A. Introduction

The Board of Regents and the Colorado Department of Higher Education require comprehensive review of academic programs every five to seven years. The University of Colorado (CU) System Administrative Policy Statement (APS) “Implementation of Regent Policy on Program Review and Newly Approved Program Review” guides all that follows. The goal of academic program review is to promote and maintain efficiently administered, high quality academic programs. Program review should inform strategic planning and provide a basic planning document, and may include major, minor, and supportive recommendations. The department and campus are expected to use the program review as a guide in making decisions regarding resource allocation, faculty staffing, program focus, admission standards, curriculum content, and other appropriate academic matters, subject to availability of resources, consistency with campus plans, and other factors. In addition, the campus views program review as a mechanism for allowing the faculty in academic programs to hold each other accountable for quality and performance and for responsible use of resources.

B. Table of Contents

A. Introduction
B. Table of Contents
C. Policy Statement
D. Program Review Process and Timeline
E. Self-Study
F. External Review
G. Program Review Panel
H. Implementation Plan
I. Progress Reports
J. Program Review Coinciding with Professional Accreditation Review
K. Annual Report
L. Review of Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Criteria
M. Appendices
   1. Definitions
   2. Unit Responsibilities
   3. Self-Study Preparation
   4. External Review Team, Visit, and Report
   5. Program Review Panel

C. Policy Statement

Consistent with the CU system APS, “Implementation of Regent Policy on Program Review and Newly Approved Program Review,” UC Denver conducts academic program reviews every seven years to assess the strengths and weaknesses of units, to make decisions regarding their future, and to ensure high-quality programs that are administered efficiently. UC Denver will conform with all elements of the system APS and refer to that policy rather than repeat its contents. However, the following guidelines have been developed to provide local details and direction for the review of all academic programs, centers, institutes, and libraries.

Program review of academic programs encompasses such topics as the unit’s strategic vision, curriculum, student enrollment, student and other learner outcomes, educational experience, diversity, research, clinical care, service, resources and cost effectiveness, faculty and staff contributions, facilities, and program improvement. Program review of centers and institutes encompasses such topics as appropriateness and adequacy of the business plan and facilities as well as the center’s/institute’s contributions to the allied academic program’s strategic vision, curriculum, research productivity, and service component.

Note: Centers and institutes must be reviewed. They can be reviewed as a stand-alone entity, as part of their “parent” unit or as part of a formal, externally evaluated funding or grant review.

Program review of a library encompasses such topics as strategic vision, curriculum involvement and other teaching programs, student educational experience, student learning outcomes, resources and cost effectiveness, faculty and staff contributions, access to resources, facilities, support for the research and clinical enterprises, and program improvement.

The CU system APS details process, content, and format for program reviews. The program review process must include:
1. internal study by the unit including analysis of learning outcomes data (self-study).
2. review of reappointment, tenure and promotion (RTP) criteria. (NOTE: If the primary unit and the program review unit are not the same, an alternate schedule for review of primary unit criteria must be created.)
3. campus level study by faculty and academic administration outside the unit – calls for campus-wide Program Review Panel (PRP).
4. external review and recommendations by national experts.
5. review of findings by dean(s), provost/vice chancellor for academic and student affairs and chancellor.

The program review report (up to 15 pages in its entirety) includes:
1. general description of review process.
2. description of implementation of past review recommendations.
3. summary of outcome of internal unit review (self-study).
4. summary of findings of external reviewers.
5. general observations and conclusions of the review by the PRP including a summary of strengths and weaknesses, recommendations for program improvement and future program development, and a timetable for decisions that affect the program reviewed.

The program review report becomes part of the annual report, submitted to the Office of the President by the chancellor with a letter of transmittal no later than July 15 each year.

D. Program Review Process and Timeline

The associate vice chancellor for academic affairs–Office of Academic Resources and Services (AVC–OARS) coordinates all program reviews for UC Denver, and advises the provost/vice chancellor for academic and student affairs on the process and outcomes of the review. While the AVC–OARS oversees the process, the unit under review is responsible for many aspects of program review and these are detailed in Appendix M.1. The review process begins each spring when the AVC–OARS notifies the dean or unit head of the units to be reviewed in the upcoming academic year, and culminates with the chancellor’s submission of the required annual report on academic program review to the Office of the President by July 15 of each year.

