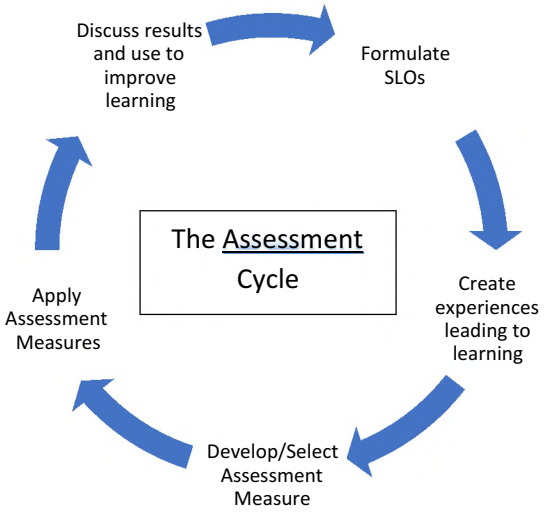
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW (APR) GUIDELINES

Salisbury University – University Analysis, Reporting & Assessment (UARA)



Contents

A WORD FROM THE PROVOST ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW (APR) 3
APR CYCLE 4
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW TIMELINE 5
Fall (Review Commencement) 5
Spring 5
Summer and Beyond (Review Completion) 5
APR REPORT OUTLINE/TEMPLATE 6
OUTLINE/TEMPLATE GUIDANCE 6
1) Self-Study 6
2) Recommendations Action Plan 7
3) Assessment Action Plan 7
4) External Review 7
5) Dean's Response to External Review 8
6) Appendices 8
REPORT FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS 8
WARNING STATUS 9
PROGRESS REPORTS 9
IMPORTANT REMINDERS 10
APR RESOURCES 10
APPENDIX A: APR Glossary 11
APPENDIX B: APR Report Rubric/Checklist 13
APPENDIX C: SU's APR Online System 14
APPENDIX D: Assessment Considerations 15
APPENDIX E: External Review Guidelines 16
APPENDIX F: Sample Questions for External Reviewers 17
APPENDIX G: Special Instructions for Accredited Programs 18
APPENDIX H: RAP Template 19
APPENDIX I: AAP TEMPLATE 20
APPENDIX J: Curriculum Mapping Sample 21
APPENDIX K: Sample Periodic Program Review Form 22
APPENDIX L: Warning Status Rubric 25
APPENDIX M: Progress Reporting Guidelines 26
APPENDIX N: References 27

A WORD FROM THE PROVOST ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW (APR)

Dear Faculty,

As another academic year begins, a new set of academic programs will embark on an opportunity to share with the campus community and external constituents (i.e., USM, MHEC, Middle States, etc.) the programmatic achievements realized during the previous seven years. The Academic Program Review (APR) is a concrete opportunity to:

- demonstrate continuous improvement in program administration, curriculum, and instruction;
- use evidence of student learning outcomes to inform decision-making;
- affirm that program's current and future plans are congruent with its School or College and the University; and
- engage the faculty and administration in a process that validates academic rigor and program viability to internal and external observers.

As such, the APR process and subsequent report provides a periodic opportunity for rigorous evaluation that advances programmatic excellence. In an effort to ensure a meaningful and thoughtful review, the APR guidelines provide direction to programs regarding the type of information necessary to facilitate such an evaluation. These APR guidelines, developed by the Faculty Senate University Academic Assessment Committee (UAAC), were designed to create a flexible, data-driven and comprehensive review process that incorporates program-level assessment and self-study.

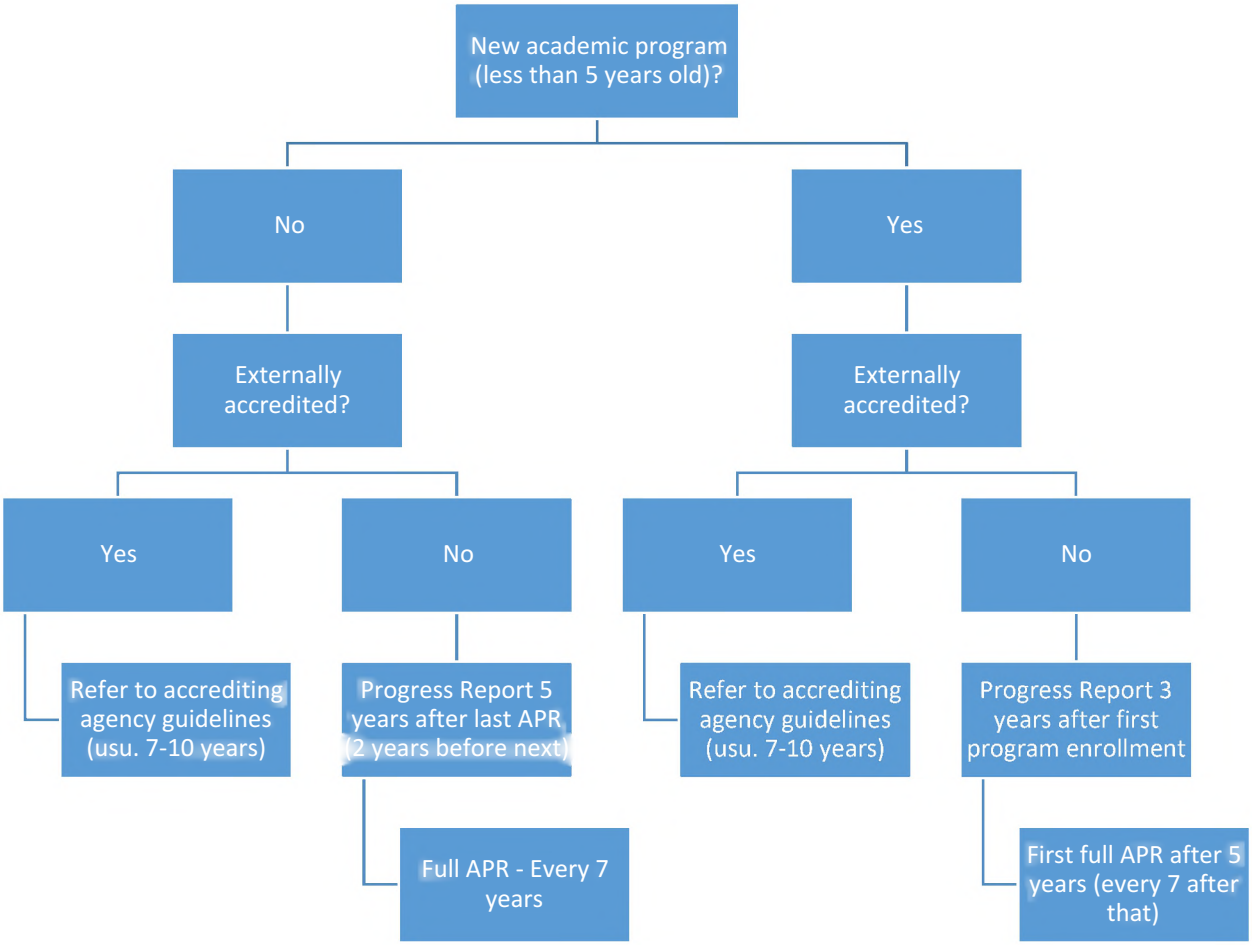
The Provost's Office and the Executive Staff routinely use information in the APR to inform resource allocation, including staffing. Additionally, the Assessment and Recommendation Action Plans that are completed as a part of APR are important documents that will be revisited periodically prior to the program's next APR.

