Policy Title:	Program Review

Policy No:	5001	Approval date: February 5, 2014
Approval Body:	Academic Council	
Effective Date:	February 5, 2014	Review Date: February 2016

Policy Statement

All University Canada West (UCW) programs must undergo a multi-stakeholder program review, including internal and external reviews, in continuous five-year cycles.

Purpose

To ensure that all UCW programs are current and meet the quality assurance standards and requirements of the Ministry of Advanced Education and or relevant accreditation bodies. Program review also identifies opportunities for program improvements and further development.

Scope

In addition to regular program updating practices, all UCW programs must undergo formal internal and external program reviews to established procedures and timelines.

Definition

These definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy.

Word/Term	Definition
Self-Study	An analysis of existing program design and curriculum, pedagogy, learning outcomes, and resources. The Self Study Committee is led by the Chair responsible for the program(s) being reviewed under the direction of the Vice President Academic. This process includes relevant faculty members, staff, students and the Program Advisory Committee.
External Review	An assessment of the academic quality of the program and learning outcomes by a panel of experts external to the University. External reviewers must have the qualifications and experience relevant to the program under review and to the review process.

Related legislation

Degree Authorization Act

Related policies

Responsibility

The Vice-President Academic (VPA) is accountable for the completion of program reviews within five (5) year cycles. The VPA, in consultation with others, commissions qualified external reviewers to assess and report on the quality of the academic program, student experiences, and program learning outcomes. The VPA is accountable for the submission of results to Academic Council and provides appropriate documentation to the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Degree Quality Assurance Board (DQAB).

The Chair, Undergraduate Programs or Chair, Graduate Programs is responsible for leading the internal self-study in accordance with established procedures and timelines, ensuring inclusion of faculty, staff, student and Program Advisory Council (PAC) input.

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Self-Study

1. The Vice-President Academic (VPA) initiates program reviews and, in consultation with the appropriate Chair (Undergraduate or Graduate Programs), identifies timeframes and resource requirements for the completion of the self-study and external review. Program reviews will be anticipated and budgeted for, with costs expensed to the appropriate budget centre.

2. The Chair responsible for the program under review, recommends the appropriate standards and criteria for review (based on standards set by the Degree Quality Assessment Board and/or other relevant accreditation bodies). The designated Chair assembles a Self Study Committee comprised of a combination of six (6) full-time and part-time faculty members who teach within the program under review.

3. The Self Study Committee establishes the criteria, processes and timelines for completion of the Self Study Report; formulates a Self Study Report outline, a list of questions to be addressed, and identifies the data and resources required to complete the self study. Criteria for assessment must be aligned with DQAB guidelines or quality assurance and compliance standards as well as standards for any accreditation body for which UCW has received, or is applying for, accreditation. The Self Study Committee develops a work plan specifying collective and individual duties and delivery dates.

4. The Self Study Committee secures data from staff including the Registrar's Office, the Director of Library and Information Services, and Student Services to support the self-study analysis and reporting requirements

5. The Chair and Committee uses appropriate methods for gathering and analyzing input from the relevant faculty members, staff, students and the Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

6. A draft of the Self Study Report with initial key findings is reviewed by the VPA prior to the writing of the final report providing an opportunity for review and clarification of the findings and recommendations.

7. The Self Study Committee produces a comprehensive and clearly written Self Study Report identifying program strengths, areas for short and longer-term improvements, and opportunities for new course or program development.

8. The Self Study Committee submits the final Report to the VPA who commissions qualified external reviewers to assess and report on program operations and deliverables. The Self Study Committee may recommend appropriate reviewers to be considered for appointment by the VPA.

9. The VPA provides the self-study report to the external reviewers, assists the reviewers to plan and the coordinate site visit and access to information required by the reviewers.

External Review

1. The VPA appoints an External Review Panel comprised of three to five qualified individuals (depending on the size of the program). External reviewers will be reimbursed for expenses (travel, accommodation, meals, honoraria).

2. The primary focus of the External Program Review Panel is on academic quality, curriculum and program learning outcomes. The External Program Review Panel considers the Self Study Report for the program and any documentation regarding university policies, procedures, the University Calendar and website, detailed course outlines, online courses, and data on student and faculty performance. The Chair of the External Program Review Panel prepares an agenda for the panel's site visit. The agenda is reviewed by the VPA and the Chair to ensure availability of participants to meet with the External Program Review Panel.

3. The External Program Review Panel provides preliminary feedback to the VPA and the Chair at the conclusion of their site visit.

4. External reviewers compile a draft report identifying program strengths and areas for further development. The draft report is forwarded to the VPA with a copy to the Chair, within 15 working days of site visit. The VPA, in consultation with the Chair (Graduate or Undergraduate), the Self Study Committee, the President, the Registrar or other senior leadership staff (where applicable) has 15 working days in which to respond in writing to the External Program Reviewer Panel accepting the report, correcting elements noted therein , or questioning or disputing findings.

5. The External Program Review Panel reviews the feedback from the University and completes the final version submitting the report to the VPA.

Final Report

The VPA presents the Report of the External Program Review Panel to Academic Council normally at the meeting immediately following receipt of the final report. The VPA includes a formal response to the Report from the External Program Review Panel outlining action plans to address recommendations made by the Self Study Committee and the External Program Review Panel.