Each school, college or other “parent unit” will identify a representative to collaborate with both the AVC–OARS and the units under review on policy, dean’s review, scheduling and other matters. This representative will work together with the unit to ensure the needs and expectations of both the unit and university administration are addressed.

In general, program review encompasses the following steps:

1. The AVC–OARS notifies units to be reviewed in the upcoming academic year.
2. The AVC–OARS seeks input from stakeholders on potential program reviewers, and selects and invites external reviewers (which includes at least one UC Denver faculty member outside the unit under review).
3. Unit under review prepares self-study.
4. External Review Team (ERT) visits the campus to assess the program and, following the visit, writes a report.
5. Campus-wide Program Review Panel (PRP) convenes to review the self-study and ERT report, and prepare program review report.
6. Program review report and external team report reviewed by dean(s)/director and forwarded with transmittal letter to provost and chancellor. (NOTE: If the school/college has programs and degrees that are part of the Graduate School, the graduate dean will also participate in the review process.)
7. Chancellor prepares letter of transmittal for each program review report.
8. Program review reports forwarded to president’s office (July 15) as part of the annual report.
9. Unit prepares implementation plan for dean(s)/director. Dean(s)/director forward plan to provost’s office by September 15.
10. Report on program progress on implementation plan submitted as part of the annual report in each of the three years following the review.

E. Self-Study – See Appendix M.3

The foundation of each program review is an analytical and evaluative self-study document prepared by the head of the unit under review with the active involvement of faculty and staff who work in the unit. In describing the process by which the self-study was generated, the
document shall include the names of all participating individuals or groups and the manner in which they participated. The self-study includes supporting material in appendices as needed. Prior to distribution, the PRP liaison assigned to the unit will review and confirm that it is complete. The unit is responsible for providing sufficient printed copies to be distributed to the External Review Team, provost, dean, AVC–OARS and Program Review Panel. An electronic version of the self-study will also be made available.

F. External Review – See Appendix M.4

With input from the provost, the dean, and the unit under review, the AVC–OARS selects an External Review Team (ERT) of nationally recognized individuals from peer institutions or others of similar size and scope. In addition, at least one member of the UC Denver faculty from outside the unit under review will be part of the ERT. The ERT will examine the self-study and other background information and—during a campus visit—will meet with members of the PRP, representatives of the unit under review, the provost, dean, and other individuals and groups. The schedule and travel arrangements for this visit are the responsibility of the parent unit or the unit under review. The schedule will be reviewed by a representative from the parent unit and the AVC–OARS. Within three weeks of its visit, the ERT will send the PRP a written report summarizing strengths and weaknesses, pointing to opportunities for future development, and recommending appropriate action. The report will be reviewed by the head of the unit under review and the head of the parent unit in which the unit resides. Any factual errors or questions of interpretation will be communicated to the chair of the PRP, who will contact the ERT and request modification of the report if appropriate.

G. Program Review Panel – See Appendix M.5

The AVC–OARS creates a Program Review Panel (PRP) to provide campus level study of all units under review, and this panel is comprised of faculty and academic administrators throughout the university. The PRP assists the provost and chancellor with the review and prepares the final program review report. Each unit under review will be assigned a liaison on the PRP who will be available to work with the unit. In addition, this liaison will take the lead on preparing the program review report.

Members of the PRP are charged with conducting the campus level study of the unit, interfacing with and evaluating the input of the external reviewers, and making recommendations regarding: opportunities for further growth and enhancement; strategies and steps for addressing areas of weakness; and, in rare cases, program discontinuance.

The PRP will prepare a written report of no more than fifteen pages after examining the self-study and other background information, the external reviewers’ report, and input it solicits from other individuals or units. The report will be forwarded to the AVC–OARS, who will send it to the head of the unit under review and dean(s) of the school/college for review. Often the PRP and ERT reports are shared with the dean(s) and unit head at the same time. The head of the unit and/or dean may point out factual errors or questions of interpretation, and the PRP may be asked to modify the report. In addition the head of the unit and dean will review the report and forward it to the provost with their comments in the dean’s transmittal letter.