I look forward to reviewing your APR report and learning more about your program. I'm confident this information will help guide me and others to improve student learning at Salisbury University. Thank you in advance for your careful and thoughtful analysis and reflection over the next year.

Sincerely,

Laurie Couch, Ph.D.
Provost & Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs

APR CYCLE



- *Progress Report*: 2 years before a program's first/next full APR [ex. PR in 2031-32 for APR in 2033-34]
- *Academic Program Review* (FIRST – Full Report): 5 years after academic year of first enrolled student
- *Academic Program Review* (SUBSEQUENT – Full Report): every 7 years
- *Accredited Program Reviews*: usually every 7-10 years depending on accrediting body's established cadence; see APPENDIX G: Special Instructions for Accredited Programs for more information (PLEASE NOTE – program review documentation for accredited programs must be sent to UARA upon completion to ensure compliance with Middle States and USM requirements)

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW TIMELINE

Fall (Review Commencement)

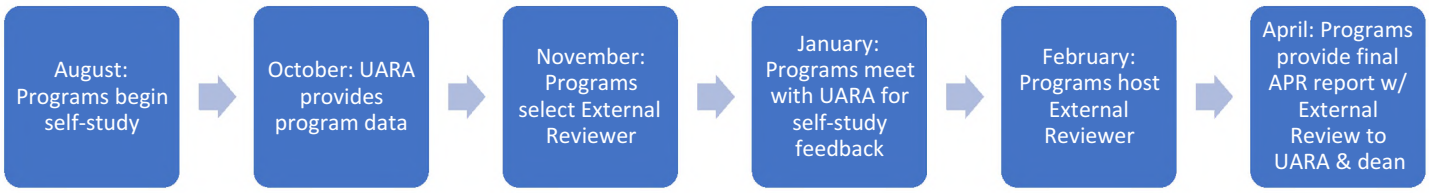
- *July-September*: programs are notified by Academic Affairs that they are scheduled to conduct an academic program review and begin preparing self-study;
- *October*: UARA provides program data (enrollment, degrees granted, time-to-degree, retention);
- *November*: programs identify external reviewer(s);
- *November-December*: programs submit a draft version of the Academic Program Review to UARA;
- *December-January*: each program will meet with a representative from UARA to discuss and obtain feedback regarding their current assessment practices, which should be used by the program to further develop the final APR submission;

Spring

- *January*: programs submit self-study to an external reviewer(s) and the Dean's Office;
- *February*: an external reviewer(s) conducts an on-site program review;
- *March*: an external reviewer(s) submits formal comments to the program chair/director/program faculty and the Dean's Office (cc UARA representative);
- *April*: programs submit the final APR report, which includes the external reviewer report as well as the updated Recommendations Action Plans, Assessment Actions Plans, and all parts of the self-study to UARA for compilation into the final APR report – to be sent to the to the Dean's and Provost's Office;
- *May*: Dean's Office reviews all program materials;

Summer and Beyond (Review Completion)

- *June*: Dean's Office submits a formal executive summary of each program review, as well as all materials, to the Provost's Office and UARA;
- *June-August*: representative(s) from the program, Dean's Office, UARA, and Provost's Office meet and the Provost's Office provides feedback to each reviewed program (see Report Feedback and Next Steps for more information);
- *September*: The Provost's Office submits a formal executive summary to the USM Board of Regents and archives all program review materials with UARA.



APR REPORT OUTLINE/TEMPLATE

1) Self-Study
   a) Program Description
      i) Program's mission and SU mission
      ii) Program data - enrollment, degrees granted, time-to-degree, retention, post-graduation
   b) Program Resources
      i) Faculty
      ii) Facilities
      iii) Curriculum & Sequencing
      iv) Advising
      v) Diversity & Access Statement
      vi) Civic & Community Engagement (WHERE APPLICABLE)
      vii) Library
      viii) Technology
      ix) Other
   c) Assessment of Student Learning
      i) Revisions and Ratings of Student Learning Outcomes
      ii) Alignment to General Education Student Learning Goals (UNDERGRAD ONLY)
      iii) Course Mapping
      iv) Assessment Methods
      v) Results
      vi) Dissemination
      vii) Use
   d) SWOT
   e) Future Strategy and Vision
2) Recommendations Action Plan (RAP)
3) Assessment Action Plan (AAP)
4) External Review
5) Dean Response to External Review
6) Appendices – rubrics, instruments, results, CVs, achievements

OUTLINE/TEMPLATE GUIDANCE

1) Self-Study

a) Program Description

i) *Mission* - brief program overview, program mission and relationship to university's mission, educational philosophy

ii) *Program Data* – UARA will provide spreadsheets with tables showing program enrollment, degrees granted, time-to-degree, and retention; include any post-graduation data here, if available

b) Resources

i) *Faculty* – hiring, expertise, scholarship, professional development

ii) *Facilities* – space available for learning

iii) *Curriculum & Sequencing* –discuss changes to program's curriculum over the past cycle and rationalize the sequence of courses/learning experiences students are expected to progress through

iv) *Advising* – discuss advising approach and resources, including cooperation with SU advisers and any faculty advising

v) *Diversity & Access Statement* – discuss resources leveraged to provide program access and support to underrepresented student populations

vi) *Civic & Community Engagement* (if any) - Community engagement describes collaboration between HE institutions and their communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources; discuss any civic or community engaged practices in your courses and/or program

vii)*Library* – discuss library resources relevant to this program

viii) *Technology* – discuss technological resources for the program

ix) *Other* – mention any other relevant resource considerations

c) Assessment of Student Learning

i) *Revisions and Ratings of Student Learning Outcomes* - review and, where appropriate, revise SLOs; identify the significance of SLOs relative to each other on a 1-5 scale (1 = minor focus, 5 = major focus) to help programs identify strategies for targeting assessment of the most significant aspects of learning within a program

ii) *Alignment to General Education Student Learning Goals* - **FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS ONLY**, discuss alignment to the University's General Education Student Learning Goals

iii) *Course Mapping* - all a program's courses should be mapped to specific learning objectives so that program faculty can document and visualize outcomes attainment through a program's course sequence (see this guide for more details and screenshots)

iv) *Methods* - in this section, the types of assessment used should be discussed, with specific mention of instruments and whether they are course-embedded or commercially obtained assessments

v) *Results* - here the results of assessment efforts for all outcomes should be interpreted and discussed, including rubrics developed and used, how results were evaluated (by whom, individual faculty, assessment committee?); detailed results and copies of rubrics are suggested as appendix items

vi) *Dissemination* – discuss how the results of assessment efforts are communicated to faculty; discuss the existence of any unique systems or structures a program may have devised for this purpose, including any committees; a primary objective for all programs should be ensuring all program faculty have access to assessment results that are updated regularly

vii) *Use* - discuss the specific ways a program is using the results of its assessment efforts to drive enhanced learning among students, with particular attention paid to the ways that assessment results inform the RAP items (tactics) and the program's future vision (strategy)

d) SWOT – consideration of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for a program should involve input from as many program stakeholders as possible

e) Future Strategy and Vision – narrative description of the future directions the program will be taking based on the outcomes of its assessment efforts and SWOT analysis (this section addresses strategy, and the Recommendations Action Plan constitutes the tactics for seeing this through)

