



Academic Program Review (APR) Handbook

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT APR	2-5
APR PURPOSES	2
OVERVIEW OF APR PHASES, TIMELINE AND RESPONSIBILITIES	2
APR PHASES: PROCEDURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES	3-4
SELF-STUDY GUIDELINES	5-14
SELF-STUDY REPORT STRUCTURE AND FORMAT	5
SELF-STUDY GUIDE AND TEMPLATE	6-9
BACKGROUND, MISSION AND GOALS	6
STUDENTS	6
CURRICULUM AND CO-CURRICULUM	6-7
ASSESSMENT	7-8
PROGRAM FACULTY AND RESOURCES	8
CONCLUDING STATEMENT	8
SELF-STUDY APPENDIX	9
SELF-STUDY APPENDIX SAMPLES AND TEMPLATES	10-14
APPENDIX TEMPLATE 1 (ENROLLMENT, RETENTION AND GRADUATION)	10
APPENDIX TEMPLATE 2 (BULLETIN, CURRICULUM AND CURRICULUM MAP)	11
APPENDIX TEMPLATE 3 (ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT SNAPSHOT)	12
APPENDIX TEMPLATE 4 (FACULTY PROFILE)	13
APPENDIX TEMPLATE 5 (BUDGET)	14
APR TEMPLATES (FOR PHASES I, III & IV)	15-17
INITIATION FORM	15
EXTERNAL REVIEW: SAMPLE SITE VISIT SCHEDULE	16
ACTION PLAN	17

ABOUT APR

The Academic Program Review (APR) is a process in which an academic program/department performs a self-study on its status and effectiveness for the purpose of strengthening the program/department. The self-study is reviewed by the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) and then by an external peer reviewer whose task is to make further recommendations for improvement. APR at York College focuses mainly on 1) alignment of academic programs' **missions, goals, and student learning outcomes (SLOs)** with the college mission and strategic plans and 2) **assessment of those outcomes.**

The APR for each program is performed every five (5) years as determined by the appropriate School Dean and the Office of Academic Affairs. **The time between each APR report is meant for implementing recommendations and continuing program assessment.**

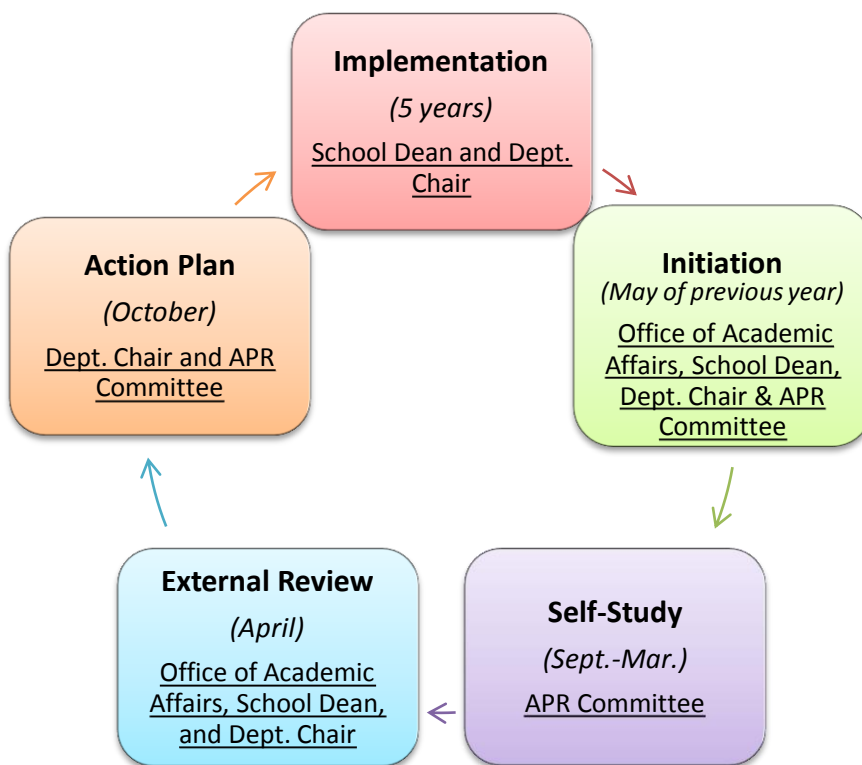
All full-time department faculty must participate in the APR.

