

# Transformative Approaches to Data-Informed Academic Program Review: Strategies for Transparency, Accountability, and Collaboration

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# Session Abstract


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This presentation describes a data-driven approach to Academic Program Review, emphasizing transparency, accountability, communication, and collaboration. A case study from a regional comprehensive university illustrates collaborative efforts among Academic Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness and Research, and Student Success. Key themes include gathering authentic stakeholder input, integrating Academic Program Review with institutional processes, aligning with student success metrics, and fostering cross-institutional collaborations. Strategies for garnering support, enhancing decision-making, and promoting improvement are discussed. Attendees will gain insights into navigating challenges, leveraging data, and fostering a culture of collaboration to ensure Academic Program Review contributes effectively to institutional effectiveness and student success.

# Agenda and Session Outcomes

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1. Describe ways to garner authentic input from stakeholders and participants throughout institutional units and techniques for utilizing feedback to generate buy-in and support for the Academic Program Review process.
2. Understand the components of an adaptive, data-informed academic program review process that exemplifies the institution's student success metrics and values.
3. Consider approaches to concretizing collaborations across institutional areas to support academic program review, including academic leaders participating in academic program review.
4. Examine mechanisms for integrating academic program review with other institutional processes, including academic program assessment, general education assessment, faculty hiring processes, and budgeting.

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What is your role in Academic Program Review?

What are some of the challenges you have encountered when implementing Academic Program Review? How did you address these challenges?


# The Purpose of Academic Program Review

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- Adaptive, data-informed approach to ensure continuous improvement and vitality of academic programs
- Connection point between faculty, administrators, and institutional officers
- Conduit for institutional reporting to external entities
  - Kentucky Council for Postsecondary Education
  - HLC, SACSCOC (> 20 standards), etc.
- Transparency, accountability, communication, collaboration

# Communication

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How do you currently gather input during the Academic Program Review process at your institution?

What challenges or successes have you encountered in fostering authentic engagement?

What strategies have worked well for building buy-in and support from faculty, administrators, and other stakeholders for program review efforts?

# Gathering Input

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- Review of good practices
- Email suggestions
- One-on-one meetings
- Provost-sponsored workshop
  - Deans, Associate Deans, Chairs, governance representatives
  - Present concrete concepts for dialogue




# Fostering Transparency

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- Communication and feedback channels created multiple avenues for constituents to provide feedback
- Each group brought unique insights and perspectives valuable for informing the Academic Program Review process
- Leaders articulated the review process's objectives, scope, and timeline
  - Establish expectations
  - Encourage commitment

# Accountability

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How does your institution use data to inform the Academic Program Review process?

What kinds of data do you find most useful for aligning APR with student success metrics?

What challenges have you faced in collecting or using data for program review?

# Student Success Metrics

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- Adaptive and data-informed process that aligns with an institution's student success metrics and values
- Methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data
  - Three-year “lookback” enrollment window
  - 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> degree or credential (may not align with other institutional data sources)
- Metrics capture diverse dimensions of student success, including academic achievement, retention, graduation rates

# Student Success Metrics

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Enrollment

Enrollment Trend (4%)

Degrees Awarded

Degrees Awarded Trend (1%)

Ratio of Degrees to Enrollment

<b>Minimum Program Standards</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Enrollment Trend</b>	<b>Degrees Awarded</b>	<b>Degrees Awarded Trend</b>	<b>Ratio of Degrees to Enrollment</b>
UG OnCampus	25	4%	7	1%	25%
UG Online	40	4%	10	1%	25%
GR OnCampus	20	4%	7	1%	39%
GR Online	40	4%	15	1%	39%
Certificates	10	4%	3	1%	30%

# Student Success Metrics- Dashboard

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Institutional Effectiveness & Research

A-Z Index

## Program Review 2024-2025

Program Title	Degree Designation	Review Type	↓ Metrics To...	College	Program ID
Paralegal Science	UCERT2	Expedited Review	4	Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences	1546
Autism Spectrum Disorders	GCERT1	Expedited Review	4	Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences	1553
Intelligence Studies	UCERT6	Streamlined Review	3	Justice, Safety, and Military Science	14061
Veterans Studies	UCERT6	Streamlined Review	3	Justice, Safety, and Military Science	15246
Applied Behavior Analysis	GCERT2	Streamlined Review	3	Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences	14985
Correctional Intervention Strategies	UCERT6	Streamlined Review	3	Justice, Safety, and Military Science	10640
Security Management	UCERT6	Streamlined Review	3	Justice, Safety, and Military Science	10641
Social Work	MSW	Expedited Review	3	Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences	14993
Mental Health	GCERT1	Streamlined Review	3	Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences	15231
Geographic Information Systems	UCERT6	Streamlined Review	3	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	10277

# Branched Pathways

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- Three paths for Academic Program Review based on student success metrics:
  - Expedited: Total of 4 or 5
  - Streamlined: Total of 2 or 3
  - Full: Total of 0 or 1

