



# University of California, Merced

# Undergraduate

# Program Review

Policy and Procedures

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## 1. Purpose of Program Review

As a public trust, the University of California, Merced, strives to assure its many constituents that it fulfills its obligations to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge for the public good. Academic program review is one way the university demonstrates its commitment to accountability, continual improvement, and strategic planning.

Academic program review is predicated on the idea of expert evaluation. Academic programs, combining cutting edge research with teaching, are far too complicated to be evaluated by simple measures; each program must be evaluated by peers whose knowledge of the fields of inquiry and education enable them to identify programmatic strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

Program review simultaneously serves both external and internal needs. Externally, program reviews are an essential requirement of accreditation in that they show reflection on annual program learning outcomes and on student success data, while providing an institutional mechanism for responding to shortcomings. In particular, program review must ensure that budgetary planning takes student learning and student success into account. Internally, Program review enables us to consider annual assessment as a piece of the larger whole, connecting student learning to research and public service as appropriate. Perhaps more importantly, while WSCUC, under the direction of the U.S. Department of Education, holds us to modest standards, expecting us to cite program reviews when providing evidence that our students can demonstrate a number of “core competencies” upon graduation, we seek to foster excellence, creativity, and innovation, to create programs that attract students who seek distinctive, cutting edge, and prestigious approaches to learning and research. Thus, we see program review as an opportunity to reflect not just on what we are doing, but also on how we want our programs to grow. Program review is therefore both formative, in that it shapes the actions of a program in its ongoing development, and summative, in that it identifies particular issues and problems that may need to be addressed and identifies actions required to address such issues and problems.

Reviews of academic undergraduate programs are conducted under the authority of the [Standing Orders of the University of California](#), the [University of California Academic Senate](#), and the [Merced Divisional Bylaws](#). Under Merced Divisional Bylaw II.4.B., Undergraduate Council (UGC) has the authority to establish and review undergraduate programs, and UGC retains the final authority to alter the type, format, requirements, review cycle, and length of program review. The details of Program Review are coordinated by the Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC), a joint senate-administration committee supported by the Office of Periodic Review, Assessment, and Accreditation Support (OPRAAS) under the Provost’s Office. PROC, with the aid of extramural review teams, and supported by OPRAAS, is responsible for ensuring that a robust assessment process facilitates the alignment of resources and the academic mission and campus strategic plans. PROC identifies and recommends to the Academic Senate and the administration opportunities and mechanisms to support resource alignment and the integration/coordination of administrative and academic periodic peer-based program review.

PROC establishes the sequence of program reviews, a sequence that is revisited annually. The current sequence is posted on the Program Review section of the Academic [Senate website](#). The sequence can be altered by action of PROC, and alterations may be requested by UGC, programs, Senate Committees, deans, or the Provost’s office.

## 2. Timeline for Program Review

Program Review will take place according the following timeline. Minor variations in the timeline are the purview of the Periodic Review Oversight Committee

<b>Year One</b>	<b>In January, by the start of spring semester</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Programs scheduled for review are formally notified, including a preliminary scope for the review. Program input into the scope is solicited via the notification memo.</li> </ul>
	<b>By March 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PROC finalizes the scope of the review, notifying the program of the format for the self-study.</li> <li>➤ Program meets with administrative support team to review purpose, process, timeline, responsibilities, support available, etc.</li> </ul>
	<b>By April 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The program lead submits the list of proposed reviewers to PROC following input from the school dean.</li> <li>➤ The Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) provides institutional data to program to support development of self-study</li> </ul>
	<b>By May 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PROC approves list of candidates for the external review team.</li> </ul>
	<b>By September 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PROC analyst extends invitations to candidates for the external review team in anticipation of a spring visit the following year and sets date for review team visit, which should take place before spring break.</li> <li>➤ Self-study submitted to PROC</li> </ul>
	<b>By December 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Charge is finalized and materials for external review team prepared for distribution to team no later than a month before the site visit.</li> </ul>
<b>Year Two</b>	<b>Before Spring Break</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Site visit by external review team takes place.</li> </ul>
	<b>By June 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Report of the external review team is submitted to PROC, following factual error check.</li> </ul>
	<b>By September 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PROC forwards external review team report to program and school dean and issues a request for an action plan.</li> </ul>
	<b>November 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Action plan is submitted to PROC.</li> </ul>
	<b>By start of Spring semester</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ PROC has approved the action plan and closed the review</li> </ul>
Review is closed.		

<p><b>Years Between Reviews</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Program and school dean update PROC annually on the status of action plan items, concurrent with the annual assessment report</li> <li>➤ Every year, PROC reviews the last three years of program review results; a report on patterns and recurring issues will be shared with UGC; patterns within particular schools, if relevant, will be shared with the school executive committee or equivalent.</li> </ul>
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**Policy for Rescheduling Program Review**

Usually programs will be reviewed every seven years, though circumstances in the interim (such as radical change in a program requiring UGC approval, the need to coordinate with an external accreditation review, or to coordinate reviews between associated programs, such as graduate programs or interdisciplinary and disciplinary programs that are closely aligned) may justify acceleration or delay of reviews. If a program’s circumstances change once a review is formally initiated, the program and dean(s) may adjust the schedule as needed by up to one year.

The request must be signed by the program lead and dean(s), explaining the need to delay, and sent to PROC for approval.

### **3. Notification of Program Review**

The program review process is initiated by PROC in January of the first year of the review. Via a written notification, PROC communicates the scope of the review to guide the program in developing its self-study, invites the program to participate in a kick-off meeting with support staff, and provides the timeline and deliverables for the immediate next steps of the process.

#### **Defining the Scope of the Review**

The scope of the review guides the content and composition of the self-study. The scope considers the program's particular circumstance, for instance whether a closely related major and minor will be reviewed together, timing of the review in relation to a corresponding graduate program, or how recent or anticipated changes (to the program itself or to its institutional context) may impact the review process. The program's program review history, including the outcomes of previous reviews, may also influence the scope of the review. In the fall semester preceding the initiation of program review, PROC consults with the Academic Senate, via its membership, and the relevant school dean to determine the scope of the review.

#### **Notification Process and Related Requirements**

The program review process begins with formal notification to the program's leadership in January of the first year of the review.

In its notification, PROC

- summarizes the program's program review history, including the date and outcomes of the last review, as applicable
- articulates the scope of the current review
- invites the program to participate in a kick-off meeting with with support staff
- communicates the date for the submission of the list of candidates for the external review team to PROC (normally April 1)
- communicates the date by which the program's self-study should be submitted to PROC (normally, September 1)

(see [Appendix A: Template for Formal Notification](#))

Units with authority and resources that affect the program under review are copied on the notification, including as applicable:

- UGC Chair
- AP/Bylaw Chair(s)
- relevant graduate group chair
- and dean(s)

The program is asked to confirm receipt of the notification. In its confirmatory memo the program should indicate whether PROC's understanding of the program, as represented in the written notification, is correct, and if not provide a correction. The program's memo may also propose changes to the timeline or scope of the review. Proposed revisions should be submitted to PROC in time for discussion at its March meeting.

Programs should ordinarily receive six months in which to complete a self-study after any alterations to the scope of the review.

## **Support for the Program**

A “kick-off meeting” is organized by the PROC analyst to orient the program to the program review process, including staff support and related resources. This meeting takes place at least one month before April 1st, the date by which the list of candidates for the external review team is normally due to PROC. (see [Appendix B: Example Agenda for Kick-Off Meeting](#)).

This meeting brings together program leadership, including the faculty assessment organizer, and the relevant administrative support staff, including the school assessment manager/analyst, the IRDS analyst, the director of institutional assessment, the UGC analyst, and the PROC analyst/program review manager. The program is encouraged to broaden program faculty participation in this meeting, as desired. To ensure timely scheduling of this meeting, participants may be contacted before formal notification.

## 4. External Review Team

Comprised of disciplinary experts, the external review team provides an independent assessment of the program's strengths, areas to be strengthened, and its future plans/strategic direction. In making its evidence-based assessment, the external review team draws on (1) the program's self-study (including data appendices), (2) interviews conducted during the site visit, and (3) national trends in the discipline.

### Requirements for the External Review Team Selection and Appointment Process

#### *Selection Process*

The program, with independent input from the school dean, develops and ranks a slate of potential review team members.<sup>1</sup> Programs and the dean should identify individuals that address the requirements articulated under Review Team Composition below. Productive candidates possess expertise relevant to the program, including its proposed strategic direction. This includes administrative experience, experience in learning outcomes/program assessment, capacity to act as chair, and diversity. Disciplinary expertise, however, is a fundamental requirement.

