



# PA State System of Higher Education Board of Governors

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Effective: July 15, 1986

Page 1 of 2

## ***POLICY 1986-04-A: PROGRAM REVIEW***

See Also:

**Adopted:** July 15, 1986

**Amended:** October 17, 1991 and October 9, 2003

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**NOTE:** *The provisions of Board of Governors' Policy 1991-06 shall take precedence over those areas where inconsistencies may exist.*

**Background:** Periodic program review is a best practice in American higher education that involves stakeholders in the continuous improvement of existing academic and academic- and student-support programs. Such review includes an analysis of past performance that is used to inform present and future directions and decision-making. The review process must be integrated with strategic-planning and budgeting processes, with regional and specialized accreditation processes, and with student-learning outcomes assessment. Criteria that direct the implementation of this policy can be found in the document, *Administrative Procedure for Board of Governors Policy 1986-04-A, Program Review*.

### **A. Purposes of Program Review**

1. To assure deliberate and continuous attention to enhancement of the quality and to assure mission centrality of academic and academic- and student-support programs within State System universities.
2. To analyze and employ quantitative and qualitative data, including student-learning outcomes, on individual programs which will contribute to both university and State System planning.
3. To provide the chancellor and Board of Governors, as well as the council of trustees of each university, with assurance that university programs are being assessed in a systematic fashion and that plans for making continuous improvements are developed and implemented.

## B. Guidelines for Program Review

1. Cycle. All university programs not subject to specialized accreditation shall be evaluated at least once every five years; when deemed necessary, the university president may require a shorter review interval for given programs. At least once every 10 years, each program not subject to specialized accreditation shall be reviewed by an appropriate external evaluator.
2. Types of Reviews. The full review is for programs not subject to specialized accreditation and requires external consultation. The president or designee may designate a program subject to specialized accreditation for a full program review.  
  
The modified review is for programs subject to specialized accreditation. The modified review must include the accreditor's recommendations/suggestions and rejoinder, when appropriate.
3. Process. Each University shall have guidelines and procedures for program review including timelines that provide for ample lead time for programs to be reviewed in any given year and a schedule for responding to review findings and recommendations.
4. Criteria for Full Review of Academic and Academic- and Student-Support Programs. The Office of the Chancellor shall, in consultation with State System Universities, establish and review criteria for the academic and academic- and student-support program reviews.

## C. Reporting

1. The president or designee shall keep the council of trustees apprised of program reviews and their outcomes.
2. The Office of Academic and Student Affairs will develop an appropriate procedure and timeline for periodic reporting to the Board of Governors.