2) Recommendations Action Plan – the RAP is the set of planned changes to a program based on the results of assessment, the SWOT analysis, and the External Review; recommendations should indicate whether they were suggested internally or externally, include updates to past RAP items, and constitute the tactics a program will undertake to achieve its strategy and address opportunities and threats in the SWOT analysis; it should include a minimum of 3-5 recommendations to be acted upon, and time-to-completion, budgetary resources, responsible parties, and completion updates; these are the actions to be taken to improve learning and "close the loop"

3) Assessment Action Plan – similar to the Recommendation Action Plan, the Assessment Action Plan is a set of *future* tactics a program intends to use to strengthen assessment processes within the program; this should include a minimum of 3-5 specific items, time-to-completion, budgetary resources, responsible parties, and completion updates

4) External Review – External Reviews are a culminating aspect of the APR process and are vital to any evaluation of an academic program. External Reviewers should be drawn from an institution similar to SU and/or an academic program similar to the program(s) under review. A reviewer must be able to apply professional standards of

evaluation consistent with the goals, expectations, and educational context of the University, as well as the standards identified by the program under review (see Appendix E: External Review Guidelines)

5) Dean's Response to External Review – every External Review conducted as part of a program's APR cycle should be followed up with a response from that program's responsible dean; programs hosting External Reviewers should send the results of the External Review to their dean and UARA within one month of the completion of the review (see Appendix E: External Review Guidelines for more details)

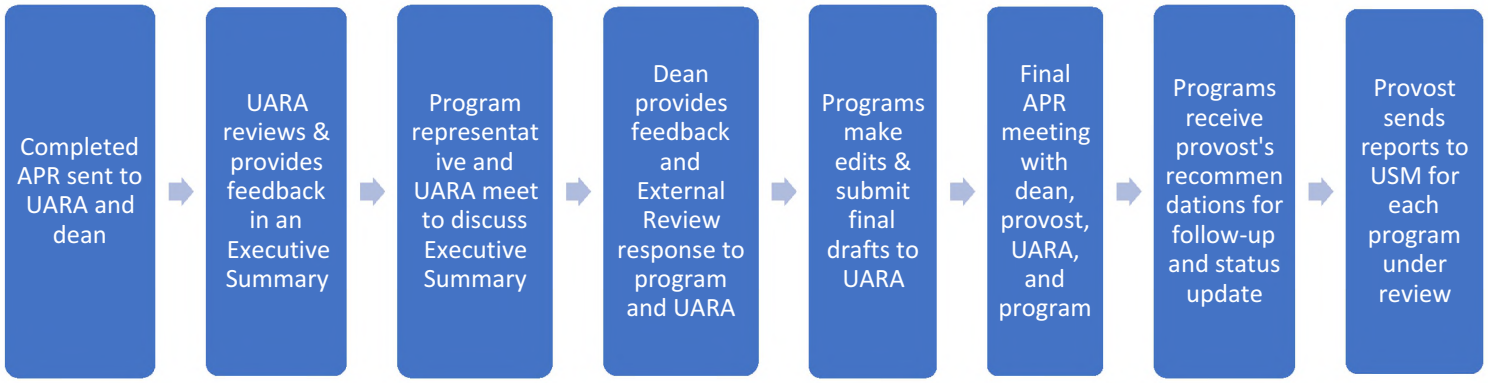
6) Appendices – a repository for more detail; programs may include items relevant to their APR but not essential to the narratives in the Self-Study portion of the main APR document; this is where programs should include rubrics, assessment data, faculty CVs, student-led research, awards & recognition, graduate/alumni placement information, etc.

REPORT FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS

Programs will be expected to complete Self-Studies prior to the arrival of External Reviewer(s) to ensure there is adequate material to inform the visit. Once programs have received their External Review from the reviewer(s), they will submit all materials to their relevant dean and UARA.

Internal Feedback

1) *UARA Response* – UARA will review the APR using the rubric/checklist featured in Appendix B to confirm completion and adherence to these guidelines; subsequently, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss UARA's recommendations
2) *Dean's Response* – the overarching APR report will be reviewed by each program's supervising dean and the dean will provide a response with special emphasis on the findings of the External Review; the dean will forward this response to UARA and the leadership of the program under review
3) *Final Meeting with the Provost* – representatives from each program under review, the dean, UARA, and the provost's office will meet in order for the provost to provide feedback and discuss outcomes, resources, and program needs
4) *Next Steps* – after meeting with the provost, programs up for APR will receive a brief summary of the provost's recommendations, and notification of satisfactory completion of the APR cycle or referral to *Warning Status*



External Feedback

1) *Provost Submits Annual Report to USM* – the provost's office submits findings of Salisbury University's APR process in a separate report for each program under review, using an updated version of the form in APPENDIX K: Sample Periodic Program Review Form
2) *Low-Productivity Programs* – programs that do not meet USM's productivity criteria, described below, over a 3-year period may be discontinued

a. *Baccalaureate Degrees* – 5 students graduated in the most recently reported year, or 15 in the last 3 years
b. *Master's Degrees* – 2 students in the most recently reported year, or a total of 6 in the last 3 years
c. *Doctoral Degrees* – 1 student in the most recently reported year, or a total of 3 over the last 3 years

WARNING STATUS

The Academic Program Review process is critical to Salisbury University's mission and accreditation, and constitutes a vital accountability and continual improvement function for the University. Some requirements for Academic Program Review are spelled out statutorily in the Code of Maryland Regulations: Chapter 13B.02.03. Academic Programs—Degree-Granting Institutions. Academic Program Review is required by the University System of Maryland (USM), Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). With this in mind, Salisbury University's academic programs must be engaged in regular, creditable assessment of learning. In cases where programs are lacking evidence of assessment, a program's Academic Program Review may be deemed deficient. Programs that are not assessing their learning outcomes will be notified of potential placement in *Warning Status* in the Progress Report meeting with UARA (2 years before the next full APR), or during the Academic Program Review meeting with their dean and the provost.