The slate must include a sufficient number of candidates, and supporting information, to enable PROC to recruit the membership specified below under Review Team Composition. The program lead and dean(s) must disclose all known affiliations between the proposed reviewer(s), UC Merced, and any of the program faculty (i.e. nature of the relationship, any potential conflicts of interest). It is expected that individuals within the same academic discipline will know one another and may have possibly worked together; nonetheless, this information must be disclosed at the time of the submission of names for consideration.

The slate of candidates for the external review team and associated cover letter are submitted by the program to PROC via the PROC analyst, along with a cover letter briefly describing the program's process for generating and approving the list (e.g. a vote, see also [Appendix C: Template for the List of Suggested External Reviewers](#)). PROC approves the slate and draws from it to appoint the external review team.

Programs should also identify two to three peer programs, true and/or aspirational, to assist PROC in evaluating the slate of review team members, and to assist the external review team in understanding the program, including its aspirations. This information should be included in the cover letter accompanying the slate of candidates for the external review team. It should also be integrated into the self-study.

#### *Review Team Composition*

The Review Team is composed of two to three faculty external to UC Merced. Within this group, it is expected that:

- one member is from another UC campus,
- one member is from a non-UC institution, preferably from a peer program
- one member has experience in student learning outcomes/program assessment
- one member serves as chair

The team is accompanied by the PROC senate liaison, although this person is not considered a

<sup>1</sup> General Education is the exception. In this instance, the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education is the relevant dean.



member of the team.

#### *Responsibilities of the Review Team Chair*

One member of the external review team is designated chair. This individual is the point of contact for the team and is responsible for leading the pre-visit conference call, coordinating team member roles during site visit meetings, and facilitating the completion of, finalization, and submission of the team report.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Appointment Process*

The PROC analyst coordinates invitations to candidates to participate on the review team, and sends official appointment letters to those who accept (see [Appendix D: Example Invitation to External Review Team Candidates](#)). Candidates may be invited in an order other than the ranked preferences of the program and relevant deans in order to assure team balance. Programs are discouraged from directly contacting their colleagues to ascertain their willingness to participate in a review.

External review team members are paid a consultation fee, funded by the program review budget. This fee is paid upon receipt of the review team report.

<sup>2</sup> Consultation fee will reflect additional responsibilities.

## 5. Periodic Review Oversight Committee Liaison

To help steward the review process, a Senate member of PROC is designated as the senate liaison to the review. The senate liaison's role is two-fold: (1) to lead, along with an administration counterpart, PROC meeting discussions regarding the program under review, and (2) to accompany the external review team, providing institutional context and ensuring that the review proceeds according to policy. The liaison is not a member of the review team and, as such, is not responsible for evaluating the content of the program review or contributing to the writing of the external review team report.

The senate liaison facilitates PROC's discussions advancing the program review, as outlined in the table below.

First Academic Year (reviews begin in Spring semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determine the scope for the review</li><li>• Approve the program's slate of potential review team members</li></ul>
Second Academic Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the self-study and develop the charge to the external review team</li><li>• Approve the agenda for the review team site visit</li><li>• Provide an update after the completion of the site visit</li><li>• Review the external review team report and provide instructions to the program for the response phase</li></ul>
Third Academic Year (reviews conclude in Fall semester)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluate the program's action plan and consider closure of the review</li></ul>

Because senate members of PROC serve one year terms, the role of liaison will transition from one individual to another as committee membership changes. A transition document will be completed by each outgoing liaison to ensure continuity (see [Appendix E: Example Transition Document](#))

### Requirements for the PROC Senate Liaison

The PROC senate liaison is selected by PROC and must be a member of the Academic Senate as well as being a member of PROC; exceptions for an alternate liaison can be requested. The liaison does not need to be an expert in the discipline of the program under review.

The PROC senate liaison must be available to participate in the site visit, and will report back to the committee following the visit regarding the success and integrity of process, to be recorded in the PROC minutes.

## 6. Program Self-study

The role of the program self-study is to facilitate the program's development of a shared understanding of its present circumstances and direction and communicate that understanding to PROC, to the external review team, and to campus stakeholders and leadership. The self-study also initiates the program's strategic planning in regards to the review, connecting the program's long term planning to its institutional context.

The self-study becomes a part of the permanent record of the program review and is filed together with the charge, the review team report and the action plan.

### Guidelines and Requirements for the Program Self-study

The self-study concisely presents the faculty's thorough and evidence based evaluation of the program, strengths, areas to strengthen, and future directions in light of larger disciplinary and educational trends, institutional plans, and priorities. Evidence directly bearing on the program's self-evaluation include its annual assessment reports and the data compendium provided by Institutional Research and Decision Support. Information on disciplinary trends as published by professional disciplinary societies or in the literature may also be relevant.

All program faculty must be consulted and given the opportunity to provide meaningful input to the development of the self-study. In the best of circumstances, faculty, lecturers, students, staff, and alumni are involved in planning and writing the document.

The composition of the self-study is the responsibility of the faculty, and not that of the staff, although staff are available to support faculty as they develop the document (see Support for the Self-study, below).

In drafting its self-study, the program should respond to the scope of the review, established by PROC and communicated in the notification letter. [Appendix E: Template for the Self-study](#) provides guidance for the organization and content of the document.

The program self-study may be organized in a way that makes sense to the program, especially for programs undergoing concurrent accreditation, such as ABET. However organized, the self-study should address the key elements of the self-study as outlined in the appendix. Excluding supporting materials, the self-study should be no more than 25 pages, single spaced.

### Submission of the Self-study

The self-study, including supporting materials, is submitted by the program leadership electronically in PDF format to PROC via the PROC analyst, with copies to the faculty assessment organizer, school assessment coordinator, school dean, and academic senate office.

Submissions should include a transmittal cover letter, that

- briefly describes the program faculty consultation process (the faculty in the program should be asked to provide their input or comment(s) prior to the self-study being edited in a final form)
- reports the results of the faculty vote on the final draft of the self-study, including the vote tally.

### Confidential Surveys

PROC may, at its discretion or at the request of program leadership or the school dean, design and conduct confidential surveys of students and faculty for a program under review. The Office of

Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) will provide assistance with the design and implementation of the surveys.

Surveys must give those surveyed the option of reporting some information as confidential, and therefore to be shared only with the external review team. Survey questionnaires must explain that all responses will be summarized to protect the identities of respondents, but that, generally, these summaries will be available to the program under review and to appropriate administrators. If respondents wish to share information or opinions with the external review team but wish to keep such information from other campus groups, they may use those portions of the survey instrument designated as confidential.

PROC summarizes the results of student and faculty surveys, identifying which summarized results may not be shared beyond the external review team.

### **Support for the Self-study**

The program should direct any questions concerning the review to the PROC analyst. The school's assessment specialist will assist and support faculty during the preparation of the self-study.

## **7. Charge to the External Review Team**

The charge is the means by which PROC communicates the campus' priorities for the review to the external review team. As such, the charge shapes the site visit and the external review team' report.

The charge becomes a part of the permanent record of the program review and is filed together with the self-study, the external review team report, and the program's action plan.

### **Process for Developing the Charge and Related Requirements**

PROC develops the charge after receiving and reviewing the program's self-study. The charge consists of a letter, articulating campus priorities for the review and/or important related context, together with a standard set of questions to guide the review team's inquiry (see [Appendix G: Example Charge to the External Review Team](#)).

Senate input to the charge is the responsibility of the senate representatives to PROC. These individuals provide input on behalf of their committees. Likewise, the administration representatives to PROC provide input to the charge on behalf of campus leadership.

PROC reviews the standard list of constituents to meet with the external review team during the campus visit and note any additions or changes in the charge.

The charge is drafted by the PROC analyst, incorporating the input of the PROC representatives, and shared with the school dean with an invitation to comment. The charge is approved by PROC and shared with the external review team at least 30 days prior to their site visit.

### **Dissemination of the Charge**

Once approved by PROC, the charge is sent to the external review team and PROC senate liaison at least 30 days prior to the start of the site visit. The charge is also provided to campus stakeholders who agree to meet with the external review team to help them prepare for the discussion.

## 8. Site Visit by the External Review Team

The site visit is a key step in the external review team's execution of its charge. Through interviews with program representatives and stakeholders, the external review team clarifies its understanding of the program in relation to the program's own strategic direction, that of the campus, and that of the discipline. Evidence gathered through the interview process is used in conjunction with the program's self-study to formulate the team's report – its formal response to the charge.

