reviewers' comments as part of the action plan.

	Program leaders meet with Academic Affairs Leadership to discuss the report's recommendations and the draft action plan.
	The action plan is due to the Dean of Academic Programs.
June 1	The action plan is sent to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and CUNY.
June 15	

4. Selection of External Reviewers

The role of the external reviewers is important in the program review process. Each program review includes a visit by at least two external reviewers. The external reviewers promote comparison with similar programs at other institutions, provide faculty and administrators a wider perspective, and ensure that the academic program under review is current and not isolated from the larger academic community.

Each program under review will be asked to nominate at least 5 candidates for the external review team. The nominees can have no conflicts of interest regarding the program under review (e.g., not a former employee, co-author, alumni, dissertation advisor, relative or close friend of current faculty member, etc.). In general, the external reviewers should:

- hold the terminal degree appropriate to the department/program under review, or in the case of professional programs, have a record of accomplishment in the field.
- have a record of distinguished scholarship and/or professional experience appropriate to the program under review.
- be recognized as an active member of scholarly and/or professional societies appropriate to the program under review.
- be currently employed at a recognized university or college at the rank of Associate Professor or higher.
- be responsive to John Jay's institutional and program mission.

At least one reviewer should:

- have current or prior experience at the level of program director or higher.
- have prior experience relevant to the accreditation process of your program (if such exists), assessment, and/or program review process.
- hold an appointment in a prestigious and nationally recognized program or a program that the department/program wishes to emulate.

The Dean shall inform the program of the composition of the external review team in writing. The Program Director may request a meeting, in writing, with the Dean within 10 days of receiving the Dean's notification, if the program wishes to discuss the external review team membership.

5. The Self-Study

The purpose of the self-study is to allow faculty, students and administration to consider not only a program's recent accomplishments and challenges but also to engage in a forward-looking planning process.

The self-study is a comprehensive written document prepared by a program that is scheduled for program review. A thorough and thoughtful self-study will be factual and explicit in assessing a program's past efforts and current status, and will outline a realistic course of action for future development. The self-study provides the basis for the entire review process so it is crucial that the report cover all aspects of the program. The most useful self-study is a thorough but succinct, honest assessment of the program. An incomplete self-study may lead to reviewers feeling confused about the program or lead to an unproductive site visit.

The self-study must be a product of a designated committee of the program faculty. Program faculty are in the best position to raise and respond to any significant strategic and operational issues being faced by the program and they are also in the best position to use the results of the review to improve the program. Program directors should ensure that there is full faculty participation in the preparation of the self-study. All full-time faculty members in the program should participate in the composition of the self-study. At a minimum they must attest that they have read the final self-study report.

In July of the year the program writes the self-study, the Office of Institutional Research will provide a data report for the self-study that includes the following:

- Number and ranks of faculty in the program over previous five years
- Full-Time Faculty Coverage of Courses in program
- Course pass rates for past three years
- Five-year trend of new student enrollment in program
- Five-year trend of enrollment in program
- Five-year trend in degrees awarded for program
- Five-year trend of student evaluation of program compared to John Jay average (from recent biennial reports)
- Average months to graduate by students in program compared to John Jay average

Additional data requests can be made by sending an email to OIR@jjay.cuny.edu with the subject line "data request." Include in your email, your name, program, description of the request and intended use of the data.

A program's self-study should address the following areas:

I. Overview of the Program

   A. Brief Introduction to the program and its history, including an overview of the curriculum and current enrollment.

B. Mission Fulfillment:
    1. What is the mission statement of the program?
    2. How does the program's mission relate to the College's mission and values?

II. Assessment and Evaluation

A. Summarize the responses to recommendations from the previous self-study and action plan that was developed as a result of the program review process. Describe all actions taken.
B. Student Learning:
    1. List the student learning outcomes of the program. Do these outcomes need revision?
    2.   Summarize the key findings and analysis of assessment results for the last five years (what the program has learned).
    3. Discuss specific changes have been made as the result of assessment findings, as well as specific changes that are currently in process. Please include implementation dates for changes that are currently in process.
    4. Discuss additional information or new assessment tools that should be considered and/or included in the program's next assessment plan.
C. Program Trends:
    a. Discuss the emerging changes in the discipline. What is being done and can be done to move forward and seize emerging/future opportunities?
    b. If relevant to the program, how do leaders within industry, business, government, or non-profit organizations become involved in offering advice and perspectives on the program and the curriculum?

