



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
Office of Planning, Assessment and Research

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW:
Assessment Standards

Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs
Standards for Internal Academic Program Review for
Schools, Departments, and Programs

PURPOSE

The purpose of these standards is to promote and maintain educational quality at Clark Atlanta University. The review process is initiated by the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs through the Provost based on a scheduled time-table. The review is designed to provide schools, departments, and programs with an understanding of each program's strengths and weaknesses. It will ensure that each academic unit will: 1) be accountable for the quality of their programs; 2) make budget decisions based on priorities; 3) ensure that programs are accountable to students; and 4) improve programmatic areas and bring about desired changes based upon an agreed upon timetable. These Core Requirements (CR) and Comprehensive Standards (CS) were identified from those currently approved as Principles of Accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools 2007.

PART I:

There are ten primary areas of review for each department. The areas of review are:

- [Standard 1.0 Program mission, goal, and objectives](#)
- [Standard 2.0 Organization, governance, resources](#)
- [Standard 3.0 Faculty](#)
- [Standard 4.0 Strategic Plan/Annual Review](#)
- [Standard 5.0 Curriculum \(includes Student Learning Outcome\)](#)
- [Standard 6.0 Student Services](#)
- [Standard 7.0 Support Staff](#)
- [Standard 8.0 Support Services and Facilities](#)
- [Standard 9.0 Off-campus programs](#)
- [Standard 10.0 Distance Learning](#)

PART II

[Analysis of the Academic Program's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats](#)

PART III

[Final Recommendations for Improvement Based on Findings of the Self-Study Report](#)

Academic Program Assessment Standards

Standard 1: Program Mission, Goals and Objectives/Learning Outcomes - The program should have a mission that is current and comprehensive. It must provide an educational philosophy that links the program to the University's mission. The program mission should clearly distinguish it from all other programs as a unique entity. It defines and justifies the program's purpose and function, identifies stakeholders, and gives meaning to all aspects of the program. Program goals are intended general outcomes of the program. A learning outcome is a statement of one of several specific performances, the achievement of which contributes to the attainment of the goal.

Criteria for Success:

1a. Program Mission

The department should have a current and comprehensive mission statement that includes the educational philosophy of the department.

The program mission should clearly distinguish it from all other program as a unique entity.

The mission statement should identify the program's purpose, function, and stakeholders.

The program mission statement should support the University's mission statement.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

1b. Program Goals and Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes must clearly articulate what students should know, think, or do upon completion of the academic program.

The program must identify expected outcomes; assess whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.

The program must use suitable indicators to evaluate appropriate and sufficient achievement of program outcomes.

Documentation: Catalog, Website, and Course Syllabi

Standard 2: Organization, Governance, and Resources - The program should have practices and policies that assign faculty the rights and responsibilities necessary to achieve high quality

academic education. It also should established governance and administrative structure that dictates authority and responsibility for decision making in goal setting, program planning, goal achievement, evaluation process for faculty and staff (including guidelines used for tenure and promotion decisions). Recognizing the wide variations in structure that exist as CAU, the intent of this guideline is to achieve an appropriate focus of accountability for the program. Within the organizational structure, the administration and faculty should exercise substantial influence with respect to:

- general program policy and planning degree requirements
- new courses and curriculum changes
- admissions
- certification of degree candidates
- course scheduling and teaching assignment
- appointment, promotion and tenure of program faculty

Criteria for Success:

2a. Organization

The program must have practices and policies that assign faculty the rights and responsibilities necessary to achieve a high quality academic/professional education.

The academic unit should describe the particular organizational structure that exists.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook

2b. Governance

The program must have established governance and administrative structure that dictates authority and responsibility for decision making in goal setting, program planning, goal achievement, evaluation process for faculty and staff (including guidelines used for tenure and promotion decisions).

Within the framework of the University's organization, responsibility for the academic/professional program should rest with the faculty and an administrator within a school or department who have the responsibility of conducting the program effectively.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook

2c. Resources

The school, department, or program must have financial resources sufficient to support its stated goals and objectives/learning outcomes.