### Preparation

#### *Organization of the Site Visit and Schedule*

The review team visit is scheduled by the PROC analyst on behalf of PROC (see [Appendix H: Example Agenda for Review Team Site Visit](#)). The PROC analyst also coordinates external review team travel, travel expense reimbursements, and consultation fee payments.

Toward this end, the program provides a list of stakeholders to meet with the external review team, which is reviewed and approved by PROC. The PROC analyst issues invitations to stakeholders and tracks those who agree to participate and who will, in turn, receive materials relevant to the review (see below, [Distribution of Charge and Self-study](#); see also [Appendix I: Example Invitation to Participate in Site Visit](#)).

#### *Confidential Email Account*

A confidential email account is created by PROC to allow stakeholders who either cannot meet with the team or prefer not to give their input in a group setting, to comment confidentially to the team (see [Appendix J: Example Notification of Confidential Email](#)). The email address is sent to all individuals initially invited to meet with the team.

The account is established by the PROC analyst approximately two weeks before the site visit, and is closed and deleted upon conclusion of the site visit. Communications to this email address are read only by the external review team. Communication with the team is one-direction only; the team does not respond to email it receives.

#### *External Review Team Pre-visit Conference Call*

Two weeks before the site visit, external review team members and the PROC senate liaison participate in a conference call, no more than one hour long, to prepare for the visit. Led by the review team chair, the call orients the external review team to the review, supports team planning for the site visit, and for writing the report, and provides an opportunity to request additional information from the program via the PROC analyst. The call is organized by the PROC analyst, who participates in the call as administrative support. (see [Appendix K: Example Agenda for External Review Team Pre-visit Conference Call](#))

#### *Distribution of Charge and Self-study*

At least thirty days prior to the scheduled visit, the PROC analyst provides to the external review team and senate liaison:

- the program's self study, including data appendices
- PROC's charge to the external review team
- the draft schedule for the site visit
- a summary of the results of the confidential surveys of faculty and students, as relevant

This information, except for the results of a confidential survey, is also provided to

- all individuals who have agreed to meet with the review team
- the school dean(s)
- PROC

### **Structure of the Site Visit**

The typical duration of a site visit is one and one-half days. The visit generally begins with a dinner, which precedes the first day of meetings on campus, and concludes with the exit interview in the afternoon of the second day.

#### *Dinner with Campus Leadership*

The night before the first full day of the site visit the external review team, including the senate liaison, dines with campus leadership. In addition to greeting the team, the dinner is intended to deepen the team's understanding of the charge and the institutional context of the review.

The initial dinner should include the review team, the PROC senate liaison, the PROC co-chairs, the appropriate dean(s), the VPDUE, and a representative of Student Affairs; other people may be included as relevant to the program's context and/or future direction.

#### *Meetings with Stakeholders*

The first morning of the visit begins with a team meeting, including the PROC senate liaison, to review procedures and note any special issues for the review. As appropriate, there may be a tour of the facilities.

Meetings are scheduled with

- the Provost/EVC
- the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE)
- the dean and the appropriate associate dean for the program
- the UGC chair
- a representative of the Diversity and Equity Committee
- a representative for Student Affairs
- the program lead(s)
- the program's senate faculty as a whole
- program students

Meetings with non-Senate faculty, teaching assistants, and appropriate school staff (e.g. advising, school assessment specialists, instructional lab staff) and faculty from closely related programs are also scheduled as appropriate.

#### *Team Time to Develop Commendations, Recommendations, and the Team Report*

On the second day of the visit, and prior to the exit interview, the team is provided two to three hours to begin drafting the report and to prepare its comments for the exit interview, including commendations and recommendations.

#### *Exit Interview with Program and Institutional Leadership*

The final activity of the site visit is an exit interview. The external review team meets with the PROC co- chairs, the UGC Chair, the dean, the associate dean, the VPDUE, and the Provost/EVC as well as the program leadership to deliver an oral summary of its findings. This summary should include the major points to be addressed in the external review team report and related commendations and recommendations. The review team may also have confidential information to share during this interview and, upon request, should be provided an opportunity to speak privately with the Provost/EVC.



## **9. Report of the External Review Team**

The external review team report is the team's written response to charge. In its report, the team provides an evidence-based assessment of the program, synthesizing what it has learned through the self-study and the site visit. The report, together with the self-study and input from PROC, forms the foundation for formulating the action plan.

The external review team report becomes a part of the permanent record of the program review and will be filed together with the self-study, the charge, and the action plan.

### **Development and Submission of the External Review Team Report**

The external review team is asked to furnish a written report of approximately 5-10 pages within two weeks of its visit. The basis for the report is the charge to the review team. In developing its report, the team synthesizes the totality of information reviewed and received, through the self-study and interviews, developing an evidence-based assessment of the program in light of the charge. In doing so, the team report provides the analysis and evidence that underpin its findings, including commendations and recommendations, as communicated during the exit interview (see [Appendix L: Template for Review Team Report](#)). Review teams are asked to treat any confidential information with care when articulating findings, commendations, and recommendations.

Recommendations for change and future development should be prioritized by level of significance.

The chair of the external review team is responsible for facilitating completion of, finalizing, and submitting the team report to PROC via the PROC analyst.

### **Receipt of the External Review Team Report**

#### *Review for Factual Inaccuracies*

Following the receipt of the external review team report, the PROC analyst forwards the report to the program lead(s), with requests to review the report for factual inaccuracies or misperceptions and to return corrections to PROC within two weeks. The program's corrections are appended to the external review team report. If no corrections are received within two weeks, the report will be considered to be correct as is. The report and the appended corrections are then forwarded to PROC for review and discussion.

#### *Payment of Consultation Fees*

Upon receipt of the external team's report, the PROC analyst arranges payment of the consultation fees for external review team members.

## 10. Action Plan

The action plan is the program and administration's strategic response to the findings of the program review process. The action plan outlines the strategic direction and related actions of the program for the period leading up to the next program review, and defines the resource commitments, formulated as a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the program and the administration, to realize those plans. The action plan also, through a revised multi-year assessment plan, promotes continued advancement of the program's goals for student learning and success.

The action plan becomes a part of the permanent record of the program review and is filed together with the self-study, the charge, and the external review team report.

### Request for an Action Plan

PROC issues a request for an action plan following its review and discussion of the report of external review team, and any correction of fact or misconceptions provided by the program. In its request, which is issued to the program lead(s) and school dean, PROC

- forwards the report of the external review team, together with the program's response to the request for corrections of fact or misconceptions
- provides guidance for the program's action plan, including as relates to institutional plans and priorities<sup>3</sup>
- asks the school dean to organize a meeting with the program lead(s), program faculty, the VPDU, and others as appropriate, to initiate development of the action plan
- notifies the program and administration of the timeline for submitting the action plan.

The due date for the action plan is normally November 1 of the fall semester following a spring site visit (see [Appendix M: Example Request for Action Plan](#)). The school assessment specialist is copied on PROC's notification.

### Development and Requirements of the Action Plan

The action plan is the program and administration's response to the findings of the program review process and any guidance provided by PROC. It is intended to guide the strategic direction of the program through the period to the next review.

The action plan should be developed as a collaborative endeavor between the program and the administration, and should involve at minimum the program's faculty, the school dean, and the VPDU. Faculty in closely related programs and other campus decision makers, including the provost, should be included as appropriate. In developing the action plan, the program is encouraged to solicit input from relevant stakeholders, including students.

In formulating the action plan, the following should be considered

- the report of the external review team

<sup>3</sup> Senate representatives on PROC may, at their individual discretion, share the review team report with their full committee and solicit input into the guidance provided for the program's action plan. Upon member request, PROC shall provide up to one month between the PROC meeting at which the report is discussed and issuance of the request for an action plan to allow for this input.

- PROC's guidance regarding the response
- the program's own findings and plans as articulated in its self-study

The program is responsible for drafting a program strategic plan together with a revised multi-year assessment plan, and writing its cover letter. The school dean provides input into the program's strategic plan; with the program, prepares a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to address the resources necessary to the action plan's success; and summarizes this work in a separate cover letter. If resources are provided by other units on campus, the MOU should articulate these commitments as well. (See [Appendix N: Template for Action Plan](#)).

To anticipate the need for coordination and allow completion before the PROC submission date, internal deadlines should be set for sharing the drafted program strategic plan and program's cover letter, including evidence of faculty agreement on the action plan (e.g. a vote), with the dean.

### **Submission of the Action Plan**

The action plan is submitted as a single document by the school dean to the PROC analyst, with copies to the program leadership and school assessment coordinators.