H. Implementation Plan

Upon completion of the PRP written report, in consultation with the unit’s faculty, the head of the unit under review will develop a three-year implementation plan consistent with recommendations in the report. This plan shall be submitted to the dean (or appropriate supervisor) for review and approval before being forwarded to the AVC–OARS.
Implementation plans are due to the AVC–OARS by September 15 to be incorporated into budget allocation decisions for the subsequent fiscal year.

I. Progress Reports

An annual progress report on all programs previously reviewed will be submitted by June 1 to the AVC–OARS to be included in the required annual report submission to the Office of the President. These progress reports are due in each of the three years following the program review and will include the following:
1. The unit name and year reviewed.
2. A description of major developments including achievements, and any further follow-up needed.
3. A review, report and—as necessary—a revision to the implementation plan.
4. A general statement on the status of program improvement, the program review process and any link with student outcomes assessment.

J. Program Review Coinciding with Professional Accreditation Review

A program review may be scheduled to coincide with professional accreditation reviews. Elements of professional accreditation review may be incorporated into the program review if the dean and the provost grant prior approval. The self-study, external review, and other components of an accreditation review may be incorporated in the program review as long as they address the goals and requirements of program review. A program review coinciding with a professional accreditation review may include an area not addressed in the professional accreditation review, such as a graduate program not covered in a specialized accreditation review.

K. Annual Report

Annual reports shall be submitted by the chancellor to the Office of the President each July 15 for review by the president and regents. The report will include all reviews conducted in the previous academic year, all progress reports, schedule of upcoming program reviews, and a list of new degree programs likely to be proposed or possibly discontinued in the next five years.

L. Review of Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Criteria

The review of the primary unit criteria for reappointment, tenure and promotion is a required part of the self-study process. The process for review of the criteria as well as the revisions should be included in the self-study document. The process and revisions will be forwarded to the Associate Vice Chancellor–Faculty Affairs for review. The provost will approve or disapprove the recommended reappointment, tenure and promotion criteria in a separate communication. If these criteria are embedded in a bylaw revision for the unit, the bylaws will then be reviewed and approved.

M. Appendices

1. Definitions
   a. Annual Report – Report compiled by the AVC–OARS, submitted by the chancellor to the Office of the President by July 15 each year, and containing program review reports, progress reports, and academic planning processes and outcomes.
   b. AVC–FA – The associate vice chancellor for academic affairs who heads the Office of Faculty Affairs and Undergraduate Enrichment.
c. **AVC–OARS** – The associate vice chancellor for academic affairs who heads the Office of Academic Resources and Services at UC Denver.

d. **Implementation Plan** – A three-year action plan prepared by the head of the unit being reviewed and consistent with the recommendations from the program review report.

e. **Program Review Panel (PRP)** – A group of UC Denver faculty and academic administrators that assists the provost and chancellor with scheduled academic program review of units and prepares the final program review report.

f. **Program Review Report** – Synthesis/summary report of the self-study and external review report prepared by the PRP detailing the academic program review of specific units. This report also contains recommendations for program improvement and future program development.

g. **Progress Report** – Report prepared by the unit head in each of the three years following that unit’s program review and submitted no later than June 1, for inclusion in the annual report.

2. **Unit Responsibilities – General Information**

A unit participating in program review must be an active participant, along with its school/college or “parent unit,” in the review for a meaningful interchange of ideas to benefit from the process. The unit recognizes that academic program review is a systematic review of programs designed to identify strengths and weaknesses of academic programs and results in establishing recommendations for program improvement and modification. Program review shall inform strategic planning and be a basic planning tool for units under review as well as the university at large. Working together with a representative from its parent unit, the unit under review shall submit complete and accurate information in a timely manner.

a. **Self study preparation**

1. Prepare self-study (see Appendix M.3) and submit electronically, by December 1, to the Office of Academic Resources and Services (OARS) administrator for review by OARS, Program Review Panel liaison, and parent unit liaison. This review may result in requests to modify the self-study.

2. After the liaisons and OARS have approved the self-study, print and bind at least fourteen hard copies. Deliver eleven copies and the electronic file (in MicroSoft Word) to staff in the OARS within two weeks of approval for distribution to the provost, parent unit and Program Review Panel.