APR PURPOSES

Purposes of the APR are to:

- Assess the quality/effectiveness of academic programs especially on student learning
- Stimulate program planning and improvement
- Promote fairness and efficiency in the allocation of academic resources
- Provide reference for the College's planning and budgeting
- Respond systematically and efficiently to requirements for self-assessment from accrediting agencies such as the Middle States

OVERVIEW OF APR PHASES, TIMELINE AND RESPONSIBILITIES



APR PHASES: PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- I. Initiation¹: The Planning Phase involves the Office of Academic Affairs, School Dean and the APR Committee. (*Begin in May of the previous year*)
 - a. The Office of Academic Affairs/School Dean will contact the department/program whose APR is coming due and discuss the schedule of completion.
 - b. An APR committee will be formed within the department.
 - c. The APR committee reviews the APR guidelines, creates a plan, and identifies potential external reviewers.
 - d. The APR committee submits the plan to the Office of Academic Affairs including: names of APR committee members, names of proposed external reviewers² and a timeline.
 - e. Lastly, the APR committee schedules a meeting with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning for consultation and guidance.

- II. Self-Study: The Examining Phase is led by the APR committee.
 - a. Include the following information: revised and updated mission statement aligned with the college mission, program goals with respective and measurable student learning outcomes (SLOs), curriculum mapping, measures (one direct and/or one indirect³), data collection and analysis. The data regarding SLOs should be collected each academic year so that they are ready for the APR; if a department/program has not done so, the data collection needs to be done before the end of the fall semester to ensure the completion of the APR in the spring semester.
 - b. Collect other relevant information.⁴
 - c. Write the self-study report – the first draft should be completed by the end of the fall semester.
 - d. Submit the self-study report to the Office of Academic Affairs/School Dean by February 1.

- III. External Review: The office of Academic Affairs/School Dean will review the self-study report and make necessary suggestions. The APR committee will further revise and resubmit the report in the defined time frame by the end of March.
 - a. The School Dean will approve the external reviewer.
 - b. The Chair will forward the self-study to the external reviewer at least ten (10) days prior to the visit; in the meantime, the copies will be sent to the Office of Academic Affairs, School Dean, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning as well.

¹ See Initiation Form Template on p. 15

² The individual who will serve as an external reviewer must be from a peer or aspiration institute, have scholarly standing in the discipline(s) under review, and have experience in assessment of student learning within the discipline(s).

³ Direct measure refers to students' work such as exams, papers, etc. and indirect measure refers to students' perception of their own learning, e.g. a graduate survey.

⁴ See details on p.6-9

- c. The School Dean will make decisions about honoraria. The School Dean along with the department chair will also handle scheduling, travel, and other arrangements for the site visit.
 - d. The external reviewer's site visit will be guided by the Office of Academic Affairs, School Dean and the department chair. The site visit⁵ includes a tour of the facilities and meetings with faculty, staff and students. It will be concluded with an exit meeting with the Office of Academic Affairs and School Dean.
 - e. The external reviewer will submit his/her report to the department chair no more than three (3) weeks following the campus visit.
- IV. Action Plan⁶: (October)
- a. Informed by the final report, the department under the self-study will identify areas for improvements, identify persons responsible for taking those steps, and decide timelines.
 - b. The Action Plan should address all the issues raised by the final report as well as by the external reviewer. It should also address significant changes that will take place. The recommendations from the department's APR committee should be included.
- V. Implementation: (5 years) Implementation of the action plan including any progress made each year should be documented in the department's annual report such that the APR becomes a living document.

