
Academic Program Review Guidelines: Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

This document responds to several *frequently asked questions* about academic program review at Nazareth College. In particular, it clarifies the relationship between departmental program review and assessment of student learning outcomes.

1. What is program review?

A program review consists of four steps: A proposal for the program review; preparation of the self-study; evaluation by an external consultant; and the preparation, in consultation with the dean, of a memorandum of understanding that itemizes an action plan for the department or program. More detailed guidelines can be found at: <http://www.naz.edu/dept/research/academic.cfm>

2. How often are program reviews conducted?

Every five to seven years. The exact timing of the program review is determined by the dean, in consultation with the department or program chairperson.

3. What is the annual assessment of student learning outcomes?

All programs [departments] at Nazareth College must engage in ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes among students within the academic major. Assessment should include analysis of the extent to which students achieve the learning outcomes the program expects of its majors and the actions resulting from this analysis. More detailed directions can be found at: <http://www.naz.edu/dept/research/academic.cfm>

4. What is the relationship between program review and annual assessment of student learning outcomes?

The self study document written during the program review process describes the totality of the program's goals, curriculum and resources. To provide this comprehensive description, the self study must include examination of the use of assessment of student learning over time. The self-study should analyze and describe how the department ensures that its curriculum and resources are contributing optimally to the achievement of the program's stated learning outcomes.

5. Should the program review focus upon student learning outcomes among non-majors?

All programs must engage in ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes among students within the academic major. In addition, many programs [or departments] may find it useful to engage in course-level assessment of student learning outcomes among non-majors. Including attention to needs and course-level outcomes among non-majors may be particularly appropriate for those programs regularly offering courses within the Core Curriculum or other courses with high non-major enrollment. Among such programs, the self-study may appropriately describe students in interfacing programs, as well as the resources and actions necessary to achieve optimal learning outcomes among those students.