Documentation: Budget Procedures, Departmental Budgets and Faculty Handbook

Standard 3: Faculty - The program must have adequate full-time faculty in number, qualifications, competence, and range of expertise to achieve its stated goals. The core full-time faculty should consist of sufficient number faculty members who are significantly involved with the program to support the teaching, research, and service responsibilities appropriate to size and structure of the program. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, a program should give primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. For each major in a degree program, the program should place primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of its curriculum with its faculty. The program considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the program is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty. Faculty quality should be addressed through demonstrated productivity in:

- efforts to improve the instructional program, including students advisement, teaching methods, course content and innovative curricula development;
- Research/Scholarship: research, writing, and publications;
- Service to the University, school, department, program; program committees; special assigned or volunteer projects; public service with government, nonprofit agencies or consulting assignments, and other supporting activities.

Criteria for Success:

3a. The program should employ competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the program.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, and Faculty Human Resources Files

3b. Graduate and undergraduate faculty must have the experience, educational background, and other credentials necessary to offer primary responsibility for quality teaching and program development for the program.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, and Faculty Human Resources Files

3c. The program must regularly evaluate the effectiveness of each faculty member in accordance with published criteria, regardless of contractual or tenured status.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, and Faculty Evaluations

- 3d.** The program should provide evidence of ongoing professional development of faculty as teachers, scholars, and practitioners.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, Departmental Budget, Faculty Evaluations, and Center for Excellence in Teaching Course Rosters

- 3e.** The program must demonstrate that each educational program for which academic credit is awarded is:

(a) Approved by the faculty and the administration

(b) Establish and evaluate the program learning outcomes.

Documentation: Faculty handbook, Academic Council Minutes, Other Academic Committee Minutes, and Program Reviews and/or Proposals

- 3f.** The program must specify how each faculty member is involved in teaching, related research and service.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, and Banner

- 3g.** Faculty workload must allow faculty members to carry out other responsibilities including: pedagogy practices, student advisement, evaluation of student performance, thesis/dissertation advisement, administrative tasks, engagement in research, publication, and other scholarly production, professional development; community obligations related to the purposes of the school, department, program, and participation in professional organizations.

Documentation: Faculty Evaluations, Course Schedules, and Teaching Loads/Faculty Utilization Ratio

- 3h.** There should be evidence that specific plans are being implemented to assure faculty diversity with respect to race, culture, age, gender, religion, persons with disabilities. Plans to ensure ongoing diversity must be current.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook

Standard 4: Strategic Plan/Annual Review- The program must have both a strategic plan and an annual review report.

Criteria for Success:

- 4a.** The program must have a strategic plan that relates to the University's strategic plan and that shows current goals and priorities in instruction, research, and service.

- 4b.** The program goals must be evaluated annually to determine progress made in the evaluation process and is properly documented.

Documentation: Annual Assessment of Strategic Plan, and Strategic/Academic Program Annual Plans for respective school

Standard 5: Curriculum – The curriculum must be developed and organized as a coherent and integrated whole that evidences horizontal and vertical integration. This should include consistency throughout a student’s matriculation through the program, across and within departmental school lines and sequentially from year to year. The curriculum should show evidence of a logical rationale for requisite course work within each school and department. The curriculum framework should specify the knowledge and skills to be acquired with related goals linked to general instructional processes and assessment techniques.

Criteria for Success:

- 5a.** The methods of instruction must be clearly explicated and relative to the learning domains (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) to determine the skills, abilities, knowledge, or values that students should be able to do or demonstrate as a result of the course or program instruction.

Documentation: Course Syllabi

- 5b.** The program’s continuing education, outreach, and services must be consistent with the program’s mission.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, and Student Handbook

- 5c.** The program must ensure the quality of educational programs/courses offered through consortial relationships of contractual agreements, ensures ongoing compliance with the comprehensive requirements, and evaluates the consortial relationship and/or agreement against the purpose of the institution.