⁵ See a site visit schedule template on p.16

⁶ See Action Plan Template on p.17

SELF-STUDY REPORT STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

STRUCTURE:

- Cover/Title page, include:
 - Department name and program names.
 - Dates (the period from last APR to current time)
 - College name and logo (York College, The City University of New York)
 - Date of completion

- Table of Contents page

- Content (*Note that the number of pages in the following parentheses is per program, not per department*)
 - Background, mission and goals (1-2 PAGES)
 - Student overview (1-2 PAGES)
 - Curriculum and co-curriculum (1-2 PAGES)
 - Assessment (2-3 PAGES)
 - Program faculty and resources (1-2 PAGES)
 - Concluding statement (1 PAGE)

- Appendix
 - Appendix 1(Enrollment, Retention & Graduation)
 - Appendix 2 (Bulletin, Curriculum & Curriculum Map)
 - Appendix 3 (Academic Assessment Snapshot)
 - Appendix 4 (Faculty Profile)
 - Appendix 5 (Budget)

HEADINGS AND SUB-HEADINGS

Report content should be organized into paragraphs, and where appropriate, use headings/sub-headings and bullets.

STYLE

Font size: The font size of body of the report should be 12 point and headings should be bold.

Font style: Times New Roman or Cambria with single space for main body and double space between headings.

SELF-STUDY GUIDE AND TEMPLATE

I. Background, Mission and Goals (Two pages maximum)

Background:

Briefly, describe the current status of the program including the implementation of the previous action plan as per the last APR. Indicate if any new programs, activities or concentrations were added. Discuss how the program has evolved over the years and/or adapted to recent changes in the field and in the college.

Mission:

State the program mission and explain how the mission fits into the overall mission of the college.

Goals:

State the program goals on *student learning* and explain how they are aligned with the program mission and the college strategic goals.

II. Students (One-two pages)

Student Overview:

In a narrative format, describe the general student population served by the program.

Enrollment/Retention/Graduation:

Provide data on enrollment, retention and graduation.⁷ Discuss analytically the five-year enrollment trend and degrees awarded by the program. Explain any major changes or significant downward or upward trends in enrollment and graduation. Comment on retention of students in the program (*please see a sample chart in the appendix section on p.10*).

III. Curriculum and Co-Curriculum (One-two pages)

Curriculum Purpose: Achieve the Program-level Student Learning Outcomes

State the student learning outcomes associated with the respective program goals in a summary format. Indicate how the program curriculum prepares students to achieve these outcomes upon the completion of the degree at the program level.

Curriculum Design and Curriculum Mapping:

Discuss the curriculum briefly. Identify core courses, requirements and capstone courses. *Provide bulletin link and/or a table in Appendix to show degree attainability within 120 credits (see a sample on p. 11).*

Demonstrate the alignment among the curriculum, program goals and student learning outcomes. *Provide a curriculum map in Appendix (see a sample on p.11).* Describe any gaps and needs to restructure course sequence/pre-requisites in order to improve student learning.

⁷ It is a program's discretion to include the tables on enrollment, retention and graduation in the body or in the appendix.

Co-Curriculum:

Describe other student learning experiences and opportunities such as internships, workshops, and senior paper/project that may not be listed in the bulletin. Explain how such experiences and opportunities fit the program goals/learning outcomes.

Curriculum Changes:

Describe any major curriculum changes that have recently been made. If gaps still exist in the curriculum design/mapping section, explain how the curriculum may be further revised in the very near future.

IV. Assessment (Two-three pages)

Assessment Overview:

In the five (5) years between the two APRs, each program is supposed to assess all of its main program goals. Provide a snapshot of assessment activities by the program for the last five years. Explain how assessment has become part of the regular activities of a program. *Provide reference in the appendix (see a sample on p.12).*

Assessment for Self-Study:

Introduce the assessment activities performed for the self-study, e.g. planning and delivery. The following suggestions serve only as general guidelines since each program may have different assessment plans, approaches and circumstances.