3. No later than one month prior to the campus visit, mail copies of the self-study to External Review Team members, along with Regent policy, CU W-9, Scope of Work (SOW), campus visit schedule, travel details, and any other useful documents.

b. **Campus Visit/External Review Team responsibilities**

1. Submit names for External Review Team – unit submits 5-7 names of external reviewers and 2-4 names of UC Denver reviewers to OARS by August 15.

2. Identify any dates that will not work for your unit’s review (with reasonable explanation such as national meeting).

3. In consultation with reviewers, make travel arrangements and hotel reservations.

4. Prepare CU W-9 and Scope of Work (SOW) for each reviewer and submit SOW to Human Resources for approval after reviewers have completed and signed the forms.

5. Together with the parent unit representative and the PRP liaison develop schedule for on-site review including notification of participants, room reservations, and refreshment planning. Share copy with OARS. Make sure the leader of the parent unit, PRP liaison, unit head and AVC–OARS are included in
both the entrance and exit interviews. The provost also participates in the exit interview.

6. Prepare official function forms for the visit, including cost of meals.
   i. Submit reimbursement forms – must have original itemized receipts.
   ii. Please limit guest list for lunches and dinners to the reviewers and no more than three UC Denver members and choose reasonably priced restaurants. Recommend dinner to be working session for reviewers and not a social event.
   iii. Pizza lunches work well for student sessions.
   iv. Don’t forget CU’s alcohol policy – we will not reimburse or approve alcohol with dinners.

c. Along with the school or college representative, serve as host for external visitors escorting them to and from meetings, and planning their transportation from and to the airport.

d. Follow up activities

e. Read and review external team report and provide corrections to factual information as necessary.


g. Prepare Implementation Plan and submit to AVC–OARS by September 15.

h. Prepare Progress reports and submit to AVC–OARS by June 1 in each of the three years following the review.

3. Self Study Preparation

The foundation of each program review is an analytical and evaluative self study document prepared by the unit under review with the active involvement of faculty and staff who work in the unit. The self-study process should cover all levels and types of education—undergraduate, graduate, professional, online and continuing. Additionally centers and institutes that are part of the unit under review must also be addressed by the self-study. The self-study includes supporting material as needed in appendices. The unit is responsible for providing an electronic copy (in MicroSoft Word) to the Office of Academic Resources and Services (OARS) and sufficient printed copies to be distributed to the provost’s office, the dean, the AVC–OARS, the External Review Team and Program Review Panel liaison.

All self-studies shall include the elements enumerated below. The questions and statements in each section are intended to guide the content. Schools and programs may require additional information or steps in the self study process. Your school or program liaison will address additional information needs. (The Office of Institutional Research and the budget office can assist in collecting some of the base information.)

a. Introduction, overview and unit description
   1. General unit description – organization, purpose, programs
      i. Note its outstanding characteristics, role and mission within the university, programs offered, personnel, national reputation, financial status, and placement of its graduates.

b. Mission, Vision and Values, and Strategic Plan
   1. Provide the program’s current mission statement, vision and strategic plan (or reference the strategic plan).
   2. How is the strategic vision consistent with the current UC Denver Strategic Plan?
   3. To what extent are stated program goals and objectives being met and what
evidence is provided for these achievements?

c. Progress since last review
   1. Describe implementation of previous program review recommendations, if appropriate.

d. Academic programs and the educational experience
   1. Provide a description of the educational activities of the department – undergraduate, graduate, residents, fellows and other learners, state funded and cash funded programs, as well as any other training programs. Do not forget to address online courses and programs.
   2. Trend data on students and other learners – courses taught, enrollments, degrees, majors.
   3. Curriculum
      i. How relevant, rigorous, and consistent with professional or disciplinary standards is the curriculum?
      ii. Are the numbers of courses, sections of courses, varieties of courses, and sequencing of courses offered sufficient?
      iii. If there is curricular overlap with other departments, disciplines, and/or programs, how is such overlap justified or appropriate? How is the curriculum relevant to the needs of students?
      iv. How is the rigor of the curriculum measured?
      v. How have students evaluated the availability, adequacy, and responsiveness of academic advising?
      vi. How have students evaluated the availability of faculty for out of classroom interaction?
      vii. What support options are available to assist students with problems?