## **11. Closing the Review and Years between Reviews**

### **Closing the Review**

A program review is closed only when PROC determines that the action plan meets the requirements outlined in Section 10 of this policy and, in doing so, provides adequate strategic direction to the program that is responsive to the findings of the review process and the guidance provided by PROC. This normally takes place by the end of the second year of the review, at the close of the fall semester.

Following a decision to close the review, PROC notifies the program, the Academic Senate, and the relevant members of the administration. In this notification, PROC communicates the date of the next program review. Typically, reviews are scheduled on a seven year cycle, but programs may request a shorter review cycle in order to coordinate with external accreditation. The action plan, and supporting program review findings, serve as the foundation for the next review cycle.

If a review is not closed, PROC, with UGC's guidance and input, may require, recommend, or arbitrate actions to achieve closure. If PROC needs to engage actively in closing the review, then with the guidance and input of UGC and the VPDUE and Provost/EVC, PROC may identify, implement, and/or recommend sanctions via existing curricular, resource, or other available mechanisms. Any action plan thus activated would provide institutional direction to the program/dean based on the findings of the review process and set expected outcomes and subsequent pathways for the program and/or the dean.

### **Years between Reviews**

In the years between reviews, the program and the administration are expected to implement the action plan as agreed. Progress on the action plan will be reported to PROC annually, as part of the annual assessment process. Both the program and dean are expected to address the program's progress independently. When acknowledging receipt, PROC communicates its evaluation of the program's progress, including, at its discretion, commendations or recommendations specific to the program's circumstance (see [Appendix O: Template for Annual Report and Evaluation of Progress on Action Plan](#)).

If a program, the school dean, or the program and the dean together, determine that a program's progress, or lack of progress, over multiple years requires a response from PROC, the program, the dean, or both together may opt to initiate an interim report, compiling and contextualizing the program's annual progress reports. PROC will request input from the relevant parties (e.g. the program and/or dean(s), and other arms of the senate and administration as appropriate) and provide a written response within four months of receipt, requiring a revised action plan from the program and dean when justified.

If the program does not show progress in implementing an action plan, PROC, with UGC's guidance and input from the VPDUE and Provost/EVC, may identify, implement, and/or recommend sanctions via existing curricular, resource, or other mechanisms.

Each year, PROC performs an analysis of the aggregate results and actions of the program reviews completed in that academic year. PROC combines this analysis with a review the last three years of program review results and prepares a report on patterns and recurring issues to be shared with the Academic Senate. Results for particular schools, if relevant, will be shared with the school executive committee or equivalent.

*Distribution of Materials Following Closure of a Review*

Copies of the action plan, external review team report, and other pertinent documents shall be sent to the Chancellor, school dean, the UCM Office of the Academic Senate, as well as PROC. File copies of these documents, along with the program's self-study and the summarized results of the student and faculty surveys, are maintained by the Office of Periodic Review, Assessment, and Accreditation Support. A brief summary of the programs reviewed and Senate actions are included in PROC and UGC Annual Reports.

## **12. Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest**

### *Confidentiality*

Undergraduate Program Reviews will be treated with confidentiality until they are closed. The self-study, the report of the external review team, and the action plan are open to examination after the review is closed. The results of student and faculty surveys are available only in summary form. Particular documents and sections of the report may be maintained as confidential documents available only as needed for particular reasons at the request of either the program or PROC. Petitions to review confidential material will be reviewed by PROC and UGC.

### *Conflicts of Interest*

Conflicts of Interest (ColS) of proposed reviewer(s) are addressed in section 4. Other ColS originating from service on senate committees, other appointments, or overlap of programs or units, also should be declared by those involved in administering the review (as administration or senate). When appropriate, PROC will recuse conflicted individuals and select an alternate to fulfill their role in the review process.

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ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION  
PERIODIC REVIEW OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (PROC)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
209-228-7930

[Date]

[Inside Address, Program Chair]

**Re: Formal Notice of Program Review**

Dear [Program Chair],

This letter is to formally notify you that the [Program Name] program will undergo academic program review beginning this spring and concluding with the external review team site visit in Spring [Year 2] and program response in Fall [Year 2].

The review will be conducted according to the [Undergraduate Program Review Policies and Procedures](#), including the timeline on page 4. [Provide the scope for the review, for instance whether a closely related major and minor will be reviewed together, timing of the review in relation to a corresponding graduate program, or how recent or anticipated changes (to the program itself or to its institutional context) may impact the review process.]

The most recent review of the [Program Name] program occurred in [Years of Previous Review]. This was the [Nth] review following the establishment of the program in [Year of Program Establishment].

Key next steps in the review process include

- 1) Confirmation of receipt of notification. Please provide to PROC via the PROC analyst a confirmatory memo which indicates whether PROC's understanding of the program, as represented in this written notification, is correct, and if it is not correct please provide a correction. This memo may also propose changes to the timeline or scope of the review. Proposed revisions should be submitted to PROC by March 1, [Year 1]. The school dean may also propose revisions to the scope of the review.
- 2) Preparation of the list of suggested members of the external review team by the program and school dean. As per policy (see p. 8), the review team is comprised of three individuals external to UC Merced<sup>1</sup>; at least one from another UC, and one with assessment expertise. To ensure a full team, we ask that you identify 10 to 12 possible candidates, following the template provided with this letter.

The program will submit the list to PROC via the PROC analyst by April 1, [Year 1] with a cover letter briefly describing how the list was approved by program faculty (e.g. a vote).

<sup>1</sup> The review team will be accompanied during their visit by a PROC Senate Liaison, chosen by the PROC.

- 3) Preparation and submission of the self-study to PROC by September 1, [Year 1]. The self-study should follow the guidelines in section 6 and appendix F of the program review policy.

Materials relevant to the review will be shared at [Link to Materials]. To orient the program to the review process and related support, PROC encourages you to participate in a kick-off meeting with key staff. The program review manager will be in contact organize details for this meeting and ensure that you have access to the materials.

PROC looks forward to working with you and your school dean to make this a successful and productive program review.

Sincerely,

[Co-Chair Signature and Printed Name]  
Co-Chair, Program Review Oversight Committee

[Co-Chair Signature and Printed Name]  
Co-Chair, Program Review Oversight Committee

Copy: [School Dean]  
[Associate Dean]  
[VPDUE]  
[Faculty Assessment Organizer]  
[School Assessment Specialist]  
[Director of the Academic Senate Office]  
PROC  
Institutional Research and Decision Support  
Undergraduate Council



**Agenda**  
**Program Review Kick-Off Meeting**

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- 1) Introductions – Program Review Manager (5 min)
- 2) Overview of Purpose of Program Review – Director of Institutional Assessment (5 min)
- 3) Overview of Program Review Timeline – Program Review Manager (10 min)
  - a. Requirements for composition of review team
  - b. Components of self study, site visit
  - c. Importance of response phase
- 4) Review of School Level Data – School Assessment Coordinator (10 min)
  - a. Annual PLO Reports and Feedback, Curriculum Map, etc
- 5) Review of Institutional Data – IRDS Representative (20 min)
  - a. Major Compendium
  - b. Minor Compendium
  - c. UC Undergraduate Experience Survey
- 6) Opportunity for faculty questions and to discuss possible data requests (10 min)

Please use the tables on this and the following page to provide PROC with a slate of potential review team members. Programs should feel free to make adjustments to the table in order to more accurately convey their preferences.

<b>Program Criteria<sup>1</sup>:</b>			
	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____
1. UC Team Member (note: if a suggested team member is both from a UC and has significant assessment experience, list them in section 3)	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____
2. Non-UC Peer Institution Team Member	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____
3. Team Member with Student Learning Outcomes/Program Assessment Experience <sup>2</sup>	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____
4. Candidates Added by the School Dean	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____	Overall Priority: _____

<sup>1</sup> If the program has its own categories of member types that it would like to have represented on the team, for example drawing from different subfields within the discipline or ensuring that at least one team member has a particular type of experience or expertise, use this axis to communicate that information to PROC.

<sup>2</sup> See handout, "Identifying Review Team Candidates with Assessment Experience"

Name:
Institution:
Link to CV/website if available:
List contributions that candidate could make to a review team <sup>1</sup> :
List any relationship <sup>2</sup> or potential conflict of interests candidate has to program faculty:

Name:
Institution:
Link to CV/website if available:
List contributions that candidate could make to a review team <sup>1</sup> :
List any relationship <sup>2</sup> or potential conflict of interests candidate has to program faculty:

Name:
Institution:
Link to CV/website if available:
List contributions that candidate could make to a review team <sup>1</sup> :
List any relationship <sup>2</sup> or potential conflict of interests candidate has to program faculty:

Name:
Institution:
Link to CV/website if available:
List contributions that candidate could make to a review team <sup>1</sup> :
List any relationship <sup>2</sup> or potential conflict of interests candidate has to program faculty:

<sup>1</sup> Examples: Experience with programs similar or aspirational to program under review, stature/reputation/influence in discipline, specific area of expertise

<sup>2</sup> Many relationships will not be problematic, but should be disclosed for transparency.

