Guidelines for Undergraduate Program Review at John Jay

1. Overview

Academic program review is a process of regular, systematic review and evaluation of all undergraduate academic programs offered at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. All undergraduate 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 plans, 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 Undergraduate Studies 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 vision, 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 the university administration.

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 Undergraduate Studies meets with the program leadership (for department-based majors this includes the Chair of the Department and the Major Coordinator; for interdisciplinary majors this includes the Major Coordinator and other stakeholders in the major) 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 3 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
March-May (one semester before scheduled APR)	The Dean or Executive Academic Director contacts the program to discuss expectations and procedures for the following year's review. The department/program begins updating webpage information (faculty profiles, course descriptions, etc.), if necessary. The department begins discussing their list of 8 external reviewer nominees they will be submitting to the Dean.
March- August	The department/program plans and holds meeting(s) and/or retreat(s) to discuss and plan the self-study and external reviewer nominee list.
September 10 of the review year	This is the last day a program can submit a list of 5 nominees for the external review team to the Dean without negatively impacting the Dean's ability to obtain a reviewer (or reviewers) from the department's list.
October 15	The program submits a first draft of the self-study to the Executive Academic Director for UCASC approval. The subcommittee on program review reads the self-study and provides comments to the program within three weeks. The final draft is expected by December 1st. The self-study appears before UCASC in December and receives comments and suggestions before approval and adoption in January or February.
December 1	Final draft of self study based on feedback from UCASC subcommittee on program review due.
March 1	The program self study is due to external reviewers.
March-April	The external review team visits the campus,

	usually for two days.
May	The Dean's Office receives the external reviewers' report within four weeks of the external review and forwards it to the program.
May-June	The program meets with the Dean and Executive Academic Director to discuss the report's recommendations to develop an action plan. The program leaders and the Dean 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. The action plan is sent to the Senior Vice-Provost of Academic Affairs and CUNY.

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 departmental mission.

At least one reviewer should:

• have current or prior experience at the level of department chair 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 chair or director may request a meeting, in writing, with the Dean within 10 days of receiving the Dean's notification, if the department/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 department'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 department/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. Department chairs and 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 program over previous five years (for departmental-based majors)
- Full Time Faculty Coverage of Courses in Major by capstone, core, elective and prerequisite compared to John Jay average
- Course pass rates in capstone, core, and electives in major for past three years
- Five year trend of new student enrollment in major
- Five year trend of enrollment in major
- Five year trend in degrees awarded in major
- Five year trend of student evaluation of major compared to John Jay average (from recent biennial reports)
- Average months to graduate by students in program compared to John Jay averag

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

I. Overview of the Major

A. Brief Introduction to the Major, including inception and current enrollment
B. Mission Fulfillment:
1. What is the mission statement of the major?
2. How does the major's mission relate to the College's mission?

3. In brief, do your assessment findings indicate that the major is accomplishing its mission?
C. List the Learning outcomes for the major. Do these outcomes need revision?
D. Is your curriculum effectively fulfilling the learning outcomes of the major? Point to strengths and weaknesses in the last five years.
E. Describe how this major builds on the knowledge and skills learned by students in the College's general education requirements?
F. Research and Internship: describe the opportunities for supervised internships and for student participation in faculty research.

II. Assessment

A. Summarize the responses to recommendations from the previous self-study and program review. Describe all actions taken.
B. Student Learning
List the learning goals of the program and briefly summarize and analyze the key findings of assessment over the last five years. What specific changes have been made as the result of assessment? What specific changes are in process? When will these be implemented? What additional information or assessment tools should be considered in the assessment plan for the next self-study?
C. Enrollment, Retention and Graduation
Describe and analyze the five year enrollment, retention, and graduation patterns in the major.
D. Trends in Graduate Outcomes
a. Using the OIR data on post-graduation employment and your program's data on alumni (if kept), describe trends in employment, post-graduate, and professional education of students who have graduated from your major.