# Expedited Review (Total of 4 or 5)

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- Continued Excellence (score of 4 or 5)
  - Describe efforts to sustain the program's current level of excellence. (1 page)
- Strategic Growth Plan (score of 4)
  - Summarize the program's strategic growth plan for the metrics with scores below 5. (1 page)



# Streamlined Review (Total of 2 or 3)

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- Mission and Strategic Plan
  - Describe how the program, program students, and faculty fulfill and reflect the Mission, Strategic Goals, and/or Values. (1 page)
- Student learning
  - Present three exemplary examples of program improvements based on the analysis of results and the effects of improvements on the program (assessment integration). (1-2 pages)
- Student success metrics
  - Summarize and discuss the data trends displayed in the program review metrics dashboard. (1 page)
- Strategic growth plan
  - Summarize the strategic growth plan for improving the program's enrollment and degrees awarded. (1-2 pages)


# Full Review (Total of 0 or 1)

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- Pre-meeting
- Mission and Strategic Plan
  - Describe how the program, program students, and faculty fulfill and reflect the Mission, Strategic Goals, and/or Values. (1 page)
- Student learning
  - Present three exemplary examples of program improvements based on the analysis of results and the effects of improvements on the program (assessment integration). (1-2 pages)
- Student success metrics
  - Summarize and discuss the trends displayed in the program review student success metrics dashboard. (1 page)
- Strategic growth plan
  - Describe the strategic growth plan for improving the program's student success metrics. (1 page for each metric, 5 pages total)
- Discuss, in detail, the additional items required from the pre-meeting.
  - These items may include cost analysis, external/market factors, internal pressures, etc.

# Collaboration

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What collaborations have been most effective in supporting your institution's Academic Program Review?

Where do you see opportunities for stronger partnerships?

How can institutions foster better communication and collaboration between departments, assessment offices, and leadership teams during the Academic Program Review process?

# Faculty Professional Development Series

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- Establishes a community focused on program excellence
- Increases communication, participation, and support during the program review process.
- Open to Department Chairs, Program Coordinators, and/or others associated with the programs under review during the current academic year.
- Seven Sessions Offered in Fall
  - Introduction/Overview (2)
  - Certificates (1)
  - Expedited and Streamlined (1)
  - Full Review (3)

# Creating a Loop

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- Communicate academic programs and metric totals
  - Faculty Senate
  - Board of Regents
  - President and President's Cabinet
  - Deans and Chairs
- Pre-Meetings (Full Review)
- Program Review Self-Study Reports
- Closing Meetings
- Follow-up memo with previous year's cohort recommendations
- Mid-cycle follow-up letters, college-level

# Academic Program Review Recommendations

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- Continue without modifications
- Continue with modifications
- Continue with conditions and monitoring
  - A recommendation that establishes conditions for continuance, such as target enrollments.
- Close within 1-3 years

# Recommendation and Review Process


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- Department Chair
- College Committee (provides recommendations on Full Reviews)
- College Dean
- Faculty Senate Academic Quality Committee for programs recommended to “Close within 1-3 years” and “Continue with conditions and monitoring”
- University Committee, consisting of the Provost (ex officio, non-voting), Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, VP SSEO, Executive Director for IE&R, Faculty Senate Designee, Chair’s Council Designee
- Provost



# Transparency

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In what ways does your institution currently integrate Academic Program Review with other processes like academic assessment, faculty hiring, or budgeting? How might these processes be better aligned?

What barriers have you faced in connecting Academic Program Review with other institutional functions, and how have you worked to overcome them?


# Connections


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- Leverage the connections between academic program review and other critical institutional functions
  - academic program assessment
  - General Education assessment
  - CIP and SOC code review and maintenance
- Ensure coherence, efficiency, and effectiveness in institutional decision-making and resource allocation
  - Budget allocation, resources allocation
- Emphasize leveraging data and evidence from various institutional processes to inform Academic Program Review and enhance evidence-based decision-making

# Summary and Conclusions

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- In today's higher education environment, academic programs must be continually evaluated for accountability, transparency, and student success.
  - This session emphasized a collaborative, data-driven approach to Academic Program Review that integrates with institutional processes and aligns with institutional goals.
  - By fostering engagement and leveraging institutional synergies, Academic Program Review can drive continuous improvement and enhance program relevance and quality.
  - Aligning APR with academic assessment, faculty processes, and budgeting can help institutions build adaptive, responsive programs that promote institutional effectiveness and student success.
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After hearing the case study, how might your institution implement similar collaborative strategies between Academic Affairs, Institutional Effectiveness, and Student Success to strengthen the Academic Program Review process?

What takeaways from this case study could be applied to improve your institution's approach to Academic Program Review?

# For more information

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- Easter Kentucky University Academic Program Review Website:
  - <https://oie.eku.edu/eku-program-review>
- Bethany Miller (Bethany.miller@eku.edu)
- Jennifer Wies (jennifer.wies@eku.edu)

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