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ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION  
PERIODIC REVIEW OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (PROC)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
209-228-7930

[Date]

[Inside Address, Review Team Candidate]

Dear [Candidate's Name]:

This coming [Semester of Site Visit] the University of California, Merced's [Program Name] program will undergo its [Nth] periodic review. This process, which takes place once every seven years, affords a comprehensive review of the program in support of long-term planning and continuous improvement. We write to ask, on behalf of UC Merced's Periodic Review Oversight Committee, if you would be willing to join the review as [a member/the chair] of the external review team.

The responsibilities of the review team include

- analysis of the program's self-study,
- participation in a pre-visit conference call of no more than one hour approximately two weeks before the site visit
- a one and one-half day site visit (including a dinner the night before the first day) involving interviews with faculty, students, and staff, and
- preparation of a final written report summarizing the team's findings and related recommendations for [Program Name]'s continued growth at UC Merced.

[Include two to three sentences explaining the importance of this review in the current institutional context.]

We hope to schedule the site visit [Range of Dates], depending upon team members' availability.

UC Merced will pay for all travel costs, including lodging and meals, together with a [Consultation Fee Amount] consultation fee. Support and coordination for the visit and review will be provided by UC Merced Staff.

The Periodic Review Oversight Committee feels strongly that the [Program Name] program could benefit from your expertise and hopes you are willing and available to support UC Merced's ongoing development in this review.

Our program review manager, [Program Review Manager Name], is available to answer any questions you may have; you can reach [him/her] at [Program Review Manager Email Address] or [Program Review Manager Phone].

Thank you very much for your consideration of this invitation.

Sincerely,

[Co-Chair Signature and Printed Name]  
Co-Chair, Program Review Oversight Committee

[Co-Chair Signature and Printed Name]  
Co-Chair, Program Review Oversight Committee

## EXAMPLE TRANSITION DOCUMENT

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Hyperlink to supporting documents in the PROC Box folder as applicable.

Additional lines may be added as appropriate to reflect process.

### YEAR 1

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#### NAME OF PROC LIAISON:

##### \_\_\_\_\_ PROGRAM NOTIFICATION

DATE: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

SCOPE OF PROGRAM REVIEW: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

##### \_\_\_\_\_ KICK-OFF MEETING

DATE: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

##### \_\_\_\_\_ SLATE OF CANDIDATES FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM

DATE DUE: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE RECEIVED: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE APPROVED BY PROC: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

##### \_\_\_\_\_ EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM COMPLETE

DATE OF SITE VISIT: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

#### YEAR 1 PROC LIAISON COMMENTS FOR YEAR 2 LIAISON:

### YEAR 2

---

#### NAME OF PROC LIAISON:

##### \_\_\_\_\_ PROGRAM SELF-STUDY

DATE DUE: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE RECEIVED: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE REVIEWED BY PROC: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE DRAFT CHARGE SHARED WITH SCHOOL DEAN FOR INPUT: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE INPUT RECEIVED FROM SCHOOL DEAN: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

CAMPUS' PRIORITIES FOR THE REVIEW AS COMMUNICATED IN THE CHARGE: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

\_\_\_\_\_ **EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM SITE VISIT**

UPDATE TO PROC FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THE SITE VISIT: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

\_\_\_\_\_ **REQUEST FOR ACTION PLAN**

DATE SENT: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS COMMUNICATED TO PROGRAM FOR ACTION PLAN: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

**YEAR 2 PROC LIAISON COMMENTS FOR YEAR 3 LIAISON:**

**YEAR 3**

---

**NAME OF PROC LIAISON:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **ACTION PLAN**

DATE DUE: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE RECEIVED: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

DATE REVIEWED BY PROC: [PROVIDED BY PROC ANALYST]

## **Template for the Program's Self-Study**

*How to use the template:* This template outlines the required elements of a program's self-study. For each major section of the self-study, the template includes a brief description of the purpose (Purpose), the content to be addressed (Content) and the relevant documents or evidence to be referenced in the narrative as appropriate (Supporting Documents). Excluding supporting documents, the self-study should be no more than 25 pages, single spaced.

The self-study may be organized in a way that makes sense to the program, especially for programs undergoing concurrent accreditation, such as ABET. However organized, the self-study must address the topics outlined below. If a different format is followed, it is the program's responsibility to describe in the cover letter accompanying the self-study where the required elements are addressed in the document.

**In drafting its self-study, a program responds to the scope of the review established by PROC and communicated in the notification letter.**

*Audience:* While drafting, the self-study, programs will want to keep in mind the audiences for the document. Of particular importance is the external review team, which consists entirely of faculty external to the campus, and therefore is likely unfamiliar with the program and the campus.

### Template

#### **I. Table of Contents**

**II. Contact Information** – Provide the contact information for the program lead

#### **III. Date of Preparation**

#### **IV. Introduction**

*Purpose:* Orient the reader to the program and the self-study.

*Content:* Provide a concise history of the development of the program. If the program has undergone a substantial revision since its last program review, briefly describe the reason and intent of the revision. Describe the internal and external contexts that have and are likely to shape the program going forward. Briefly describe the organization of the remainder of the self-study.

*Supporting Documents:* Materials from the most recent periodic review, the program's approval, or approved revisions to the program.

#### **V. How does your program envision its work: Program Mission, Goals, and Learning Outcomes**

*Purpose:* Describe the educational intentions of your program, including intended students and impacts. Relate these intentions to your discipline and to the mission, priorities and directions of the school(s) and UC Merced.

*Content:* Describe the educational intent of your program, including its mission, goals, intended program learning outcomes, and program philosophy. Who do you intend to educate toward what ends, and on what timelines (e.g. completing a degree within four years for majors, two years for transfer students)? In other words, describe the population(s) of graduates from your program in terms of learning (demonstrated skills, knowledge, dispositions, etc.), preparation for post-graduate success (career and/or further education), diversity (in all its dimensions), number, and time-to-degree. What is the current and ideal size of your program? Why? What do you intend to be the normative

time-to-degree for native and transfer students in your program?

Relate the program to the larger institutional context, including UC Merced's hallmarks of an undergraduate degree recipient, relevant graduate program(s) and/or research emphasis(es) at UC Merced, and to the mission, priorities, and directions of the school and UC Merced. Describe how your program contributes to the larger educational good at UC Merced, including General Education, undergraduate development of the WSCUC Core Competencies (for major's only), and as relevant through delivery of service courses.

Contextualize your program in the disciplinary research and higher education landscape. Describe how your program relates to the direction of your field and to peer, including aspirational, programs at other institutions. In what ways is it similar? In what ways, distinctive? In what direction(s) should it evolve, given available resources?

*Supporting Documents:* Catalog description of the program, including mission statement; other relevant planning documents; program brochure(s) or other marketing materials

## **VI. How does program accomplish its goals?**

*Purpose:* Describe how the program is designed, resourced, and assessed to realize the educational intentions outlined in Section V.

*Content:* Describe how the degree program is designed and resourced, and its structure communicated, to cultivate the educational intentions described in Section V. Through what curriculum, pedagogy, co-curricular opportunities, advising, and assessment-as-planning processes does it give rise to the population of graduates described above and contribute to larger institutional goals?

Relevant foci may include:

- (1) Describe how the curriculum is organized and implemented to develop intended program learning outcomes, including the WSCUC Core Competencies (majors only), and the hallmarks of a baccalaureate degree recipient. What is the logic driving the selection and timing of required and elective requirements, including co-curricular? How are these curricular and co-curricular elements intentionally taught and sequenced to complement and augment each other? Describe any challenges to course sequencing.
- (2) Describe how the program is organized to enable majors to complete the degree in four years or two years if transfer. On what schedule(s) are courses taught to ensure students can plan for and complete a degree in four years? How are students recruited, advised, and supported for timely and successful degree completion?
- (3) Describe any program requirements (e.g. residency requirements, examination requirements, entering/continuing/graduating GPA requirements, etc.).
- (4) Describe the educational delivery method(s) of the program and the pedagogical rationale for that method(s) in relation to program design. Describe any disciplinary guidelines, best practices, or literature on teaching and learning that inform the program's curriculum and faculty's pedagogy, including efforts to support diverse students.
- (5) Describe how the program is designed to contribute to the development of learning outcomes for other programs, including General Education and/or through those supported through the provision of service courses.