Documentation: Assessment Plan, Contractual Agreements, and Relationship Agreements

- 5d.** The program must define and publish general education requirements for its undergraduate and major requirements for all its programs. These requirements conform to commonly accepted standards and practices for degree programs.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 5e.** The school, department, or program must identify college-level competencies with the general education core and provides evidence that graduates have attained those

competencies. (Only for the general education core courses that are taught by the specific program.)

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 5f.** The program post-baccalaureate professional degree programs, and its master's and doctoral degree programs, should be progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs.

Documentation: Catalog, Website, and Course Description

- 5g.** The program should ensure that its graduate instruction and resources foster independent learning, enabling the graduate to contribute to a profession or field of study.

Documentation: Course Descriptions, and Course Syllabi

- 5h.** When evaluating success with respect to student achievement in relation to the program's mission, the program should include, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.

Documentation: Survey –Career Planning & Placement, Student Evaluations, and Course Enrollment and Course Completion Statistics

- 5i.** The program must maintain a curriculum that is directly, related, and appropriate to its purpose and goals and to diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 5j.** The program should demonstrate that the program length is appropriate for each of the degrees offered.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 5k.** Where there are specializations or concentrations, objectives and a rationale for these specializations or concentrations should be spelled out.

- The program must explain how the curriculum is designed to achieve the objectives set forth for the specialization or concentration.
- There should be evidence that the key courses for the specialization or concentration are offered on a regular basis by qualified faculty.
- Specialization and concentration courses shall not be substitutes for the common curriculum components.

Documentation: Catalog, Website, and Course Schedule

5l. When there is a field practicum, internship or other experiential activity (whether required or optional), the program must provide clearly designed standards for all students.

- The program must provide standards for the selection of practicum/internship sites, clearly defined expectations for field sites and supervisory credentials, with specific descriptions of the roles of the school, department or program personnel and students to ensure quality.
- There must also be clearly defined evaluative instruments for assessing student progress, the field site, and field supervisors.

Documentation: Catalog, and Student Evaluation

5m. Assessment of student learning outcomes should be conducted as a part of the academics review process.

This assessment should identify what students should know (cognition), think (attitude), and be able to do upon completion of the program, as well as the general education curriculum.

Documentation: Academic Program Reviews, Annual Assessment Plans, and Student Evaluations

Standard 6: Student Services - The program must have clearly articulated policies regarding student admissions, advising, evaluation of academic performance, and students' rights and responsibilities to secretarial, clerical and administrative personnel that are adequate to meet the program goals and objectives.

Criteria for Success:

6a. The program must use technology to enhance student learning and ensure that students have access to and training in the use of the required technology.

Documentation: Student handbook, student satisfaction surveys (technology), course descriptions, and program course outline

6b. The school, department, or program must clearly articulate and make compulsory the requirements and processes of student admission to the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Admission policy and standards, including academic requirements, GPA, standardized tests and scores, should be clearly and publicly stated in catalogues, brochures,

handbooks, university/school/department/program web page, and other official documents.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 6c.** There must be written policies and procedures concerning transfer credit and the use of proficiency examinations.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 6d.** There must be written policies and procedures concerning withdrawal, leaves of absences, and sick leaves, as well as policies regarding re-entrance to a school, department or program.

Documentation: Catalog, and Website

- 6e.** There must be policies and procedures regarding students' rights and responsibilities.

Documentation: Student Handbook, and Catalog

- 6f.** The school, department, or program must provide opportunities for and encourage students to organize in their interests as students.

Documentation: Student Handbook

- 6g.** The school, department, or program must have clear criteria for evaluating students' academic and field performance, to include procedures for terminating a student's environment in a particular school, program or department.

These documents may be University-wide publications but must be available to students and other interested parties.

Documentation: Catalog, Student Handbook, and Course Syllabi

- 6h.** There must be evidence of strong and continuous program advisement for all students from the joint of admission through graduation.

Documentation: Policy Regarding Student Advising, Student Handbook, Student Advising Records

Standard 7: Support Staff- The school, department, or program should have support staff to assist in the functions of the unit.