There are two major models for assessing student learning outcomes. The first model is to choose one program goal covered in major courses at different levels and collect data from those selected courses. For example, the chosen program goal to assess is “to develop students’ quantitative reasoning”, which are covered in XXX201 and XXX301. We develop three to four SLOs that measure “quantitative reasoning” and collect students’ work from these two courses to evaluate students’ performance on these SLOs. The purpose is to see how students perform on each SLO at different levels, whether the sequence of student learning is in place, and how students are making progresses to meet this particular program goal.

The second model is to assess different program goals across various major courses. For example, a capstone course covers all the program goals and we use students’ work in the course to assess more than one program goals. Consider the limited resource especially regarding the manpower, the first model is recommended as we can assess each goal throughout the period between the two APRs.

Once the program goals, SLOs and course(s) are decided, choose measures (a direct measure such as student paper, exam or portfolio; and/or an indirect measure such as student survey) that you think can best assess the chosen program goal and learning outcomes. Specify the sample size and data collection time period. Show how the data were analyzed and what the results indicate.

Another possibility is to choose the same program goal assessed earlier in the APR cycle and assess it again later in the cycle. The purpose is to collect new data on the same SLOs and test the validity of the changes implemented after the first assessment.

Assessment Action Plans (One-two paragraphs)

Based on the findings on student learning, identify any necessary changes in terms of the curriculum, pedagogy, resources and/or the assessment process itself. Changes for the curriculum may include rearrangement of course sequence, addition/withdrawal of courses, adjustment of certain course content, and others. Pedagogical changes may be related to teaching strategies, methods of identifying students' weaknesses in specific learning areas and of providing timely feedbacks to address those weaknesses, and adoption of new technology in education. The assessment strategies, which include assessment design, planning, measures, and revision of program goals and student learning outcomes, may need adjustments. Other changes identified as the results of the assessment may be related to resources, technology, and personnel. Include a timeline of when and how the action plans will be executed.

V. Program Faculty and Resources (One-two pages)

Faculty

Profile overview (One paragraph)

Indicate the current number of faculty for the program and whether any new lines were created in the last five years or are planned in the near future. Explain how teaching effectiveness has been assessed since the last APR and what steps were taken to improve student learning.

Faculty Scholarship/Research (One paragraph)

Indicate the number of faculty publications (articles, books, creative works, etc.), invited speeches and conference presentations over the last five years. Highlight any MAJOR research results and recipients of highly recognized awards/grants, and how the program/department supports these efforts. **Explain how these accomplishments improve student learning.** *Insert reference in Appendix (see a sample template on p. 13).*

Resources

Budget (One paragraph)

Describe, if any, significant changes, in terms of percentage, that have occurred in the budget allocation during the last five (5) years. Indicate if any specific area had a significant decrease. Explain how the budget was utilized in the last few years toward faculty development and improvement of student learning experience. *Insert reference in Appendix (see a sample template on p. 14).*

Other Resources: Technology, physical space, etc. (One paragraph)

Briefly indicate other resource changes since the last APR.