e. Analyze student and other learners’ outcomes assessment data (Include annual report with at least two years in the self-study appendix)
   1. What are the knowledge and skill goals for undergraduate and, if relevant, graduate student and other learning?
   2. How are the knowledge and skill goals made known to students and other learners?
   3. How well are the knowledge and skill goals being met?
   4. How are learning outcomes measured?
   5. If the learning outcomes measures have changed since the last program review, specify the reason(s) for abandoning one measure and for adopting a different one in its stead.
   6. How well are student majors in each program finding employment, or being accepted into graduate programs in or related to their field of study?
   7. How have the results obtained from measuring learning outcomes been used to revise and strengthen the program(s)?

f. Faculty activities
   1. Faculty data
      i. Numbers of faculty by meaningful category (rank, appointment or type).
      ii. Description of faculty effort.
      iii. Comparative data from similar national programs.
   2. Review and possibly make recommendations for revision of criteria for reappointment, tenure, promotion and post-tenure review. Must include documentation that the primary unit head and the dean support the changes.
(NOTE: If the primary unit and the program review unit are not the same, an alternate schedule for review of primary unit criteria must be created.)

3. Discuss faculty recruitment, development (including mentoring) and retention.

4. Do the faculty have the professional competence needed to achieve the goals of the department, college/school, campus and Board of Regents?

5. Faculty Research and Creative Work
   i. Describe the major scholarly, research and creative work interests of the department—evaluate the focus, extent, quality and productivity of the research effort.
   ii. Describe areas of strength and trends in activity and productivity.
   iii. Describe collaborative efforts.
   iv. Describe any problems or deficiencies in research and creative work and planned activities to correct them.
   v. Assess the adequacy of resources to support research and creative work.
   vi. What is the quality of the scholarly contributions of faculty and professional staff? How do appropriate external professional communities recognize the quality of these contributions?

6. Faculty Clinical Activity (if appropriate)

7. Faculty Service – both university and public
   i. How are the faculty engaged with the appropriate professional communities?

8. Faculty Teaching
   i. What ratings have students given in evaluating teaching? What steps have been taken to improve low evaluations of teaching? What other steps could be taken to improve teaching?

G. Diversity
   1. How are you recruiting diverse students? How diverse are the students matriculating and graduating with degrees in the program?
   2. How are you recruiting diverse faculty and staff? How diverse with respect to gender and ethnicity are the faculty and staff? Is this diversity sufficient to be responsive to a diverse student body and to recruit and retain a diverse student body?
   3. To what extent are issues related to diversity addressed in courses in the curriculum in your academic program?
   4. How well do faculty engage with students from diverse communities and with diverse perspectives?

H. Resources
   1. Provide an analysis of facilities, fiscal, and other resources – include all sources of funds.
   2. How adequate are the program’s resources – physical, financial?
   3. How adequate are support resources (e.g., collaborating faculty from other disciplines, professional staff, support staff, library, media, operating expenses, space, technology) to achieve the goals of the program?
   4. As appropriate, comment on: (1) the student/faculty ratios, (2) the program’s costs, (3) the costs per student, and (4) the costs per faculty member. How do these compare with peer institutions?

I. Summary
   1. Analysis of the unit’s scope of responsibilities, strengths, and weaknesses.
   2. Evaluation of emerging opportunities, important trends, significant accomplishments.
3. Recommendations for program improvement.
   i. What improvements should faculty, professional staff, and administrators undertake to enhance the program?
   ii. What steps are most critical to take your unit to the next higher level?

4. External Review Team, Visit, and Report Format

The University of Colorado requires that all programs are reviewed every 5-7 years with the objective of identifying “…strengths and weaknesses of academic programs and result in the establishment of recommended alternatives for program development and modification, with the ultimate goal of promoting and maintaining high-quality academic programs that are administered efficiently.” A program review is a basic planning tool to guide “…decisions regarding resource allocation, faculty staffing, program focus, admission standards, curriculum content, and other appropriate academic matters.” It may contain recommendations of various types, and may coincide with a professional accreditation review.