- (6) Describe the program's processes for assessing student learning and success, including for subpopulations as a means to steward diversity. What planning documents (e.g. multi-year assessment plan) and program practices (e.g. assessment committee, faculty meetings, etc.) are in place to regularly examine student learning and success, and advance the program's goals in these areas?
- (7) Describe how the program fosters the success of diverse students, including through the design of its curriculum, pedagogy, advising, co-curricular opportunities, and assessment processes.
- (8) Describe how students are engaged in research, inquiry processes and creative endeavors in the field and the opportunities they have to interact with faculty in the pursuit of research and creative activities.
- (9) Describe the university resources devoted to the program's delivery, including space, equipment, library acquisitions, computing costs, staff support, and IT/software costs, as applicable. These resources should be contextualized in a discussion of the appropriateness of current and planned allocations in light of intended educational outcomes.
- (10) How do the curriculum and program structure design compare with that of its peers? Explain the rationale for either similarity or distinctiveness.

*Supporting Documents:* The program's most recently approved degree requirements; program curriculum map; sample plan(s) for completing the degree in four years; advising guidelines; multi-year teaching schedule; multi-year assessment plan; sample class syllabi or a summary of course formats may also be provided to demonstrate the diversity of educational delivery methods employed.

## **VII. Who are the primary individuals/teams taking responsibility?**

*Purpose:* Describe the individuals, and the governance structure, designed to guide and realize the educational intentions identified in Sections V and VI.

*Content:* Describe the program's instructional personnel and their deployment in support of the program's educational intentions. This includes Senate and non-Senate faculty, teaching assistants (TAs), etc. Describe the distribution of instructional responsibilities among faculty (Senate and non-Senate) across the program, including among lower and upper division and required and elective courses. This may include student to instructor ratios. Discuss any challenges to meeting instructor demand as a function of student learning goals/needs as applicable.

Describe faculty (Senate and non-Senate) and TA qualifications and contributions to the program, including their roles in program assessment as a planning process in support of student learning and success.

Describe faculty and staff diversity in relation to the field, and the program's efforts to foster the success of diverse students.

Discuss the mentoring and evaluation processes for assistant professors, non-Senate faculty, and TAs as relates to the educational intentions of this program. Summarize faculty accomplishments (Senate and non-Senate) in the areas of teaching/advising, research/creativity, and service, also with particular reference to the educational intentions of this program. Describe any professional development opportunities available to faculty (Senate and non-Senate), and any incentives or encouragement faculty receive to participate.

Provide an overview of the program's governance structure in relation to the program's educational intentions. Discuss faculty participation in governing and stewarding in the program, including participation in program-level assessment, strategic planning, etc. Describe how instruction-related decisions are made and how they are communicated to instructional personnel and staff.

Describe staff support available to the program, which may include references to staff to student ratios, co-curricular requirements, internship/clinical experience placement and coordination.

*Supporting Documents:* Instructional FTE; comprehensive list of participating faculty and abbreviated CVs; by-laws or other documents describing the program's governance structure and the distribution of decision-making responsibilities within the group; names of current and past officers for the program's committee; student to instructor ratios (Senate, LPSOE, non-Senate, TA); faculty workload policy; TA assignment policy; staff FTE; staff-student ratios.

### **VIII. How well are you doing it and how do you know?**

*Purpose:* Engage in an evidence-informed appraisal of the extent to which your program is meeting its intentions for student learning and student success outlined in sections V and VI. Identify strengths and areas to strengthen.

*Content:* Drawing on the results of annual assessments and student success data for your program, comment on the success of your program in realizing your program's aspirations for student learning achievement (demonstrated skills, knowledge, dispositions, etc.), preparation for post-graduate success (career and/or further education), diversity (in all its dimensions), number, time-to-degree, and program size.

Consider the extent to which students are achieving the program learning outcomes, and WSCUC Core Competencies (majors only). Are the results good enough for all student populations? How do the faculty know? How have the results of annual assessment been used to improve student learning, to improve teaching, to improve the learning environment, to improve student support, and to improve curriculum? As relevant, reflect on the adequacy of institutional support for improving teaching and learning.

Consider the program's contributions to student success. To what extent are students graduating in four years or two years if transfer? Are all students equally successful?

Discuss the efficacy of the program's efforts to foster the success of diverse students, including through the design of its curriculum, pedagogy, advising, co-curricular opportunities, and assessment processes. To what extent are student populations equally successful?

Consider the sufficiency of the program's instructional personnel and their deployment in support of the program's educational intentions. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the program's governance structure, mentoring and support for faculty and TAs, and administrative support for facilitating the program's goals. What is working? What could be improved?

Discuss the development and effectiveness of the multi-year assessment plan, and the adequacy of institutional support for assessment.

*Supporting Documents:* Annual program assessments reports and PROC feedback; student enrollment data; student success data (disaggregated data on enrollment, time-to-degree, degree completion rates,

persistence, etc.); institutional survey results; alumni data.

**IX. Future directions and planning: What does success look like?**

*Purpose:* Drawing on the program's self-evaluation (Section VIII) and disciplinary and institutional directions, initiate planning for the strategic direction of the program for the period leading up to the next program review. This section will inform the program's action plan.

*Content:* Articulate the strategic direction of the program taking into consideration the strengths and areas to strengthen identified in Section VII as well as disciplinary and institutional priorities and directions. Planning should reflect on enrollment trends in the program and prospective growth, goals for student learning, student success, and diversity, current student/faculty ratios, and necessary institutional support. This section will demonstrate the relationship between the program's goals and UC Merced's mission, discuss implications for strengthening closely related programs, institutional plans and priorities, and campus goals for student success, including persistence, diversity, and timely degree progress. Programs may benefit from making comparisons to peer programs, including aspirational peers. This section may also include any issue the program wants to bring up that would be helpful to the external review team.

**Note:** If in the course of the self-study a program begins to think about changes to its curriculum, we recommend that these be outlined here, but not submitted to UGC for review until after the site visit has been completed.

*Supporting Documents:* Relevant institutional and/or program or unit planning documents.

**X. Recommended Supporting Documents:**

Not included in the 25 page limit for the self-study, these documents serve as reference materials for the external review team and provide evidence to support the narrative of the self-study.

- A) Current degree requirements
- B) Catalog description of the program, including mission statement;
- C) Program brochure(s) or other marketing materials
- D) Co-Curricular Requirements
- E) Curriculum Map
- F) Multi-Year Assessment Plan, including WSCUC core competencies
- G) Annual PLO Assessment Reports
- H) Teaching Schedule/History of Course Offerings
- I) Student Demographics and Outcomes, including IRDS data
- J) Alumni Information
- K) Program Resources (instructional FTE, staff, space, equipment, library acquisition, computing costs, and IT/software costs as applicable)
- L) Organizational Structure
- M) Faculty List and Abbreviated CVs
- N) Materials from Program Approval or Previous Program Review



ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION  
PERIODIC REVIEW OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (PROC)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
209-228-7930

[Date]

Dear External Review Team,

Thank you very much for your willingness to participate in the first program review of UC Merced's [Program Name] program. This process, which takes place once every seven years, affords a comprehensive review of [Program Name] in support of long-term planning and continuous improvement.

As the external review team for this review, you are charged with making an independent assessment of the program's strengths, opportunities for improvement, and its future plans/strategic direction. This evidence-based assessment will draw on (1) the program's self-study (including data appendices), (2) interviews conducted during the site visit and (3) national trends in the discipline.

As the team makes its assessment, we also ask that you consider [Program Name]'s achievements and future directions in light of UC Merced's long term strategic plans. [Communicate the campus' priorities for the review].

To facilitate your work, a set of review questions are included with this letter. The questions are drawn from the program review policy and input from the Periodic Review Oversight Committee, and so reflect considerations typical of a program review process. These questions are intended to both guide the review team and to assist the program members in their preparation for the review. Only those questions relevant to the program need be considered.

We look forward to your visit and your subsequent report. We anticipate that your evaluation and recommendations will be pivotal to the future growth of the [Program Name] program and an invaluable contribution to our campus planning processes.

Sincerely,

[Co-Chair Signature and Printed Name]  
Co-Chair, Program Review Oversight Committee

[Co-Chair Signature and Printed Name]  
Co-Chair, Program Review Oversight Committee

UC Merced is interested in your overall assessment of the teaching and research accomplishments and potential of the program you are reviewing. We are interested in the evaluation of the educational program and assessment practices, as well as comparisons to peer programs. Recommendations to increase resources may follow from your review, but are not in themselves the primary responsibility of the reviewers.