Designation in *Warning Status* happens during the Academic Program Review meeting with a program's dean and the provost (see "June/July" of the APR timeline for more information). All programs will thus have a minimum of 2 years to choose at least one learning outcome, develop and implement an assessment instrument, evaluate results, and use those results for program improvement (see APPENDIX L for Warning Status Rubric). Each year during the normal Academic Program Review cycle, UARA will notify respective deans and the provost of any programs at risk of going into *Warning Status* or currently in *Warning Status*, and will maintain records of the progress being made towards coming out of *Warning Status* for any programs in the APR Online System. Programs in *Warning Status* will be required to meet with UARA annually for 1-2 years to provide verifiable evidence of assessment and the development of systems and procedures for making effective use of that assessment. *Annual Warning Status Review Meetings* to verify assessment will be conducted by UARA and may include relevant deans, the provost, and/or the Associate Vice President for Planning & Assessment. Programs that are able to furnish satisfactory evidence of assessment and its use will be removed from *Warning Status*.

Example Scenario: a new degree program in AI applications has first enrollment in 2030. As a new program, the first APR is scheduled for 2035 (5 years later). In 2033, the program undergoes its first Progress Report with UARA (2 years before the full APR). UARA observes no assessment during the Progress Report and notifies the department leadership, providing suggestions and support for development of an assessment process. In 2035, the B.A. in AI Applications is up for APR. There is no assessment system. This program will, as a result, be recommended for Warning Status.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are designed to ensure that programs have the information and support needed to effectively assess for student learning, and they occur 2 years prior to each program's first or next full Academic Program Review cycle. The procedure for Progress Reports (see Appendix M) is similar to that for the full APR articulated in the Outline/Template above, but the scale of the report is smaller, as UARA will evaluate three specific elements of the standard APR Report:

- Updated Recommendations Action Plan (RAP) items
- Updated Assessment Action Plan (AAP) items
- Updated Assessment Systems – methods, results, dissemination, and use

In the year of a Progress Report, programs will submit the above items to UARA. UARA will review and schedule a meeting to discuss issues surrounding a program's assessment, and a final outcome summary will be uploaded to the Online System. Programs are expected to use feedback from the Progress Report cycle to ensure they are fully prepared to deliver their Academic Program Review reports two years after.

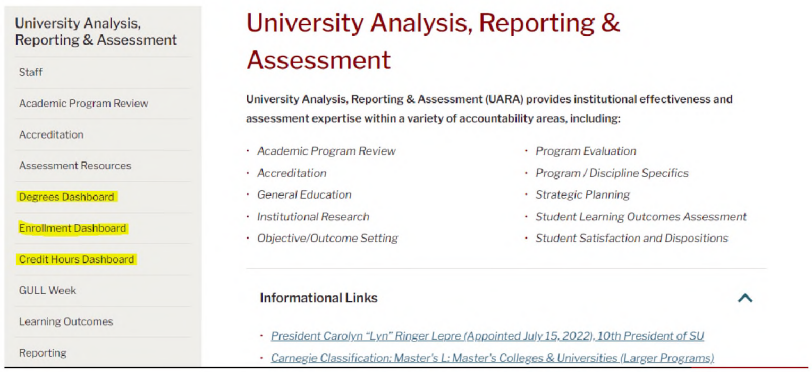
IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- **If the academic program grants more than one type of degree (e.g., a B.A. and a B.F.A.; a B.A. and a M.S.), then EACH degree program must complete and submit a separate APR report. *Rule of Thumb*: if the program has a unique CIP (Classification of Instructional Program) Code, it needs its own APR report.**
- Academic Program Review should begin with review and revision, where appropriate, of an academic department or program's Student Learning Outcomes.
- Academic Program Review should be comprehensive but succinct, designed to give as complete a view of a program's operations as possible, as efficiently as possible. **While there is no strict limit, APR reports should not exceed 20-30 pages, excluding appendices.**
- The Academic Program Review Report should incorporate information about the results of the last APR cycle (the past 7 years), as well as current program information and the program's outlook for the future. Reports may include historical information covering periods outside the most recent APR cycle, but are not required to do so.
- APR Reports should be appropriately future-focused, as the overarching goal of the APR process is to promote deep engagement with a program's scholarly direction, along with program strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).
- Recommendations Action Plan and Assessment Action Plan items should include follow-up information concerning how and when initiatives undertaken by departments as a result of assessment were completed. If items were not completed, an explanation should be provided along with a description of the revised solution being implemented to solve the problem the department/program identified (and which had motivated the inclusion of the original action plan item).

APR RESOURCES

The following are informational resources, including a calendar of programs due for upcoming Academic Program Reviews, Factbook pages concerning demographics, enrollment and other SU characteristics, and a series of Dashboards. The Dashboards are available on the UARA webpage and can be accessed from the navigation menu on the left (see highlighted portion of the screenshot below).

- APR Schedule
- Factbooks
- Dashboards



APPENDIX A: APR Glossary

Academic Program Review (APR) – a comprehensive evaluation of the recent past (last APR cycle), present, and future directions of an academic degree program, including the following components:

- Self-Study Narrative
- External Review
- Dean's Response to External Review
- Recommendations Action Plan (RAP)
- Assessment Action Plan (AAP)

APR Report - the resulting document compiled after a program has completed the full Academic Program Review process, to be made available to the Provost and MD higher education stakeholders

Assessment - Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning

Direct Assessment – any method of collecting data on student learning which requires students to demonstrate a skill, knowledge, or behavior

Indirect Assessment – any method of collecting data on student learning that requires reflection on the acquisition of a skill, knowledge, or behavior

Assessment Action Plan (AAP) – planned changes to a department or program's systems of assessment to enhance learning among students enrolled in that program; this constitutes the tactics a program will use to improve its assessment systems and procedures

Community Engagement (Carnegie Foundation Elective Classifications) - Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

External Review – the formal external peer review process for an academic degree program in which a qualified reviewer(s) (see guidelines) applies professional standards of evaluation consistent with the goals, expectations, and educational context of the university, as well as the program under review

Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) - the State of Maryland's higher education regulatory and coordinating board

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE or "Middle States") - a voluntary, peer-based, non-profit membership organization that performs peer evaluation and accreditation of public and private universities and colleges in the United States and foreign higher education institutions

Progress Report – an interim program review report completed 2 years prior to an academic degree program's full APR, composed of the following components:

- Assessment Design
- Recommendations Action Plan (RAP)
- Assessment Action Plan (AAP)

Self-Study – the internal narrative of a program's recent past, present, and future directions, including presentation and discussion of relevant enrollment and degree data

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) – statements of the knowledge, skills and abilities individual students should possess and can demonstrate upon completion of a program of learning

Recommendations Action Plan (RAP) – planned changes to a department or program informed by assessment, External Review, and SWOT analysis, and which form the set of tactics a program will use to accomplish its vision for the future

University System of Maryland (USM) – Maryland's system of public higher education institutions

Warning Status – temporary probation status for programs that have been unable to engage meaningfully in assessment efforts despite repeated warnings; requires annual check-in with UARA for 1-2 years after submission of a program's APR with a major assessment deficit to ensure assessment systems are functioning and data is being gathered

APPENDIX B: APR Report Rubric/Checklist

Please refer to the APR Report Outline/Template Guidance section for details about what is needed for each aspect of the APR report in the checklist below (approximately 1-2 pages is sufficient for each item below).