An external team of reviewers visits the campus to assess the program and, following the visit, writes a report. The External Review Team (ERT) of nationally recognized individuals comes from institutions of similar size and scope. Typically a team will include two external members with more members possible for larger departments, schools or colleges. The ERT also includes at least one member of the UC Denver faculty from outside the unit under review.

The ERT will examine the self-study and meet with campus representatives, Program Review Panel representative(s), members of the unit under review, the dean, the provost, and other pertinent individuals and groups. Within three weeks of its visit, the ERT will send a written report of up to five pages to summarize strengths and weaknesses, point to opportunities for future development, and recommend appropriate action. The report need not include description, unless there is a need to clarify an issue from the self-study.

The external reviewers’ report (recommended length five (5) pages) should follow the format below which may be modified as needed.

a. Summary and Overview: This section serves as a brief summary and overview of the external review team’s perspective on the program.

b. Role and Mission: This section addresses (1) the appropriateness of the role and mission of the program to the university, the community, and the academic field, and (2) the distinctiveness, if any, of the program.

c. Program Strengths and Weaknesses: This section provides (1) an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the program with respect to such issues as mission, faculty, curriculum, policies and practices, students, diversity, relations with internal and external constituencies, availability of resources, learning outcomes and any other relevant issues, and (2) how thoroughly the unit articulates, measures, and responds to the results of the measures of student learning outcomes.

d. Recommendations for program improvement and program development: This section includes specific and realistic recommendations for improving the program, both with and without additional resources.

e. Other observations: Include any other observations that the team believes will be
useful for the unit under review as they plan for the future.

The report should be transmitted electronically to staff in the Office of Academic Resources and Services via program.review@ucdenver.edu.

f. Visit Planning

The on-site visits by external reviewers are usually scheduled for two days, and primary responsibility for the two-day schedule and hosting the visit falls to the parent unit or the unit under review. This includes inviting meeting participants, reserving rooms, and ordering refreshments (refer to Appendix M.1, Unit Responsibilities). In addition, the unit under review will take responsibility for processing payments and reimbursements. The visit usually includes the following elements:
1. Entrance meeting with program head, PRP representative(s), AVC–OARS and parent unit representative
2. Individual meeting with “next level up” leader
3. Campus(es) tour
4. Faculty meeting or meetings
5. Student meeting or meetings
6. Meeting with other university groups closely allied with the program
7. Meeting with people from key affiliated organizations (e.g., hospitals, Auraria)
8. Time to work on preliminary recommendations and report
9. Exit meeting with provost, dean (or school/college representative or parent unit head), program head, PRP representative(s) and AVC–OARS

5. Program Review Panel

a. The program review process requires campus level study by faculty and academic administration outside the unit under review. A standing campus-wide Program Review Panel (PRP) will assist the chancellor and provost in the review of existing programs and make recommendations for program improvement. The PRP reviews the self-study document for completeness and accuracy, participates in the external review team visit, and prepares the final Program Review report of no more than fifteen pages. This report includes:
1. general description of review process.
2. description of implementation of past review recommendations.
3. summary of outcome of internal unit review (self-study).
4. summary of findings of external reviewers.
5. general observations and conclusions of the review by the PRP including a summary of strengths and weaknesses, recommendations for program improvement and future program development, and a timetable for decisions that affect the program reviewed.

b. The PRP will consist of representatives from across UC Denver. These representatives will be selected or elected and will serve staggered three-year terms. The PRP will be supported by the Office of Academic Resources and Services (OARS). A chair will be selected by the provost and will serve a one-year term, which can be renewed. An OARS representative will serve as an ex officio member and provide staff support to the committee. The committee representation is as follows:
1. Architecture and Planning
2. Arts and Media
3. Business
4. Dental Medicine  
5. Education and Human Development  
6. Engineering  
7. Graduate School  
8. Liberal Arts and Sciences (3)  
9. Libraries (2)  
10. Medicine (3)  
11. Nursing  
12. Pharmacy  
13. Public Affairs  
14. Public Health  
15. Faculty Assembly  

c. Each program review will be assigned a liaison from the PRP. This person will take primary responsibility for assuring the review is conducted in a fair, timely and accurate manner. In addition, the liaison will work with the OARS office to draft the program review report. The PRP will forward the final report to the unit under review and the appropriate dean for review and comment.