III. Addressing Ethical and Current issues

A. How does the major address recent developments and areas of new scholarship in the discipline? (i.e., the use of computerized databases in public management, the growing use of community policing, increased focus on cybercrime and terrorism, or the development of state constitutional law. Examples of new scholarship might include feminist and multi-cultural perspectives, sociological theories, or critical legal studies, etc.)
B. How does the major prepare students with particular job skills or bodies of knowledge specified by the communities of practice related to the major?
C. How does the major address issues of gender, race, and ethnicity?
D. How does the major address ethical or moral issues and questions?

IV. Internal Coherence and Structure of the Major

A. How does the program ensure consistency across courses offered in multiple sections?
B. What courses within the major, if any, appear to be outdated, and in need of revision, elimination, or replacement?
C. Provide average enrollment data for students in the major in each course listed as part of the major for the last four years. Considering these data, are courses offered frequently enough and in enough sections for students to meet major requirements?
D. Are there courses in the major that have not been taught in the past 3 years? (Consider all courses, even those offered by other departments).
E. Sequencing

1. Does the sequence of courses in the major prepare students for success at each level?
2. How does the capstone or senior seminar culminate the learning experience for students in the major?

F. Tracks or Concentrations:
1. If the major has tracks or concentrations explain the rationale for having them.
2. Provide enrollment data for each track or concentration.

G. Compare the curriculum for this major with similar majors 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 major and what are their ranks? Provide a table or pie chart.
b. What is the percentage of full-time to part-time faculty coverage in the major?

B. Teaching
a. Are there any areas of expertise that are not sufficiently represented among the faculty of the major?
b. How are teaching assignments in the major made?
c. What does the department/program do to help faculty improve student learning?
d. Are classroom assignments planned and reviewed systematically to support the alignment of curriculum and learning goals?
e. What percentage of faculty teaching in the major participate in outcomes assessment each year?
f. How does the major assure that all classes have a quality syllabus which includes the areas specified in the College's *Guidelines for Model Syllabus?*
g. How does the major assure that course content adheres to official course descriptions listed in the *Undergraduate Bulletin*?

C. Advisement:
1. What is done to advise students about the course requirements of the major?
2. What percentage of sophomores between 30-50 credits in your program have you advised on a per semester basis?
3. What is done to advise students about careers for which this major serves as a preparation? How does the department work with communities of practice to make the major relevant to the work world?
4. What is done to advise students about graduate and professional school admissions?
5. What strategies are employed to create a sense of community among majors (i.e. student clubs, external speakers, meetings, lounge, etc.).
6. How does the faculty communicate with majors as a group?

D. Scholarship
1. Summarize scholarly achievements by all faculty teaching in the major 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, equipment and supplies, facilities, etc.) necessary to support the major.
b. Discuss the Library and other relevant resources such as computer facilities and laboratories.

      c.   Describe the adequacy of current resources and discuss resource needs over the next 5 years.

VII.   Summary and Recommendations
      a.   Outline key findings from the self study, including the primary program strengths and challenges, and priorities the program has identified for improvement.

VIII.   Next Program Planning and Assessment Cycle:

      a. Outline the program's plans for improvement over the next five year period (curriculum, research, facilities, faculty recruitment and development, diversity goals, etc.)
      b.   Which improvements are possible by reallocating existing resources and which can only be addressed through additional resources?

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 departments/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 Undergraduate Studies and Institutional Review will provide much of the information and data that the external reviewers will need to complete their task in addition to the department 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 Undergraduate Studies will handle all the logistical arrangements for the visit, including accommodation and transport. Prior to the site visit, it is expected that the reviewers will have become familiar with the institution and the department/program based on materials sent to them by the Dean. They will have carefully read the self-study. They will have developed some preliminary questions about the department/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 department 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 department. 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 department 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 will be presented to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

7. Action Plan

Once the external reviewers submit their report, it will be distributed to all full-time program faculty members and the department 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 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 department 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 recommendation.

• Prioritizing goals and recommendations.

• Identifying and listing needed resources to support the action plan, clearly differentiating between what can be accomplished by redistributing existing resources and what requires new resources.

• Outlining a time-line 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.