VI. Concluding Statement (One-two paragraphs)

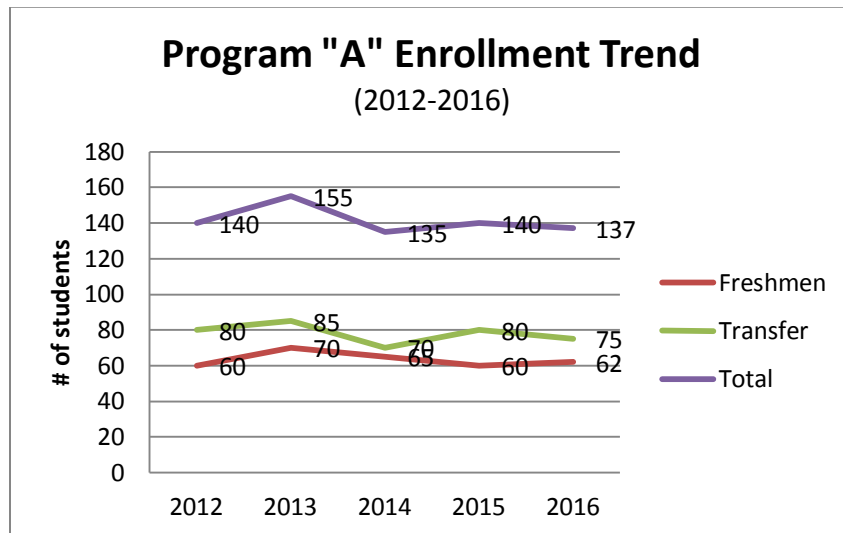
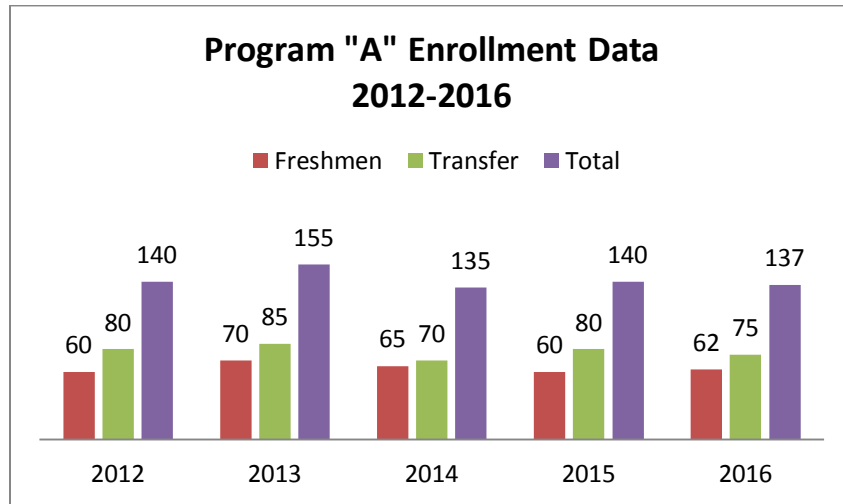
Provide an overall summary in a form of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis for the department and respective programs. Include any proposed plans/changes that specifically aim at improving student learning at program level.

VII. Self-Study Appendix

1. **Students: Enrollment, Retention and Graduation** (see a sample on p.10)
2. **Bulletin, Curriculum and Curriculum Map** (see a sample on p.11)
3. **Assessment Snapshot** (see a sample on p.12)
4. **Program Faculty and Resources:**
 - a. **Faculty** (see a sample on p.13)
 - b. **Budget** (see a sample on p.14)

Self-Study Report Appendix # 1: Enrollment, Retention & Graduation

Review the samples below to make a similar chart for Enrollment, Retention and Graduation



Self-Study Report Appendix # 2: Bulletin, Curriculum and Curriculum Map

Link to bulletin: <http://www.york.cuny.edu/produce-and-print/contents/bulletin>

Sample Curriculum (BA: English Major)

Course Category	Credits
Major Courses & Electives (39 credits)	
Required Foundation	9
Pre-Twentieth Literature	6
Methodology	3
Emphasis	9
Electives	6
Seminar	3
Global Writing	3
General Education (42 credits)	
Required Core	12
Flexible Common Core	18
College Option	12
Free Electives (39 credits)	
Total =120 credits	

Program Curriculum Map

Entire program curriculum should be mapped. Insert rows/columns as needed and use the appropriate scale determined by the program to designate which learning outcomes are covered in what course(s).