It might be helpful to think of your review with the following questions, organized according to the structure of the self-study, in mind:

How does the program envision its work?

- Are the program goals clear and explicit in regards to what students should be learning, and what skills and knowledge they should be taking away from each course? Do program goals address all of the students that it serves, including, as applicable, majors, non-majors, and minors?
- How does the program relate to national trends within the discipline, including aspirational peer programs?
- How well does the program align with and demonstrably support UC Merced's mission and goals, including General Education?

How is the program accomplishing its mission?

- Are the program's efforts in the areas of teaching, advising, mentoring, and introduction to research for its students consistent with the stated program goals?
- Is it adequate in scope and depth to ensure education is appropriate for the B.A./B.S.?
- Are course expectations consistent and reasonable for the standards of a B.A./B.S. degree or a minor?
- Are there clear pathways for completing the degree in four years?
- Is the faculty quality and breadth of coverage adequate for a strong undergraduate program?
  - Areas that should (must) be strengthened or added?
  - Areas that should (must) be de-emphasized or removed?
  - In which area(s) should the next appointment (resources permitting) be made?
- Are program curriculum and/or pedagogy informed by disciplinary resources and/or scholarship on teaching and learning as appropriate to the discipline?
- To what extent are course offerings and class sizes supporting program learning outcomes and student graduation?
- How well are non-senate faculty, as applicable, and teaching assistants integrated into the delivery of the program?
- Are students provided frequent opportunities to assess their skills and knowledge, and provided feedback to help them reflect on what they have learned and what they still need to learn? Are students provided frequent opportunities to complete and receive feedback for written work?
- Is the program attending to the needs of UC Merced's diverse undergraduate population, a majority of whom are from groups historically underrepresented in higher education? Is the program doing enough to recruit high quality students representative of UC Merced's diversity?

#### Who are the primary individuals/teams taking responsibility?

- How are decision-making responsibilities distributed?
- Is there broad faculty participation in planning and assessment for this program? Does this planning include, as relevant, lecturing faculty, particularly as pertains to educational outcomes?
- Do the current administrative structures at UCM foster undergraduate education in the program you are reviewing?
- Are there closely related units, including co-curricular units, at UCM or other UC campuses with which more collaboration should be undertaken?
- Are there appropriate support facilities such as libraries, teaching and research space, computer labs and training?
- Is there sufficient interaction between the program and any campus programs with which it should interact?

#### How well is the program doing it and how does it know?

- Is the program meeting its goals in regards to what students should be learning in the major, and what skills and knowledge they should be taking away from each course?
- How well does this program prepare graduates for careers it says it supports? Would top students from the program be viable candidates for graduate programs? Professional programs?
- What is the overall quality of the program with respect to the following?
  - Faculty teaching (for undergraduate programs, consider teaching of both majors and non-majors)
  - Student learning
  - Student satisfaction
- Do students feel welcome in the major and is there adequate advising to meet their needs?
- To what extent is the unit using best practices to attract, retain, and support diverse faculty?
- To what extent is the unit promoting an inclusive climate for all groups?
- To what extent is the diversity of the undergraduate body reflected in the diversity of the teaching faculty? (and grad students where relevant)
- Are students in fact completing the major in nine or fewer semesters?  
Evaluate the program's assessment of students' learning outcomes. Is the assessment plan appropriate? Effectively administered? Is it used to improve teaching and learning? The team may also wish to comment on its appraisal of student learning in the program, based on both examples of student work and the program's assessments.

#### Future Directions/planning

- Does the program provide an imaginative, workable long-range plan that will allow it to make major contributions to the discipline and to pursue appropriate specializations with distinction?
- What would be needed for this program (or some component) to achieve national distinction giving due consideration to present UCM faculty resources compared to those available at top ranked programs elsewhere?
- Have annual assessments or the program review process up to this point revealed undeveloped areas within the program that should be a focus for future planning?
- Has the program had adequate support in developing and responding to its assessments?

**[Program Name] Program Review  
Site Visit Agenda**

**Review Team**

[Name of External Review Team Chair]  
[Names of External Review Team Members]

[Name of PROC Senate Liaison]

**[Two weeks before Site Visit]**

[Time, Time Zone] **Review Team's Pre-Visit Conference Call**

**[One Day before Site Visit]**

Arrive and check in at [Lodging]

6:00 p.m.

**Welcome Dinner, [Location]**

[PROC Co-chair Name] PROC Co-chair and Provost/Executive Vice  
Chancellor  
[PROC Co-chair Name] PROC Co-Chair and Division Council Vice Chair  
[School Dean Name] Dean, [School]  
[VPDUE Name] Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate  
Education  
[Representative Name] Representative of Student Affairs

**[Day One of Site Visit]**

7: – 7:45 a.m.

**Breakfast at hotel**

7:40 – 8:00

**Travel to campus**

8:00

**Arrive on campus**

8:15- 8:45

**[Room]**

**Team Orientation & Planning**

8:45 – 9:30

**[Room]**

**[Program Leadership]**

9:30 – 10:15

**[Room]**

**[Provost/EVC and Representative of Student Affairs]**

10:15 – 10:30

**Break**

10:30 – 11:00

**[Room]**

**[UGC Chair]**

11:00 – 12:00

**[Room]**

**Lunch with [School Dean] and [VPDUE]**

12:00 – 12:15

**Break**

12:15 – 1:15

**[Room]**

**Open Session with Assistant Professors**

1:15 – 2:00

**[Room]**

**School Support Staff**

[Name] [Job Function]

[Name] [Job Function]

[Name] [Job Function]

2:00 – 3:00

**[Room]**

**Open Session for Tenured Faculty**

3:00 – 3:15

**Break**

3:15 – 4:15 **[Room]** **Open Session for Undergraduate Students**  
 4:15 – 5:00 **[Room]** **Teaching Assistants**  
 6:00 p.m. **Team Dinner, [Location]**

***[Day Two of Site Visit]***

8:15 – 8:30 a.m. **Team arrives, greeted by [Program Review Manager]**  
 8:30 – 9:15 **[Room]** **Tour of Teaching and Research Labs**  
 Guided by **[Name]**  
 9:15 – 10:00 **[Room]** **Open Session for Non-Senate Faculty**  
 10:00 – 1:00 p.m. **[Room]** **Team Lunch and Time for Writing Report and Preparing for Exit Interview**  
 1:00 – 2:00 **[Room]** **Exit Interview**  
**[PROC Co-chair Name]** PROC Co-chair and Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor  
**[PROC Co-chair Name]** PROC Co-Chair and Division Council Vice Chair  
**[VPDUE Name]** Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education  
**[UGC Chair Name]** Chair, Undergraduate Council  
**[School Dean Name]** Dean, **[School]**  
**[Associate Dean Name]** Associate Dean, **[School]**  
**[Program Chair Name]** Chair, **[Program Name]** Program



Dear [Invitee]:

The [Program Name] program is undergoing its first periodic review [Site Visit Dates]. This process, which takes place once every seven years, affords a comprehensive review of the program in support of long-term planning and continuous improvement.

**On behalf of the Periodic Review Oversight Committee, I write to invite you, or another [Unit] representative, to meet with the external review team on [Meeting Date], from [Meeting Time], in [Meeting Location].** This meeting is also expected to include [Other Meeting Participants].

The discussion will focus on [brief description]. The team will be interested in your perceptions of current context as well as future needs in light of [institutional planning].

**Please let me know as soon as possible if you, or a representative, are able to attend.**

Additional details will be provided before the visit, including [Program Name]'s self-study, the charge to the team, and the final site visit agenda

I am happy to answer any questions you may have and look forward to your RSVP.

Sincerely,

[Program Review Manager Name]

Program Review Manager & PROC Analyst

Office of Periodic Review, Assessment, and Accreditation Support

[E-mail]/[Phone]

TO: [Program Name] Program Stakeholders

FROM: [Co-Chair Name], Co-chair, Periodic Review Oversight Committee  
[Co-Chair Name], Co-chair, Periodic Review Oversight Committee

RE: Notification regarding Confidential Email Account in Support of the [Program Name] Program Review

As you many know, the [Program Name] program is undergoing program review, with a site visit by an external review team to take place [Site Visit Dates]. This process, which takes place once every seven years, affords a comprehensive review of the [Program Name] program in support of long-term planning and continuous improvement.

Meetings with the review team have been scheduled for [List Participant Types] and all stakeholders have been invited<sup>[1]</sup> (see [Link to Agenda]).