Aspect	Lacking	Needs Improvement	Meets Expectations
1) Self-Study			
1.A) Description			
1.A.i) Mission & SU Mission			
1.A.ii) Program Data			
1.B) Resources			
1.B.i) Faculty			
1.B.ii) Facilities			
1.B.iii) Curriculum & Sequencing			
1.B.iv) Advising			
1.B.v) Diversity & Access Statement			
1.B.vi) Community Engagement			
1.B.vii) Library			
1.B.viii) Technology			
1.B.ix) Other			
1.C) Assessment of Learning			
1.C.i) SLO Revisions & Ratings			
1.C.ii) Alignment to GenEd SLGs			
1.C.iii) Course Mapping			
1.C.iv) Methods			
1.C.v) Results			
1.C.vi) Dissemination			
1.C.vii) Use			
1.D) SWOT			
1.E) Future Strategy & Vision			
2) Recommendations Action Plan			
3) Assessment Action Plan			
4) External Review			
6) Dean's Response to External Review			

WARNING STATUS ACTIVE FOR THIS PROGRAM

Date Active: _____

Date of 1st Review: _____

Date of 2nd Review: _____

Dean/Dept. Chair Acknowledgement: _____

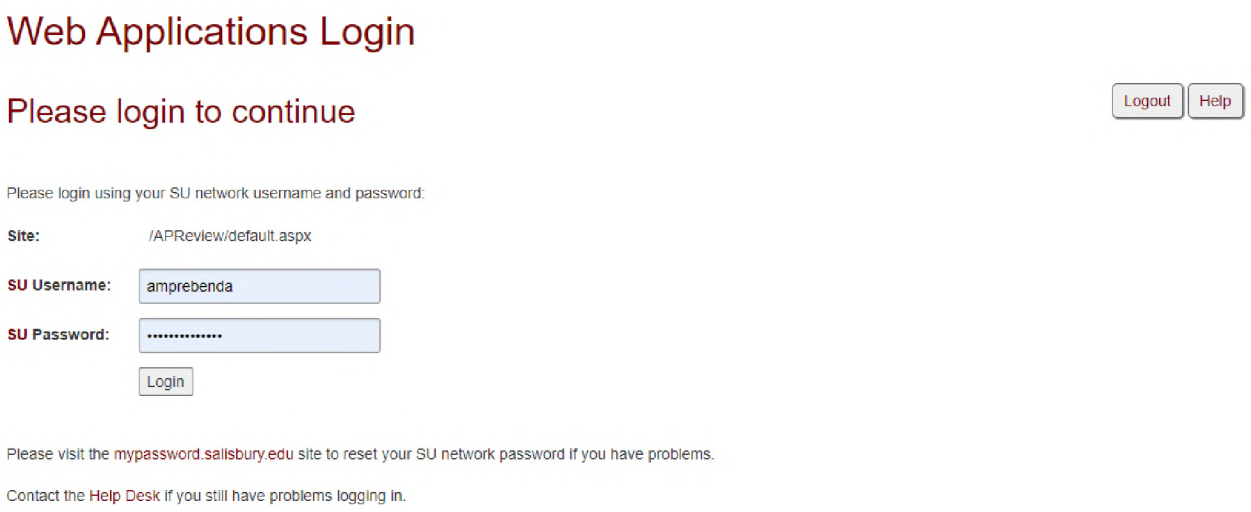
Date: _____

NOTES:

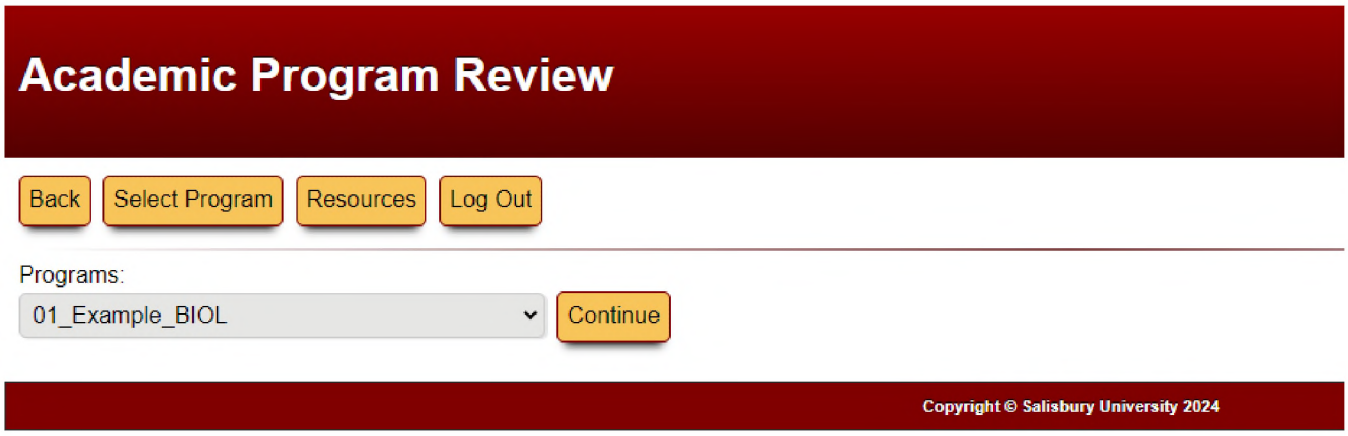
APPENDIX C: SU's APR Online System

SU has a digital repository of Academic Program Review information and documentation available on the UARA Academic Program Review webpage. UARA would like to encourage all faculty and any relevant staff to access the APR Online System and regularly update program assessment and reporting information. New programs and faculty who have not been involved with APR should contact the UARA Assessment Coordinator to be registered in the APR Online System. Additionally, the Assessment Coordinator is available to assist with questions about use of the APR Online System.

- *Credentials* – your SU login information should allow to access the Online System (see login screenshots below)
- *Troubleshooting* – Please contact Aaron Prebenda, Assessment Coordinator (410-543-6025) if you are having difficulty with the system, or have any questions.
- *Please Note*: New users require registration in the Online System. Contact Aaron Prebenda, UARA Assessment Coordinator (410-543-6025) for assistance.



Program-specific Dropdown Menu:



APPENDIX D: Assessment Considerations

The best assessment practices utilize both direct and indirect methods of collecting evidence of student learning in order to paint a more complete picture of student achievement and capabilities. While all of these examples listed below are geared to programmatic assessment of student achievement, the methods marked with an asterisk (*) can also be used at the course level to measure student learning.