D. Enrollment, Retention and Graduation:
    ● Describe and analyze the five-year enrollment, retention, and graduation patterns in the program.
    ● Examine and evaluate progress to degree metrics and comparison to peers.
    ● What efforts have been made to improve progress to degree performance and completion rates?
    ● Do students from educationally underrepresented groups (racial/ethnic minority, low-income, first generation in college) succeed in the program at rates comparable to other students? How are equity gaps addressed?
E. Trends in Graduate Outcomes:
    ● Describe trends in employment, further graduate, and professional education of students who have graduated from your program using the OIR data on post-graduation employment and your program's data on alumni if kept (some of this data can be found on the U.S. Census Bureau site: https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/pseo_explorer.html?type=earnings&compare=postgrad&specificity=4&state=36&institution=00269300&gradcohort=0000-3&filter=50&program=00&degreelevel=05)
    ● What is the range of student career outcomes? Are these outcomes consistent with program goals?
    ● What career resources are available to students?

III. Addressing Ethical and Current issues

A. How does the program address new and traditionally marginalized scholarship in the discipline?

B. How does the program incorporate the Seven Principles for a Culturally Responsive, Inclusive and Anti-Racist Curriculum?

C. How does the program address ethical or moral issues and questions?
D. How does the program prepare students with particular job skills or bodies of knowledge specified by the communities of practice related to the program?

IV. Internal Coherence and Structure of the Program

   A. What courses within the program, if any, appear to be outdated, and in need of revision, elimination, or replacement?
   B. Does the sequence of courses in the program prepare students for success at each level?
   C. Describe the opportunities for supervised internships and for student participation in faculty research.
   D. What type of experience is offered in the program to culminate the learning experience for students?

   E. Tracks or Specializations:
       1. If the program has tracks or specializations explain the rationale for having them.
       2. Provide enrollment data for each track or specialization.
       3. Does the program have sufficient full-time faculty to teach courses in all of the tracks or specializations? Is there sufficient enrollment in each track or specialization to support it?
   F. Compare the curriculum for this program with similar programs offered at other colleges both within and outside of CUNY. Are there ideas from other programs worthy of adoption?

V. Faculty

   A. Demographics
       a. How many faculty teach in the program and what are their ranks? Provide a table or pie chart.
       b. What percentage of faculty teaching in the program hold a Ph.D (or J.D. if relevant)?
       c. What is the percentage of full-time to part-time faculty coverage in the program?

   B. Teaching
       a. Are there any areas of expertise that are not sufficiently represented among the faculty of the program ?

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       b. What orientation do adjuncts receive and how are they oriented into the program?
       c. Are student assignments planned and reviewed systematically to support the alignment of curriculum and learning outcomes?
       d. Are there regular meetings of the faculty teaching in the program for the purpose of discussing and improving the program? If so, how often?
       e. How does the program assure that all classes have a quality syllabus which includes the areas specified in the College's *Guidelines for Model Syllabus?*

   C. Recruiting, Admissions, and Enrollment
       a. What is the optimal size of your program at John Jay?

b. What effort has the program made to enhance student diversity (traditionally underrepresented groups in the field)? Have those diversity efforts been successful?

D. Advisement:
1. What is done to advise students about the degree requirements of the program?
2. What is done to advise students about their academic progress?
3. What is done to advise students about careers for which this program serves as preparation? How does the program work with communities of practice to make the program relevant to the work world?
4. What strategies are employed to create a sense of community among program students (i.e. student clubs, external speakers, meetings, lounge, etc.).

D. Scholarship
1. Summarize scholarly achievements by all full-time faculty teaching in the program in the last five years, including publications, grants, and other contributions.
2. How do the research strengths of the faculty support the curriculum?

VI. Resources
a. Describe College resources (personnel, library, laboratories, equipment and supplies, facilities, etc.) necessary to support the program.
b. Discuss resource needs over the next 5 years.