Criteria for Success:

- 7a.** The school, department, or program must be able to verify that it has secretarial, clerical, and administrative personnel that are adequate to meet the program goals and objectives.

Documentation: Departmental Organizational Charts, and Departmental Budgets

Standard 8: Support Services and Facilities - The school, department, or program must have library, technological, and physical resources that are adequate to meet the program goals and objectives.

Criteria for Success

- 8a.** Library facilities and services must be adequate for undergraduate and graduate programs and students and faculty must have reasonable access to the library facilities.

- The library acquisitions must be adequate for student and faculty learning, teaching, and research.

Documentation: Student Satisfaction Surveys (Library), Course Syllabi

- 8b.** There must be adequate number classrooms for the courses offered, and faculty offices should be appropriate for course preparation, student advisement, and other faculty responsibilities.

Documentation: Classroom Assignments, Physical Inspection

- 8c.** Program faculty and students should have access to appropriate equipment for coursework and research, including computer facilities, visual and devices, audio and videotapes, and films.

Documentation: Space Allocation, Physical Inspection, Departmental Budget

Standard 9: Off-Campus Programs - Off-campus programs are defined as ones which are located within a substantial geographic distance from main campus, and at which the student can complete at least two-thirds of the degree program. These programs require special planning and control to ensure that they are offered with the same quality standards that are maintained at the main campus.

Criteria for Success:

- 9a.** Authorization for off-campus programs must be obtained through the appropriate University structure and accrediting body as warranted, needed, required, etc.

Documentation: Evidence of Authorization from Appropriate Accreditation Body

- 9b.** The full-time faculty of the parent program must be continuously involved in and committed to the off-campus program.

This involvement must be spelled out with respect to planning, teaching, advising, admissions and other elements of the academic department.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, Faculty Evaluations

- 9c.** The curriculum requirements, admission practices, student advisement, and qualifications of faculty must be equivalent to the main program.

Documentation: Catalog, Faculty Human Resources Files, Student Advisement Records

- 9d.** Students in off-campus programs should have reasonable access to a library collection that is appropriate for the students' level of study, computer facilities and other appropriate academic support services.

Documentation: Interlibrary Agreements, Online Library Resources, Library Handbook

- 9e.** The main campus program and the off-campus programs must demonstrate equivalent quality.

Documentation: Student Evaluations, Student Satisfaction Surveys, Faculty Feedback, Faculty Evaluations and Physical Inspections

Standard 10: Distance Learning Courses

Criteria for Success:

- 10a.** Authorization for off-campus programs must be obtained through the appropriate University structure and accrediting body as warranted, needed, required, etc.

Documentation: Evidence of Authorization from Appropriate Accreditation Body

- 10b.** The full-time faculty of the parent program must be continuously involved in and committed to the off-campus program.

This involvement must be spelled out with respect to planning, teaching, advising, admissions and other elements of the academic department.

Documentation: Faculty Handbook, Faculty Evaluations

10c. The curriculum requirements, admission practices, student advisement, and qualifications of faculty must be equivalent to the main program.

Documentation: Catalog, Faculty Human Resources Files, Student Advisement Records

10d. Students in off-campus programs should have reasonable access to a library collection that is appropriate for the students' level of study, computer facilities and other appropriate academic support services.

Documentation: Interlibrary Agreements, Online Library Resources, Library Handbook

10e. The main campus program and the off-campus programs must demonstrate equivalent quality.

Documentation: Student Evaluations, Student Satisfaction Surveys, Faculty Feedback, Faculty Evaluations and Physical Inspections

Part II: Analysis of the Academic Program's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

Criteria for Success:

The program's SWOT analysis must provide explanation of the strengths and opportunities of the program and a detailed description of how the weaknesses and threats are addressed.

Documentation: SWOT analysis

Part III: Final Recommendations for Improvement Based on Findings of the Self-Study

Criteria for Success:

The academic program must provide a written evaluation, and Self-Study Report addressing recommendations of priorities for improvement.

Documentation: Self-Study Reports