Direct Evidence of Student Learning: a professional decides what was learned and how well	Indirect Evidence of Student Learning: the student decides what was learned and how well
- Ratings of student skills by field experience supervisors - Scores and pass rates from licensure, certification exams, or other national tests - Capstone experiences (research papers, theses, presentations, etc.) scored with a rubric - Other written work, performances, or presentations scored with a rubric* - Portfolios of student work* - Scores of locally designed tests in key courses, qualifying exams, or comprehensive exams accompanied by descriptions of what the tests assess* - Score gains between entry and exit on published or local tests or writing samples* - Employer ratings of employee skills - Systematic observations of student behavior (presentations, group discussions, etc.) - Summaries or analyses of electronic discussion threads* - Classroom response systems (clickers, etc.)	- Course grades* - Assignment grades if not accompanied by rubric/scoring guide* - Admission rates into graduate programs and subsequent graduation rates - Quality/reputation of graduate programs into which alumni are accepted - Placement rates of graduates into appropriate career positions and starting salaries - Alumni perceptions of their career responsibilities and satisfaction - Student ratings of their knowledge/skills or reflections on what they have learned* - End-of-semester evaluation questions focused on course not instructor* - Student/alumni satisfaction collected through surveys/exit interviews/focus groups - Voluntary gifts from alumni and employers - Student participation rates in faculty research, publications, and conference presentations - Honors, awards, and scholarships earned by students and alumni

* Northern Illinois University: https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/direct-versus-indirect-assessment-of-student-learning.shtml#:~:text=Direct%20Assessment%20refers%20to%20any,than%20a%20demonstration%20of%20it.

APPENDIX E: External Review Guidelines

External peer review offers objective qualitative feedback from respected colleagues as part of the Academic Program Review process. A reviewer must be able to apply professional standards of evaluation consistent with the goals, expectations, and educational context of the University, as well as the standards of the program under review. SWOT analysis provides an effective review framework for External Reviewer(s).

Each program under review must provide external reviewer(s) with a base of relevant information concerning the program. In addition to the current draft of the program's Academic Program Review, common requests for information include:

- current or recent course syllabi,
- representative examples of course materials (e.g., exams, assignments),
- the program's student assessment and learning outcomes plan,
- evidence of student learning,
- the current course catalog,
- the previous APR report (if applicable),
- and any other materials that will provide an adequate stock of resources from which to assess the program.

External Reviewers may conduct visits on-site or virtually, where appropriate. Both types of visits provide the opportunity for the reviewer to evaluate the program in an applied manner that cannot be achieved to the same degree through document review. When a reviewer is visiting SU, the program should plan activities such as:

- individual and/or group meetings with all program faculty (including part-time, if possible);
- meetings with any office personnel or faculty that manage day-to-day operations of the program;
- meetings with the faculty of collaborative programs (e.g., those with shared students as majors/minors);
- meetings with academic advisors;
- meetings with representatives from the Dean's Office;
- meetings with students and student groups, if applicable;
- the opportunity to review program resources (facilities, equipment, research, etc.); and
- the opportunity to examine additional documentation.

A reviewer should attempt to affirm the strengths and weaknesses of the program, validate the evidence addressing student learning outcomes, critically evaluate program capabilities and resource needs, and address the issue of academic rigor. A reviewer should also evaluate the overall quality of the educational experience for program graduates. Within a month of the visit, a written report detailing the reviewer's conclusions must be submitted by the reviewer or review team to the Department Chair/Program Director, UARA (Aaron Prebenda; amprebenda@salisbury.edu), and the Dean's Office. **This report is an essential supporting document for the APR and a critical resource for future planning.**

1. *Who*: One or two faculty members from peer programs and institutions prepared to apply professional standards of evaluation to support Salisbury University's Academic Program Review.
2. *What*: review of program resources, faculty, research, teaching and other outputs measured against student learning outcomes and goals.
3. *When*: fall or winter of the academic year of program review (e.g. for 2025-2026 APR year, an external reviewer should visit during the fall of 2025 or early spring of 2026).
4. *Where*: Salisbury University's campus and/or, where appropriate, remotely.
5. *Why*: see background and expectations above.
6. *How:* budget for $1,000-1,500 per external review for reviewer stipend (may be more or less based on remote status, travel distance, multiple programs being reviewed, etc.).

APPENDIX F: Sample Questions for External Reviewers

The External Reviewer should evaluate the program using a SWOT analysis and/or based upon the following questions:

1. **Goals and Objectives**
   A. Are the program's mission, long-term strategic plan and vision consistent with the College/School's and the University's? Are there potential areas of conflict?
   B. What evidence is presented of the trends (enrollment, time-to-completion, degrees granted, retention) over the past seven years and their overall impact on the program?
   C. What critical changes were made as a result of the last Academic Program Review?

2. **Program**
   A. Are the goals and objectives of the degree program clearly defined? How well is the program achieving objectives?
   B. Are the curricula, program structure and instruction well designed and appropriate to the scholarly and creative trends in the discipline?
   C. Does the organization of the program hinder or enhance potential trends in the discipline?
   D. What strategic and annual initiatives might be pursued in order to strengthen the program?
   E. Highlight the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

3. **Student Learning and Student Success**
   A. Does the program provide evidence to indicate sufficient academic rigor as well as ongoing student learning?
      a. What evidence indicates whether an appropriate number and variety of courses are offered?
         i. What evidence indicates balance between breadth and specialization?
         ii. What evidence indicates whether course offerings meet student needs?
      b. What are the opportunities for experiential learning?
      c. Is the evidence for student learning consistent with the program's student learning outcomes?
      d. Is the evidence for student learning of depth and breadth to validate that the program is accomplishing its student learning objectives?
      e. Are student learning outcomes consistent with those at comparable institutions?
      f. What curricular and pedagogical modifications would enhance student learning?
   B. Are there efforts to diversify the student learning community? If so, are they effective?
   C. Are there other efforts to improve student success? If so, are they effective?

4. **Facilities, Support and Administration**
   A. Does the University show commitment to the program, its students, its faculty, and the resources necessary to ensure academic rigor?
   B. What evidence indicates the program has the appropriate expertise and staffing numbers to serve its students and accomplish its student learning outcomes?
   C. What evidence indicates that current resources, including facilities and equipment, are effectively and efficiently used, and adequate to meet student learning outcomes and goals?
   D. What evidence indicates that the library and other information resources are appropriate to support the program?
   E. Identify resource priorities that enhance the program, reallocations that restructure it, or cuts to streamline it.