VII. Summary, Recommendations, and Next Steps
a. Outline key findings from the self-study, including the primary program strengths and challenges.

b. Outline the program's priorities for improvement over the next five-year period (curriculum, student learning and assessment thereof, facilities, faculty recruitment and development, diversity goals, etc.)

IX. Appendices
a. Current Five Year Assessment Plan for student learning
b. Curriculum Map (for assessment of student learning)
c. Annual Assessment Reports of student learning for the previous five academic years
d. List of courses currently in the program including course descriptions and date the course was last taught
d. List of scholarly activities of all full-time faculty teaching in the program for the last five years
    i. Teaching and Other Primary Responsibilities
        -List all courses taught (indicate distance learning courses with an asterisk)
        -List other primary responsibilities
        -List new courses developed
        -List these supervised (include topic, name of student, and whether thesis has been completed
    ii. Intellectual/Professional Development
        -List publications/creative works performed or exhibited using APA format
        -List papers presented using APA format for proceedings or papers
        -List works in progress
        -List grant activity

6. External Reviewers Campus Visit

In the spring semester, the external review team will be on campus to assess the program. A successful external review team visit requires careful organization and management of time in order to ensure that the objectives of the review are met. Some flexibility in the schedule (for unanticipated events and meetings) is crucial as is time for the team to deliberate and begin drafting a report. It is important for programs to be aware of the tentative nature of the initial schedule and of the need for flexibility as the campus visit proceeds. Reviewers can, and often do, change the schedule after they arrive on campus.

The Offices of Academic Programs and Institutional Research will provide much of the information and data that the external reviewers will need to complete their task in addition to the program self-study. In general, the external reviewers will be informed of the role academic program review performs at John Jay College and the expectations we have of them as reviewers. However, reviewers have a right to expect:

- • the most current data.
- • timely access to a self-study that contains a comprehensive description of the program.
- • evidence that learning outcomes are being met.
- • a campus visit that gives them free access to any and all information necessary to writing an informed and useful report.

The Office of Academic Programs will handle all the logistical arrangements for the visit, including accommodations and transportation. Prior to the site visit, it is expected that the reviewers will have become familiar with the institution and the program based on the materials sent to them by the Dean of Academic Programs. They will have carefully read the self-study and developed some preliminary questions about the program based upon these materials.

The campus visit normally lasts 2 days. During their time on campus, the external reviewers will meet with all department faculty, some students and administrators, campus support services with direct relationships to the program including the library, inspect facilities and examine procedures, read on-campus documents and websites, and, if they wish, observe classes. External review teams can and do request meetings not originally scheduled and arranged. The program is expected to provide a program liaison/host for the duration of the site visit so that visitors know where to go and when.

The material in the self-study should provide the most essential information and meetings with reviewers should be devoted to highlighting selected issues and concerns that are relevant to an honest assessment of the program. Maximum involvement of key academic groups (faculty, students, lecturers, administrators, etc.) is therefore essential.

At the conclusion of the site visit, the external review team will share their preliminary findings with the Dean at an exit interview. Within four weeks, the external reviewers submit a report based upon the program self-study and the findings and observations made by the external review team during their campus visit. The report will assess the academic program's strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for improvement and development. An executive summary of the report will be written and this, along with the entire report, will be presented to the Dean of Academic Programs.

7. Action Plan

Once the external reviewers submit their report, it will be distributed to all full-time program faculty members and the program will have the opportunity to respond to the report's findings. The Dean and the program will then begin

formulating a plan of action for the future, which should include a new or revised five-year assessment plan tied to the program goals.

The action plan is a crucial step in the APR process. It is designed to respond to the findings of both the self-study and the external review report. The action plan indicates how the program plans to address the issues raised during the review process. The most important elements in the formulation of the action plan are:

> • Compiling recommendations resulting from the self-study and external reviewers report.

> • Identifying and outlining suggested strategies and ideas for responding to program goals and reviewer recommendations.

> • Prioritizing goals and recommendations.

> • Outlining a timeline for completion and implementation of each item.

> • Documenting all actions and providing written reports of progress as scheduled.

The final goal of academic program review is an action plan that not only records accomplishments but also acts as a guide for program revision and improvement.