Use only one scale in the map. Possible scales to use: 1) Use of letter "X"; 2) "I=introduced, D=Demonstrated, M=Mastered"; 3) I=Introduced, R=Reinforced, E=Emphasized; or 4) B=Basic, I=Intermediate, A=Advanced

Fictitious Example:

Program Goals (PG) and Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)	Program: Economics (Learning opportunities: courses, seminars, internships, etc.)						
	Eco 101	Eco 102	Eco 200	Eco 300	Eco 420	Eco 430	Seminar 450
PG1: Students will advance <i>communication skills</i> necessary to succeed in obtaining professional employment and/or pursue graduate studies.							
PSLO 1.1: Students will be able to write proficiently using economic concepts, ideas and special economics vocabulary.		I		D	M		
PSLO 1.2: Students will be able to orally communicate economic concepts, ideas and proposals, to wide business audiences.	I		D		M		
PG 2:							
PSLO 2.1:							

(*Any required academic activities or learning experiences such as field work, internship, etc. can also be listed under the course column.)

Self-Study Report Appendix # 3: Academic Assessment Snapshot

Assessment year (AY)	Program Goals & Program Level Student Learning Outcomes	Data: Measures, course(s), sample size	Data Evaluation Tool and Expected level of achievement	Results and Interpretation of the results	Evidence on use of Results: Recommended Changes and Actual Changes made (if any)
AY 1:	PG1:	E.g. final exams, data from Eco 100, 300, 420, Sample =60, 20 from each course	E.g. Rubrics, 70% will perform at "capstone level of 4 in the rubric".		
	PSLO 1.1:				
	PSLO 1.2:				
	PG 2:				
	PG 2.1:				
AY 2:	PG 2.2:				
	PG2:				
	PSLO 2.1:				
	PSLO 2.2:				
	PG 3:				
AY 3:	PG 3.1:				
	PG 3.2:				
	PG4:				
	PSLO 4.1:::				
	PSLO 4.2:				
	PG 5:				
AY 4:	PG 5.1:				
	PG 5.2:				
	PG6:				
	PSLO 6.1:::				
	PSLO 6.2:				
AY 5:	PG 1:				
	PG 1.1:				
	PG 1.2:				
	PG2:				
	PSLO 2.1:				
AY 5:	PSLO 2.2:				
	PG 3:				
	PG 3.1:				
AY 5:	PG 3.2:				

Self-Study Report Appendix # 4: Faculty Profile

#	Faculty Name	Education (Highest Degree Earned/Year)	Date Hired	Rank	Tenure Status	Area of Expertise/ Concentration	Insert CV Link
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10							
11							
12.							
13.							
14.							
15.							

APR APPENDIX (Phase I, III & IV)

Academic Program Review Initiation Form (Phase I)

Submit to Office of Academic Affairs

APR Initiation Information:

Department Initiating Review	
Department Chair	
Program(s) Being Reviewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "A" • "B" • "C"
Date of Initiation	
Expected Date of Completion	
Expected Date of Site Visit	
Expected Date of Action Plan	

APR Department Faculty Committee:

Faculty Name	Rank	Program/Discipline

Proposed External Reviewers:

Name	Title	Current Place of Employment	Scholarly Area of Expertise/Concentration	Comments	Dean Approved

Approved by _____ Date _____

School Dean

Date Signed

External Review: Sample Site Visit Schedule (Phase III)

Time	Activity	Location
9:00	Breakfast Meeting with department chair	
10:00	Meeting with discipline coordinators/directors	
11:00	Tour of facilities and library	
11:30	Lunch break	
1:00	Meeting with students	
2:00	Meeting with faculty	
3:00	Review of course syllabi and student work	
4:30	Meeting with evening students	
5:30	Exit meeting with Provost and Dean	

Action Plan Template (Phase IV)

Overall Recommendations:

MAJOR AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT	Specific Areas for Improvements	Steps for Improvement	Person Responsible	Expected Date of Completion
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				
Choose an item.				