APPENDIX G: Special Instructions for Accredited Programs

Accredited programs shall conduct a comprehensive Academic Program Review (APR) on a schedule that is congruent with their accreditation reviews, or every 7 years where no specific timeframe is mandated. **Required documentation for Accredited Programs' Self-Study should be uploaded for each cycle into the SU APR Online System, and accredited programs are responsible for submitting documentation to UARA to ensure compliance with MHEC, USM, and Middle States accreditation and program review obligations.** Please contact the UARA for assistance with uploading documents into the Online System.

Programs that maintain specialized accreditations with accrediting agencies may substitute the formal accreditation standards of the respective agency in lieu of the SU APR documentation provided the accrediting agency is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and/or the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Please visit the directories of recognized accrediting agencies for CHEA and the ED to see the most recent lists. At the time of this publication, the following agencies accrediting specialized programs at SU have been recognized:

1. *Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP)*
2. *The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)*
3. *Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)*
4. *Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE)*
5. *Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)*
6. *Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)*
7. *Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP; formerly known as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, NCATE)*
8. *Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)*
9. *National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)*
10. *National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)*

APPENDIX H: RAP Template

Internal/External Recommendation: ENTER TEXT HERE				
Action Steps	**Assigned Responsibility**	**Start Date**	**Completion Date**	**Academic Year 20##-## Updates**
1. ENTER ACTION STEP TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE OR DETAIL CHALLENGES OR CHANGES TO ACTION STEP
2. ENTER ACTION STEP TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE OR DETAIL CHALLENGES OR CHANGES TO ACTION STEP
3. ENTER ACTION STEP TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE OR DETAIL CHALLENGES OR CHANGES TO ACTION STEP
Primary Coordinator(s): ENTER TEXT HERE				
Anticipated Outcome(s) of Action Plan: ENTER TEXT HERE				
Budget/Reallocation Plan: ENTER TEXT HERE (e.g., N/A)				
Comments: ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE				

APPENDIX I: AAP TEMPLATE

Action Steps	Assigned Responsibility	Budget	Start Date	Completion Date	Comments
0. Create assessment committee for the program	Dr. Williams (Department Chair)	n/a	Summer 2023	May 2024	This is also Recommendation Action Plan #1 (see there for more detailed steps and AY2013-14 updates).
1. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE
2. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE
3. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE
4. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE
5. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE
6. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE
7. ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER NAMES, POSITION TITLES, COMMITTEES HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE	ENTER TEXT HERE IF APPLICABLE

Additional AAP Considerations for Discussion in APR Reports

Types of assessment, description of methods, outcomes to be assessed for, courses involved in this assessment effort, results, dissemination of results to relevant stakeholders, use of results for learning enhancement

APPENDIX J: Curriculum Mapping Sample

Examples are modified from the "Assess 101: Introduction to Assessment" workshop materials (February 11, 2014 at Michigan State University) by Dr. Amy Driscoll.

Table 1. Example curriculum map: program student learning outcomes mapped onto program courses

		PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES											
		Academic Leadership			School Leadership					Professional Inquiry			
		1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
REQUIRED COURSES FOR MASTERS DEGREE	EDU 400: Writing for Graduate Students										X		
	EDU 500: The Professional Learning Environment					X	X	X	X				
	EDU 505: Project-Based Instruction I		X										
	EDU 510: Philosophy & History of Education			X			X						
	EDU 515: Using Data, Authentic Assessment & Portfolios		X				X			X			
	EDU 520: Project-Based Instruction II		X										
	EDU 530: Research Methods and Beginning Statistics										X		
	EDU 535: Literacy in the 21st Century	X					X						
	EDU 540: Research I – Application of Design & Methods										X		
	EDU 550: Curriculum Foundations	X											
	EDU 555: Instructional Design & Technology				X	X	X						
	EDU 560: Introduction to Law & Policy				X								
	EDU 565: Equity & Diversity in Educational Instruction						X						
	EDU 570: Finance & Business				X								
	EDU 575: Seminar in Educational Technology			X		X	X						
	EDU 600: Mentoring, Coaching, & Evaluating Instruction					X		X	X				
	EDU 605: Professional Productivity							X	X				X
	EDU 650: Research II – Application							X			X	X	
	EDU 660: Thesis*							X			X	X	X

Note: Asterisk (*) denotes that the Master's Thesis serves as the Program Capstone and as the major evidence for the achievement of both University Student Learning Outcomes and Program Student Learning Outcomes.

Table 2. Example curriculum map: program student learning outcomes mapped onto university student learning outcomes

			UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES											
			1. Skills					2. Knowledge		3. Dispositions				
			1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	2.2	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5
PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	Academic Leadership	1.1		X			X	X		X	X			
		1.2				X		X		X	X			
		1.3					X		X	X	X			X
	School Leadership	2.1			X		X		X	X	X			
		2.2	X				X			X		X		
		2.3		X			X			X				
		2.4	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
		2.5				X	X	X	X	X	X			
	Professional Inquiry	3.1	X		X			X	X		X	X		
		3.2		X	X	X			X		X			
		3.3	X				X	X			X	X		
		3.4	X	X				X	X	X	X	X		

APPENDIX K: Sample Periodic Program Review Form

2023 Format for Reports to USM on Periodic Review of Academic Programs

SECTION I: PROGRAM AND INSTITUTION DEMOGRAPHICS

A. Institution:

B. HEGIS+2 (MHEC Program) Code:

C. CIP Code:

D. Degree / Certificate Level – Select all that apply and indicate the name of the degree / certificate:

☐ **Bachelor's: _____**
(BA, BS, etc.)

☐ **Master's: _____ _____**
(MA, MS, MBA, MEd, MPH, MSN, etc.)

☐ **Combined Master's/Doctorate:_____**
(MS/Ph.D., MEd/Ed.D., MSN/DNP, etc.)

☐ **Doctorate: _____ _____**
(Ph.D., Ed.D., DNP, PharmD., etc.)

☐ **Certificate: _____ _____**
(LDC, UDC, PBC, PMC, CAS, etc.)

E. Title of the Program reviewed:

F. Academic Department:

G. Academic College / School:

SECTION II: EXTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Year in which the program review process was completed:

B. Is the external review a result of an Accreditation Self-Study (i.e. ABET, AACSB, ACPE, ACEJMC, ARC-PA, ACEN, CCNE, CEPH, CSWE, NCATE, etc.)? ___ Yes _____No
If Yes, indicate the accrediting organization: _____

C. List the Names and Affiliation(s) of the External Reviewers (minimum of two):

SECTION III: ENROLLMENTS AND DEGREES AWARDED FOR EACH OF THE PAST FIVE YEARS IN THIS PROGRAM

A. Enrollment – Fall Headcount for Each of the Following Years

Undergraduate Enrollment (Bachelor's)				
Fall 2018	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Fall 2021**	**Fall 2022**

Graduate Enrollment (Master's)				
Fall 2018	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Fall 2021**	**Fall 2022**

Graduate Enrollment (Combined Master's/Doctorate)				
Fall 2018	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Fall 2021**	**Fall 2022**

Graduate Enrollment (Doctorate)				
Fall 2018	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Fall 2021**	**Fall 2022**

Certificate Enrollment				
Fall 2018	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2020**	**Fall 2021**	**Fall 2022**

B. Degrees Awarded - For the Fiscal Years as Follows:

Undergraduate Degrees Awarded (Bachelor's)				
2018	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**

Graduate Degrees Awarded (Master's)				
2018	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**

Graduate Degrees Awarded (Combined Master's/Doctorate)				
2018	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**

Graduate Degrees Awarded (Doctorate)				
2018	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**

Certificates Awarded				
2018	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**

SECTION IV: SUMMARY OF THE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL REVIEW

A. Internal Self-Study Findings:

B. External Review and Recommendations:

SECTION V: DEPARTMENTAL / COLLEGE OR SCHOOL / INSTITUTIONAL ACTION PLAN

A. **Brief summary (approx. 250 words) outlining action plan to address recommendation(s*); the provost should have had a chance to review this plan prior to submission:***

B. Mechanism for follow-up and assessing the progress of the recommendation(s).

C. For low enrollment and low degree productivity programs: *

a) List the special circumstances that impact low enrollment and/or low degree productivity in this program;

b) Briefly explain why this program with low enrollment and/or low degree productivity should be continued at this time (i.e., its connection to or support of another program); and

c) Outline clearly the plan and progressive timelines to increase enrollment and/or degree productivity in this program such that it remains viable.

*** For this review period please complete the information as indicated if the program has low enrollment and/or is demonstrating low degree productivity in accordance to the MHEC Definition of Low Degree Productivity.**

<u>MHEC Definition of Low Degree Productivity</u>:

Bachelor's: < 5 in most recent year or a total of 15 in last three years

Master's: < 2 in most recent year or a total of 6 in last three years

Doctorate: < 1 in most recent year or a total of 3 in last three years

SECTION VI: INSTITUTION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submitted by:
Date of Submission:
Contact Information:

a) Name:
b) Email:
c) Office Phone:

APPENDIX L: Warning Status Rubric

	Not Meeting Minimum Standard*	Meets Minimum Standard	Robust Assessment System Standard
Recommendations Action Plan	No action plan items or action plan items that are disconnected from the results of assessment since the last APR	At least one RAP item is informed or inspired by the results of assessment within the program	All RAP items are informed or inspired by the results of assessment
Assessment Methods, Results, Dissemination, and Use	Limited or no evidence of assessment and/or insufficient information provided about methods, results, dissemination, and use for at least one SLO since the last Progress Report or APR	Since the last Progress Report or APR, at least one SLO has been assessed for, and results have been analyzed and used to inform future program planning or improvement	All program SLOs have been assessed for since the last APR, and details have been provided concerning all assessment methods, results, dissemination, and use
Assessment Action Plan	No action plan items or action plan items that are disconnected from the results of assessment since the last APR	At least one AAP item is informed or inspired by the results of assessment within the program	All AAP items are informed or inspired by the results of assessment

*Standards for Academic Program Review are determined by the University System of Maryland (USM), Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE).

APPENDIX M: Progress Reporting Guidelines

Progress Reports happen 2 years prior to full APR for all programs, whether new or established/previously reviewed.

There are a few items UARA needs with each Progress Report as a function of record-keeping:

1. Progress to completion of Recommendations Action Plan items (aka "RAP"; templates on pgs. 19-20 of APR guidelines document) since your last APR – 1-2 pgs. [new programs only have new RAP items]
2. New RAP items taking shape from assessment results – 1-2 pgs.
3. Progress to completion with Assessment Action Plan items (AAP) – 1-2 pgs. [new programs will not have this]
4. Assessment System – methods, results, dissemination, use – 3-6 pgs.
    a. Methods – any new procedures or major changes to instruments/rubrics, scoring, process
    b. Results – summarize findings from last APR cycle through the present; provide some summarized quantitative or qualitative data (ideally organized by outcome; a few tables w/ brief descriptions should be fine)
    c. Dissemination – who sees assessment results and how (esp. changes)
    d. Use – how are results of assessment informing development of new RAP items and improving learning (program changes that should be inspired by assessment results for the closed loop)

UARA will be looking for information that can be contained to somewhere between 6-12 pgs. of material discussing the abovementioned items. This is meant to form a starting point for the full picture presented in the APR report due in 2 years' time. Once programs have submitted these materials, UARA will review them and schedule a meeting with the program chair to go over any questions or concerns. If program documentation is satisfactory in terms of preparation for the full APR. the Progress Report process will conclude; if there is additional information needed or if there are major concerns in advance of the full APR, those will be discussed and the program will be given the opportunity to address these by submitting amended or additional materials. The Progress Report process will provide a window into the assessment system and data programs will have for their full APR, and in instances where there is insufficient evidence of assessment, programs will be given a formal warning that they must have:

1. Assessed learning in the program for at least one program SLO
2. Analyzed the data and informed the department of the outcome
3. Used the results to inform future program planning and/or improvements

Programs that are not able to meet these requirements may be placed on *Warning Status* (see the guidelines, pg.9), which is to indicate that the program is not in compliance with state and accreditor requirements and has the potential to be flagged by USM or Middle States for lack of academic assessment, which could lead to loss of accreditation or funding. UARA will store Progress Reports in the APR Online System so that the Assessment Coordinator may refer to them during the full review process to evaluate Recommendations Action Plan and Assessment Action Plan progress and completion.

Progress Report Timeline in the Academic Year of Review (fall-spring):
October: UARA contacts programs to provide process overview for Progress Reports
November-January: Progress Report documentation is compiled and/or written and submitted to UARA
February: UARA provides feedback to programs and any revisions are made
March: Final Progress Report documentation is collected and stored in APR Online System

APPENDIX N: References

Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement –
https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/elective-classifications/community-engagement/

Definition of Assessment –
Huba, M. E., & Freed, J. E. (2000). *Learner-centered assessment on college campuses: Shifting the focus from teaching to learning*. Allyn & Bacon, 160 Gould St., Needham Heights, MA 02494.

Definition of Student Learning Outcomes –
https://www.bu.edu/provost/files/2017/06/Creating-Learning-Outcomes-Stanford.pdf

MHEC –
https://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/Documents/acadaff/acadproginstitapprovals/COMAR_CH_03_Web.pdf (see pg. 12 'Long-Term Goals', pg. 13)

https://mhec.maryland.gov/institutions_training/Pages/acadaff/programreview.aspx

Middle States –
https://www.msche.org/self-study-guide-for-institutions-in-ssi-2023/

Length of APR reports -
https://www.provost.iastate.edu/academic-programs/accreditation/academic-program-review--purpose-and-process/self-study

https://provost.umn.edu/academic-oversight/academic-program-review/academic-program-review-self-study-guidelines

https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/direct-versus-indirect-assessment-of-student-learning.shtml#:~:text=Direct%20Assessment%20refers%20to%20any,than%20a%20demonstration%20of%20it.