We understand that not everyone who may wish to participate in the review is able. **As such, a confidential email account has been established to give all stakeholders the opportunity to comment to the external review team.**

The email account was established by a member of the Office of Periodic Review, Assessment, and Accreditation Support. Only this individual and the review team members have access to it. The emails are not viewed by any representative of the [Program Name] program.

The account is established for the site visit only and will be closed and deleted immediately after the visit. Only comments made before or during the day of the team's visit ([Site Visit Dates]) will be considered as part of the review process.

Please note that the review team will not respond to emails submitted to the account. However, the comments, along with other forms of information, will be considered as the team undertakes its work and develops its report, including recommendations to the program and administration.

The team is not able to meet individually with members [Program Name] program community, so please do not request private appointments.

To communicate to the review team, please address your email to: [Confidential Email Address]

Please direct any questions you may have to [Program Review Manager], [Program Review Manager Email Address].

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<sup>[1]</sup> If you did not receive an invitation and would like to participate a meeting please contact [Program Review Manager] at [Program Review Manager Email Address].

## Agenda for [Program Name] Review Team Phone Call

[Date]

[Time]

### Call-in Information

[Conference Call Number]  
[Conference Call Access Code]

1. [Chair]: Introductions & Overview of Agenda (5 mins)
2. [Program Review Manager]: Overview of the process, charge & review guidelines (5-10 mins)
3. [Chair]: Team discussion (35 – 40 mins)
  - a. Discussion of team members' preliminary thoughts about the self-study in relation to the charge and guidelines.
    - i. Identify emerging questions or areas to follow up on during site visit meetings.
    - ii. Identify, as relevant, any additional materials (easily gathered) that might help the team better understand the program in preparation for the visit.
  - b. Review draft visit schedule.
    - i. Are there meetings you would like to have that are not scheduled? Do the groupings seem appropriate?
    - ii. Identify what team members will attend what meetings or will all team members attend all meetings?
  - c. Consider report drafting assignments – who will be the lead on what elements of the report?
4. [Chair]: Other? (5 min)
5. [Program Review Manager]: Next steps. (5 min)

**Report of the Review Team for the Program Review of [X],  
University of California, Merced**

[Date of report submission]

**Members of the Evaluation Team**

**Chair, [X]**

[Title]

[Institution]

**[Team Member Name]**

[Title]

[Institution]

**[Team Member Name]**

[Title]

[Institution]

**[Team Member Name]**

[Title]

[Institution]

**[Team Member Name]**

[Title]

[Institution]

The external review team report is the team's written response to the charge. In its report, the team provides an evidence-based assessment of the program, synthesizing what it has learned through the self-study and the site visit.

### I. Introduction:

- a. Brief overview of the program under review including history, faculty FTE, students served, and other context necessary for interpreting the review. (Draw from program's self-study.)
- b. Brief description and evaluation of review process, including the thoroughness and representativeness of the program's self-study and nature of the site visit (length, participants, etc.)
- c. Brief overview of the organization of the remainder of the report

### II. Review team findings:

In these sections, provide the context, rationale, and reasons for the review team's recommendations and commendations.

- a. **Students:** Discuss the program's goals for student learning, and the evidence of how well they are meeting those goals, in the context of national trends within the discipline, the expectations for a bachelor's degree, and student needs.
- b. **Program Faculty and Leadership:** Discuss the organization of the program, including its coherence, its ability to present clear and explicit goals, effectively administer assessment, and engage in long-term planning. Discuss whether the program's needs are adequately met by administration and support staff, and how well the program utilizes the available resources.
- c. **The Institution:** Discuss the program's alignment with institutional priorities, its efforts to serve the distinctive undergraduate population at UC Merced, and its contributions to and reliance on closely related programs. Discuss any potential within the program to achieve national distinction or contribute to the national distinction of the campus as a whole.

### III. Conclusion:

In the final step of program review, the program and school dean collaboratively prepare an action plan. This report, together with the self-study and input from PROC, forms the foundation for formulating the action plan.

- a. Overarching findings and conclusions
- b. Commendations/strengths
- c. Priority recommendations

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ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION  
PERIODIC REVIEW OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (PROC)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
209-228-7930

[Date]

**To:** [Program Chair], [School Dean]

**From:** [Co-chair Name] Co-Chair, Periodic Review Oversight Committee  
[Co-chair Name] Co-Chair, Periodic Review Oversight Committee

**Re:** [Program Name] Program Review

The Periodic Review Oversight Committee voted unanimously to accept the report of the external review team for the [Program Name] program, which is shared with you here.

We ask the program to now, in collaboration with the school dean, begin preparing an action plan in response to the findings of the program review process.

To initiate development of the action plan, [School Dean's Name] is asked to organize a meeting with the program lead(s), program faculty, the VPDUE, and others as appropriate.

[Include comments from PROC relating program review findings to institutional priorities, providing guidance to assist the program in aligning its own strategic planning with that of the institution as a whole.]

The completed action plan will include the following:

- cover letters from the program and school dean
- the program's strategic plan
- the revised multi-year assessment plan
- the memorandum of understanding between the program and administration regarding resourcing of the steps/actions outlined in the strategic plan.

As per policy, the submission date for this action plan is November 1, [Year 2].

**Copy:** [Associate Dean]  
[School Assessment Specialist]  
[Director of the Academic Senate]  
Undergraduate Council  
Periodic Review Oversight Committee

## Template for Action Plan

## Required Elements of the Action Plan

1. **Program Cover Letter.** Briefly describes the process employed to create and approve the action plan, and provides evidence of faculty agreement on the action plan, e.g. a vote. This includes a description of how the strategic and assessment plans are informed by
  - a. The report of the external review team, including findings, commendations and recommendations.
  - b. The PROC memo accompanying the report of the external review team.
  - c. The program's own findings and plans as articulated in its self-study
2. **Dean's Cover Letter.** Briefly provides the dean's analysis of the strategic plan as a response to the review in light of school and institutional priorities. It also describes the dean's role in developing the action plan.
3. **Program Strategic Plan:** A holistic vision and description of the strategic direction of the program for the years until the next review. It should include clear goals, actions to achieve those goals, and a concrete timeline for implementation, and be responsive to current institutional directions and priorities. The program's plan draws on the program's own findings and plans as articulated in its self-study and responds to the findings of the review process and PROC's guidance.
4. **Revised Multi-year Assessment Plan:** A plan for assessing the program's learning outcomes, and other objective goals established in the strategic plan. The multi-year assessment plan should cover the period until the next review. For majors, the plan should address the WSCUC Core Competencies.
5. **MOU:** An agreement between the program and administration (school dean and other programs, administrative units) regarding resourcing of the steps/actions outlined in the strategic plan. This agreement facilitates the implementation of the strategic plan by clarifying and documenting the mutual commitments of the participants together with the resource commitments, new and/or re-prioritization of existing, needed to achieve intended ends.

# Annual Report and Evaluation of Progress on Action Plan: Part I – Program’s / Dean’s report

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Current Year: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Year Action Plan Submitted to PROC: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Completed by (Name): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Completed by (Position): \_\_\_\_\_

This form is to be completed annually, concurrent with annual assessment, by the relevant undergraduate program chair and by the school dean.

Copy and past action items verbatim from the Program Review Action Plan into the left-most column.

Briefly summarize (in no more than 200 words) the progress made prior to the current year on each action item.

Briefly summarize (in no more than 200 words) the progress made during the current year on each action item.

Briefly summarize (in no more than 200 words) the plan for each action item for the coming year.

Submit the completed form along with the Annual PLO Assessment Report.

Action Items from Program Review Action Plan (include expected dates for relevant actions)	Summarize progress made <u>previous</u> to current year	Summarize progress made in current year (may be n/a if action was completed before current year)	Self evaluation of progress to date			Summarize plan for the coming year (may be n/a if action is completed)
			E	S	U	
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
[add more rows as needed per plan]						



## Annual Report and Evaluation of Progress on Action Plan: Part II – PROC’s response

Program Name:

Current Year:

Year Action Plan Submitted to PROC:

Completed by (Name):

Completed by (Position):

Using the program’s and dean’s reports, briefly comment (in no more than 200 words) on the progress made on each action item to date and evaluate.

In the context of progress to date, comment, if deemed useful, on the plan for the coming year.

Comments on progress to date (may be n/a, commendation, or recommendation)	Evaluation of progress to date		
	E	S	U
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
[add more as needed per plan]			

Overall progress by the program and school dean towards completing the program review action plan has been:

- Exemplary
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory

Comments: