Chapter 6: Program Review and Reporting

This chapter guides academic departments through the formal program review process required by the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE). It includes an overview of expectations, a customizable timeline, and practical tools for preparing the self-study, selecting external consultants, and responding to reviewer feedback. The Program Assessment Review (PAR) Rubric supports internal evaluation and continuous improvement. A dedicated FAQ page addresses common questions about scheduling, documentation, and reporting requirements.

- Overview of Program Review
- ADHE Program Review Requirements and Procedures
- Internal Planning Timeline
- Guide to Writing the Self-Study Report
- Example Planning Documents
- Program Assessment Review (PAR) Rubric
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Overview of Program Review

Academic Program Review (APR) at Arkansas State University is a collaborative process led by faculty and supported by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Accreditation and Assessment. It is designed to help departments reflect on program strengths, identify areas for improvement, and plan strategically for the future.

This chapter provides practical guidance for completing each stage of the review, including preparing the self-study, selecting external consultants, responding to feedback, and submitting materials to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE).

What to Expect

- A steering committee of faculty and the department chair will lead the review.
- The department will prepare a comprehensive self-study report using A-State templates.
- Two external consultants will review the report and conduct a site visit.
- The department will submit a response and improvement plan to ADHE.
- Progress reports may be required in the years following the review.

Recommendations

There are excellent recommendations in the article “Avoiding the Potholes of Program Review” written by Halonen and Dunn (2017). It is recommended everyone on the steering committee read the article. The article can be found here:

> **Avoiding the Potholes of Program Review**
> By Jane S. Halonen and Dana S. Dunn | February 27, 2017
>
> Most departments undergo periodic assessment. Here’s how to make it useful.
>
> **https://www.chronicle.com/article/avoiding-the-potholes-of-program-review/**

Some of the recommendations for a successful APR from Halonen and Dunn’s (2017) article are summarized here for your convenience:

- **Number 1: You need a village.**
  Deans, department chairs, and faculty need to participate in the self-study report writing. Creating a steering committee with key faculty who will direct and write the report will help share the responsibility and show a cohesive faculty cohort that is ready to tackle the program's challenges. After the consultants have reviewed the report and conducted the site visit, the dean, department chair, and faculty should collaborate to develop a strategy for moving forward based on the consultants recommendations.
- **Number 2: The past is history but it's important**
  The steering committee should find and distribute the previous APR to the department. The information in the past APR should also be shared with the upcoming consultant as part of the self-study report. The self-study report template includes a synopsis of the previous APR in the first section and the previous APR could be included as an appendix to the new report.
- **Number 3: Set a timeline and stick to it**
  There are a minimum number of days to hire the consultant, create the self-study report, conduct the site visit, and develop a strategic plan established on the APR website. The steering committee should set dates for each milestone and allow some extra time for delays and proofreading.
- **Number 4: Don't hire your buddy**
  The consultants should be experts in the program's discipline and the two consultants together should provide a combination of perspectives for the program's future. However, hiring a close friend will not provide the objectivity and analysis needed for a thorough review.
- **Number 5: Last but probably should be done first—Update the website**
  The consultant is going to read the department and program's website as soon as they are hired. Dedicate a person on the steering committee who will work with the administrative assistant and IT to update the department and program's website.

How to Use This Chapter

This chapter guides departments through the **process of preparing for and completing an Academic Program Review (APR)**. Each page focuses on a key stage in the review cycle, which will help you with the following tasks.

- **Timeline and Scheduling**: Plan ahead using A-State's internal calendar and ADHE's review schedule.
- **Self-Study Preparation**: Use templates and examples to organize your report.
- **Consultant Selection**: Follow best practices for choosing qualified reviewers.
- **Response and Follow-Up**: Learn how to write your institutional response and track progress.
- **Resources and Rubrics**: Access downloadable forms and evaluation tools.

For site visit schedules, communication protocols, and specialized accreditation timelines, see the **External Academic Reviews** chapter in the Accreditation Book.

Faculty are also encouraged to read “Avoiding the Potholes of Program Review” by Halonen and Dunn (2017), which offers practical advice for managing the process effectively.

ADHE Program Review Requirements and Procedures

Academic Program Review at Arkansas State University is conducted in alignment with **Arkansas Code §6-61-214**, which mandates that the **Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB)** regularly review existing academic programs offered by public institutions in the state. These reviews are administered by the **Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE)** to ensure program quality, viability, and alignment with statewide educational goals.

Overview of State Requirements

Review Cycle and Applicability

- All academic programs—**active and inactive**—must undergo external review every **7 to 10 years**.
- Programs that are **not program-specific accredited** are reviewed by **external consultants** selected by the institution.
- **Accredited/licensed/state-certified programs** follow the review schedule of their accrediting body but must still submit their self-study, evaluation, and institutional response to ADHE.

See: Program Site Visit Schedule for a list of when the non-program-specific accredited/licensed/state-certified programs are scheduled to next have an expert consultant visit the A-State campus.

Purpose of Program Review

- Evaluate program effectiveness and alignment with institutional goals.
- Identify areas for improvement and strategic development.
- Inform decisions related to program continuation, modification, or closure.

Required Documentation

- A **comprehensive self-study report** prepared by the institution.
- A **written evaluation** from two external reviewers.
- An **institutional response** to the reviewers' findings.

- All documents must be submitted to ADHE **within six weeks** of receiving the evaluation.

Reviewer Expectations

- Institutions must select **two out-of-state reviewers** with disciplinary expertise.
- At least one reviewer must conduct a **site visit** and meet with faculty, students, and administrators.
- For **Career and Technical Education (CTE)** programs:
  - One reviewer must be a **local industry expert**.
  - One must be an **out-of-state faculty consultant**.

Institutional Response and Follow-Up

- Institutions may respond to ADHE recommendations in writing or request a meeting.
- ADHE may require **progress reports** one, three, or five years after the initial review, depending on the nature of the recommendations.

Consultant Selection, Remuneration, and Reimbursement Procedures

To ensure a smooth and compliant review process, departments must follow these procedures when selecting and compensating external consultants:

Consultant Requirements:

- ADHE requires two out-of-state consultants per program.
- Only one is required to conduct an on-campus site visit.
- The Office of Academic Affairs will work with departments to select appropriate consultants and to decide if more than one consultant should conduct a site visit.

Payment Process:

- Consultants must submit a completed **Procurement Vendor Packet** (including IRS W-9) and a signed contract.
- Payment is processed via requisition **after the ADHE External Reviewers Report** (with CVs for each consultant) is received.

Stipends:

- Negotiated by the Office of Academic Affairs.
- Lead consultants (who travel) receive higher stipends than reader consultants.
- Stipends may vary based on the number of programs reviewed.

Travel and Lodging:

- Use **Hilton Garden Inn** for lodging; reservations should be direct-billed to the department.
- Consultants pay for travel upfront and are reimbursed by the department via requisition.
- Mileage reimbursed at the university’s standard rate.
- Itemized meal receipts are required; alcoholic beverages and non-consultant meals are not reimbursed.
- Only consultant meals will be paid for by department/college (no spouses or children).
- Additional meals will need to be covered by the department/college.

Budget Transfers:

- The department/college will send an itemized list with copies of all receipts to Office of Academic Affairs once all expenses have been paid.
- Office of Academic Affairs will then do one budget transfer to the department/college to cover all expenses.
- The department will provide Office of Academic Affairs with the FOAP or multiple FOAPs (supplies or travel) if necessary for Office of Academic Affairs to do the transfer.

Internal Planning Timeline

Academic Program Review (APR) at A-State is a structured, multi-month process. This guide walks departments through each stage of preparation, consultant coordination, and post-review response, organized by timeframe, to help departments stay on track and meet Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE) requirements.

Communication Process

The Office of Accreditation and Assessment provides guidance and resources to support departments through the external review process. The following documents outline the communication protocols and planning tools used to coordinate programmatic accreditation and consultant reviews:

See: **Communication Protocols for Accredited Programs**

Tips for Success

The Office of Academic Affairs recommends program leaders do the following to have a successful program review:

- Begin planning at least one year before their scheduled site visit.
- Build in buffer time for delays and proofreading.
- Recruit or appoint a program review steering committee of three to five faculty and the department chair
  - Having the department chair and a few key faculty collaborate to write the self-study report helps to share the work load, inform the department about the discoveries made during the self-study analysis, and prepare for the forthcoming site visit
  - Assign a steering committee member to manage website updates.
- Establish an internal timeline by setting the approximate date for the site visit and working backwards.
  - Use the **Program Review Timeline Worksheet** to customize your department's calendar.
  - Faculty and department chairs are busy people and ADHE expects all documents to be submitted by within six weeks of the completed process or by June 1, whichever comes first

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Timeline Overview

Use the timeline below to work backward from your anticipated site visit date.

> **Note:** This timeline applies to both non-accredited programs and those with specialized accreditation, licensure, or state certification. Accredited programs follow the review schedule and procedures of their accrediting body but must still submit their self-study, evaluation, and response to ADHE within six weeks of receiving the final report.

One Year Before the Site Visit

Establish the Site Visit Date and Form Your Team

Checklist:

- Choose an approximate date for the site visit, ideally in the spring semester.
- Form a steering committee of 3–5 faculty members plus the department chair.
- Assign roles for writing, scheduling, and updating the department website.
- Review the previous APR and share it with the committee and potential consultants.

See: Data Request Form (DOCX)

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150 Days Before the Site Visit

Submit Consultant Recommendations

Checklist:

- Complete the Consultant Recommendation Form and submit it to the Office of Accreditation and Assessment.
- Recommend four qualified out-of-state reviewers with disciplinary expertise.
- Avoid selecting close colleagues or collaborators to ensure objectivity.

See: Program Consultants Recommendation Form

See: Reimbursement Policy

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120 Days Before the Site Visit

Secure Consultants

Hiring the program consultants is a critical step in the review process. These individuals provide expert feedback that informs the program's strategic goals and continuous improvement efforts. Consultant selection is a collaborative process involving the program faculty, department chair, dean, Office of Accreditation and Assessment, and Office of Academic Affairs.

Arkansas Code §6-61-214 requires institutions to select a minimum of **two out-of-state reviewers** affiliated with programs similar in mission and scope to the one under review. The **lead consultant** will conduct the site visit, while the **second consultant** serves as a reader. The second consultant may participate in key meetings virtually if all parties agree.

The **steering committee must recommend four consultants** 150 days prior to the anticipated site visit. Recommendations should be based on academic credentials and higher education experience. A mix of peer and aspirant institutions, and both faculty and administrators, is highly encouraged.

During the site visit, the lead consultant should meet with:

- Dean and associate dean
- Department chair
- Faculty (without administration)
- Students
- External constituents (e.g., advisory council, alumni, employers)
- Office of Academic Affairs (including the Provost and AVC responsible for program review)

Checklist:

- ☐ Confirm participation of two reviewers:
  - One will conduct the site visit.
  - The second may serve as a reader and participate virtually.
- ☐ Coordinate with Academic Affairs to finalize consultant agreements.

See: Suggested Program Review Site Visit Schedule/Agenda

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60 Days Before the Site Visit

Submit Draft Self-Study Report

Checklist:

- Send a draft of the self-study to the Office of Academic Affairs for feedback.
- Use the A-State template to ensure alignment with ADHE expectations.

See: **Guide to Writing the Self-Study Report**

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30 Days Before the Site Visit

Send Final Self-Study to Consultants

Checklist:

- Finalize the report and send it to both consultants.
- Include the previous APR as an appendix.
- Ensure the department website is up to date.

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14 Days Before the Site Visit

Finalize Site Visit Itinerary

Checklist:

- Coordinate meetings for the lead consultant with:
  - Faculty (without administration)
  - Students
  - Department chair and dean
  - External stakeholders (e.g., alumni, advisory council)
  - Office of Academic Affairs

Site Visit

Host the Consultant

Checklist:

- Ensure all scheduled meetings occur smoothly.
- Provide access to relevant documents and facilities.
- Gather informal feedback from participants.

See: ADHE External Reviewers Template (DOCX)

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30 Days After the Site Visit

Receive Consultants' Report

Checklist:

- Consultants submit a written evaluation with findings and recommendations.

    - The findings will include key information for continued program improvement. These findings should be the basis for the program leaders' (dean, associate dean, department chair, and program faculty) response letter that includes a timeline and improvement plan.
- Share the report with the steering committee and begin drafting the institutional response.

See: Post Review Planning Document

Within 30 Days of Receiving the Report

Submit Institutional Response and Improvement Plan to the Office of Academic Affairs

Checklist:

- Collaborate with the dean, chair, and faculty to develop a strategic response.
- Include a timeline for implementation and address all consultant recommendations.

See: 1-Year Progress Report Template

Final Submission to ADHE

Deliver All Documents

Checklist:

- Submit the self-study, consultants' report, and institutional response to ADHE within six weeks of the site visit or by **June 1**, whichever comes first.

Follow-Up Reporting

The Office of Academic Affairs expects the following progress reports:

- **1 Year Later**: Submit a progress report by **May 15**.
- **3 Years Later**: Submit additional report if requested.
- **5 Years Later**: Submit final report if required.

Resources

- **Example Planning Documents**

Guide to Writing the Self-Study Report

The AHECB Existing Program Review Policy adopted in October 2008 requires the review of all academic programs every 7-10 years. A major component of the policy is an internal review (self-study) by institutions and an external review by consultants of programs that do not have program-specific accreditation/ licensure/certification. The institution's self-study, consultants' written evaluation, and the institution's response to the consultants' findings will be submitted to ADHE.

> **Submission Logistics**
> The self-study report should be a **PDF document** with appendices, delivered via email or Dropbox to the external reviewers. It should include both **quantitative and qualitative evidence**, and reference existing documents such as strategic plans, assessment reports, and curriculum materials.

Required Sections

The program's self-study to be reviewed by external consultants should contain the following information:

Introduction

1. Program history and mission
2. Summary of last program review
3. Progress on previous recommendations

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

1. Describe specific educational goals, objectives, learning outcomes, and activities of the program.
2. Explain how the program serves the general education program and other disciplinary programs on the campus, if applicable.
3. Document market demand and/or state/industry need for careers stemming from the program.
4. Document student demand for the program.

Data Presentation/Analysis

Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs
• Program goals/objectives • Learning outcomes • Co-curricular activities (high-impact activities) • Enrollment trends: number of majors, percent changes • Employment and graduate school opportunities	• Program goals/objectives • Learning outcomes • Co-curricular activities (high-impact activities) • Enrollment trends: number of majors, percent changes • Enrollment trends: pipeline of applications, program acceptances, program enrollment • Employment and graduate school opportunities

Curriculum

1. Describe how program content parallels current thinking/trends in the field/trade (best practices, advisory committee recommendations, etc.).
2. Provide an outline for each program curriculum, including the sequence of courses.
3. State the degree requirements, including general education requirements, institutional, college or school requirements, and major requirements.
4. Indicate the semester/year the major/program courses were last offered. Exclude general education courses.
5. Provide syllabi for discipline-specific courses and departmental objectives for each course.
6. Outline the process for the introduction of new courses, including all internal curriculum review processes and the findings.
7. List courses in the proposed degree program currently offered by distance delivery.
8. Describe the instructor-to-student and student-to-student interaction for distance courses (prerequisite courses, lab requirements, examination procedures-online/proctored, instructor response to student assignments).

Data Presentation/Analysis (Detailed data/documents such as syllabi could be assimilated into an appendix)

Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs
• Course rotations/schedule • Identify courses not offered in the last three years • Course prerequisites • Additional graduation requirements • Possible presentations: Bulletin pages; 8-semester degree plans	• Course rotations • Identify courses not offered in the last three years • Course prerequisites • Additional graduation requirements • Possible presentations: Bulletin pages; degree plans

Program Faculty (full-time/adjunct/part-time)

1. Provide curriculum vitae or program faculty information form for all full-time program faculty. The vita or form should include the following: all degrees and institutions granting the degrees; field or specialty of degrees; number of years employed as program faculty at the institution; current academic rank, if applicable; professional certifications/licenses;

evidence of quality and quantity of creative and scholarly/research activity; evidence of quality and quantity of service activities; evidence of professional activities and non-teaching work experiences related to courses taught; list of course numbers/course titles of credit courses taught over the past two academic years; and other evidence of quality teaching.

2. Indicate the academic credentials required for adjunct/part-time faculty teaching major/program courses.
3. Describe the orientation and evaluation processes for faculty, including adjunct and part-time faculty.
4. Provide average number of courses and number of credit hours taught for full-time program faculty for current academic year.

Data Presentation/Analysis (Detailed data/documents such as faculty CVs could be assimilated into an appendix)

Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs
• Faculty 180 CVs • SSCH per faculty over time period of analysis • Number of courses taught per faculty per semester and year • Accounting of scholarly/research activities • Other productivity as appropriate and involves students: grant production	• Faculty 180 CVs • SSCH per faculty over time period of analysis • Number of courses taught per faculty per semester and year • Accounting of scholarly/research activities • Other productivity as appropriate and involves students: grant production

> Faculty 180 holds grant productivity and can generate a report

Program Resources

1. Describe the institutional support available for faculty development in teaching, research, and service.
2. Describe the professional development of full-time program faculty over the past two years including the institutional financial support provided to faculty for the activities.
3. Provide the annual library budget for the program or describe how library resources are provided for the program.
4. Describe the availability, adequacy, and accessibility of campus resources (research, library, instructional support, instructional technology, etc.).
5. Provide a list of program equipment purchases for the past three years.

Suggested Data Presentation/Analysis

Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs

• Faculty Center services • Research and Technology Transfer • Assessment Office services • Graduate and teaching assistants	• Faculty Center services • Research and Technology Transfer • Assessment Office services • Graduate and teaching assistants

Instruction via Distance Technology (if applicable)

This section should be completed if at least 50% of any program/major course is delivered
electronically.

1. Summarize institutional policies on the establishment, organization, funding, and management of distance courses/degrees.
2. Summarize the policies and procedures to keep the technology infrastructure current.
3. Summarize the procedures that assure the security of personal information.
4. Describe the support services that will be provided to students enrolled in distance technology courses/programs by the institution and/or other entities:
   - Advising
   - Course registration
   - Financial aid
   - Course withdrawal
   - E-mail account
   - Access to library resources
   - Help Desk
5. Describe technology support services that will be provided to students enrolled in distance technology courses/programs by the institution and/or other entities.
6. Describe the orientation for students enrolled in distance technology courses/programs.
7. Summarize the institutional policy for faculty course load and number of credit hours taught, compensation, and ownership of intellectual property.

Majors/Declared Students

1. State the number of undergraduate/graduate majors/declared students in each degree program under review for the past three years.
2. Describe strategies to recruit, retain, and graduate students.
3. Provide the number of program graduates over the past three years.

Data Presentation/Analysis

Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs

• Enrollment trends: number of majors, percent changes • Program retention from year-to-year • Graduation trends, number graduates, percent changes	• Enrollment trends: pipeline of applications, program acceptances, program enrollment • Program retention from year-to-year • Graduation trends, number graduates, percent changes • Time to degree

Program Assessment

1. Describe the program assessment process and provide outcomes data (standardized entrance/placement test results, exit test results, etc.).
2. Describe program/major exit or capstone requirements.
3. Provide information on how teaching is evaluated, the use of student evaluations, and how the results have affected the curriculum.
4. Provide transfer information for major/declared students including the receiving institutions for transfer and programs of study.
5. Provide information for program graduates continuing their education by entering graduate school or by performing volunteer service.
6. Provide aggregate results of student/alumni/employer satisfaction surveys.
7. Describe how the program is aligned with the current job market needs of the state or local communities.
8. Provide job placement information for program graduates including the number of graduates placed in jobs related to the field of study.

   For undergraduate career and technical education programs only, provide the following:
   - Names and location of companies hiring program graduates.
   - Average hourly rate for program graduates.
   - Names of companies requiring the certificate/degree for initial or continued employment.

Data Presentation/Analysis (Detailed data/documents such as survey results and Nuventive annual assessment reports could be assimilated into an appendix)

Undergraduate Programs	Graduate Programs
• Overview of three or more years of assessment data for all learning outcomes • DFW rates for courses over the last three years • Faculty 180 CVs will have course evaluation data • Surveys conducted by program faculty • Surveys conducted by institution and disaggregated by the program	• Overview of three or more years of assessment data for all learning outcomes • FW rates for courses over the last three years • Faculty 180 CVs will have course evaluation data • Surveys conducted by program faculty • Surveys conducted by institution and disaggregated by the program

Program Effectiveness (strengths, opportunities)

1. List the strengths of the program.
2. List the areas of the program most in need of improvement.
3. List program improvements accomplished over the past two years.
4. Describe planned program improvements, including a timetable and the estimated costs. Identify program improvement priorities.

Institutional Review Team

List the names/departments of the self-study committee chair and committee members.

Example Planning Documents

These examples are provided as reference for the Program Review Process

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A-State Internal Timeline Worksheet

Program Name: _____

Name of Self-Study Chair: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Timeline Action	Important Dates
One-year prior to assigned site-visit year: Establish approximate date for site visit	Approximate site visit date is:
150 days prior to site visit: submit consultant recommendations to Provost	Submit consultant recommendation form to Provost Office by:
120 days prior to site visit: secure consultants	Secure consultants by:
60 days prior to site visit: send self-study draft to Office of Academic Affairs, Dean, and Department Chair	Draft of self-study report to Office of Academic Affairs by:
30 days prior to site visit: send self-study to consultants	Send final draft to consultants by:
14 days prior to site visit: establish site visit itinerary	Send itinerary to site consultant by:
30 days after site visit: receive consultants' report	Consultants' report received on:
Within 30 days of receiving consultants' report: develop implementation plan with Academic Affairs, Dean, Chair, and faculty, and write institutional response (Required by ADHE)	Response to consultants' report due on
Regardless of site visit date, all above steps completed	All steps completed by April 15 of the assigned academic year: 20____
Deliver self-study report, reviewers report, and implementation plan/institutional response to ADHE within six weeks of process completion	June 1 of the assigned academic year: 20_____
One year after implementation: follow-up report on progress	Spring 20XX: Progress report due May 15, 20_____

If needed, three years after implementation: follow-up report on progress	Spring 20XX: Progress report due May 15, 20_____
If needed, five years after implementation: follow-up report on progress	Spring 20XX: Progress report due May 15, 20_____

A-State Internal Timeline Worksheet (DOCX)

Data Request Form

Used to request institutional data for the self-study report. Includes metrics like enrollment, graduation rates, retention, course rotations, and survey data.

Data Request Form (DOCX)

Program Consultants Recommendation Form

Departments must submit their **consultant recommendations** to the Office of Academic Affairs **150 days prior to the anticipated site visit**. The submission should include:

- Four recommended consultants, ordered by preference. They should be a mix of faculty and administrators from peer and aspirant institutions.
- Curriculum vitae for each recommended consultant.

Each of the recommendations must include the following:

Name	
Position	
Institution	
Department	
Department Program	
Office Phone	
Cell Phone (if available)	
Email	

Rationale for Selection Please discuss the following items: • Consultant's professional experience • How the consultant's institutional mission is comparable to A-State • Why the consultant's program is of interest in developing/modeling A-State's program/s and how this interest aligns with A-State's program under review • Comparable size of consultant's program/department • Reasons why this program is aspirational for A-State	

Program Consultants Recommendation Form (DOCX)

Program Review Site Visit Schedule/Agenda

Face-to-Face

Date of Visit

Reviewer Name:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Hotel:		**Flight Arrival:**		**Flight Departure:**	
Confirmation number:		**Airline/Flight number:**		**Airline/Flight number:**	

Activity	Date	Time	Location	Escort
Pickup from airport				
Dinner				
Meet with College Dean and Associate Dean/s				

Meet with Department Chair				
Meet with Faculty (without administration present)				
Lunch (this could be included with the student or faculty meeting)				
Meet with Students (without faculty present)				
Meet with external constituents (advisory council, alumni, employers, etc.)				
Exit Interview with: · Provost · AVC for Assessment and Accreditation · College Dean and Associate Dean/s · Department Chair				

Program Review Site Visit Schedule/Agenda (Face-to-Face) (DOCX)

Virtual

Date/s of Virtual Visit:

Lead Reviewer's Name:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Secondary Reviewer's Name:

Cell Phone:

Email:

Activity	Date	Time	Zoom Link
Meet with College Dean and Associate Dean/s			
Meet with Department Chair			
Meet with Faculty (without administration present)			
Lunch (this could be included with the student or faculty meeting)			
Meet with Students (without faculty present)			
Meet with external constituents (advisory council, alumni, employers, etc.)			
Exit Interview with: · Provost · AVC for Assessment and Accreditation · College Dean and Associate Dean/s · Department Chair			

Program Review Site Visit Schedule/Agenda (Virtual) **(DOCX)**

A-State ADHE Program Review

External Reviewers Template

Used by external consultants to structure their written evaluation. Covers curriculum, faculty, resources, effectiveness, and distance education.

ADHE External Reviewers Template **(DOCX)**

Post Review Planning Document

Required documents: As part of the Post-Review Response and Planning, please develop and submit two documents: (1) the completed table below articulating the program's response and improvement plans and (2) a cover letter from the College Dean and Department Chair that acknowledges the reviewers' recommendations and provides a commitment to the articulated improvment plan for the program/s.

In this section, please copy the recommendations that the external reviewers provided in their report; provide the institution/department/program response to the recommendation with the program's plans for improvement; describe the actions that will be taken as a result of the review; if the action was based on the recommendation/s from the external reviewers; note when the action will be completed and who is responsible for seeing that it is completed; and finally, list any resources that will be used to complete the action. Please add lines to the table as necessary.

Recommendations from External Reviewers (copied from the external review report)	**Response** (faculty, chair/director, dean's evaluation of recommendation)	**Future Planned Action**	**Timeline**	**Responsible Person/Group**	**Resources Needed**

Post Review Planning Document (DOCX)

Program Review—Improvement Plan Progress Report

Please copy the Improvement Plan you created one year ago and provide an update as to the progress of the consultants' recommendations.

Program:

Date:

Name of Person Completing this Report:

Recommendations from External Reviewers (copied from the external review report)	**Response** (faculty, chair/director, dean's evaluation of recommendation)	**Action**	**Timing**	**Responsible Person/Group**	**Resources Received and Used**	**Status of Recommendation**	**Future Plans**

Program Review 1 Year Progress Report (DOCX)

Program Assessment Review (PAR) Rubric

This rubric evaluates the completeness and quality of program assessment reports. Each category is rated as **Exemplary**, **Good**, **Developing**, or **Needs Improvement**.

Legend

- **Exemplary** — □□ Green
- **Good** — □□ Yellow
- **Developing** — □□ Orange
- **Needs Improvement** — □□ Red

Download the PAR Rubric S25

Program Assessment Review (PAR) Rubric

	Exemplary	Good	Developing	Needs Improvement
Program Information				
Program Information	All program information sections complete.	Most program information sections complete.	Less than 50% of program information section complete.	Program information not started.
Outcomes				
Learning Outcomes	Three or more distinct learning outcomes are present.	Three or more learning outcomes are present, but additional differentiation may be needed.	A) Fewer than three learning outcomes are present; OR B) Learning outcomes are not distinct.	A) Fewer than three learning outcomes are present; AND B) Learning outcomes are not distinct.

	Exemplary	Good	Developing	Needs Improvement
Assessment Schedule	All outcomes are assessed within a two-year assessment review cycle (Accreditation and Assessment Office).	All outcomes are assessed within a four-year assessment cycle (Higher Learning Commission).	Most outcomes are assessed within a four-year assessment cycle (Higher Learning Commission).	Fewer than 50% of outcomes are assessed within a four-year assessment cycle (Higher Learning Commission).
Methods				
Outcome-Method Alignment	Clearly defined alignment between the outcome(s) and selected method(s) as described in the report.	Somewhat clearly defined alignment between the outcome(s) and selected method(s) as described in the report.	Alignment between outcome(s) and method(s) is not clear.	No evidence of alignment between outcome(s) and method(s).
Method & Method Type	Method(s) are clear; have face validity for specific purpose and student learning; use both direct and indirect method(s).	Method(s) are clear; have face validity for specific purpose and student learning; use ONLY direct OR indirect method(s).	Method(s) are clear; lack face validity for specific purpose OR student learning; use ONLY direct OR indirect method(s).	Method(s) lack clarity; lack face validity for specific purpose OR student learning; use ONLY direct OR indirect method(s).
Method Target	Clear student-focused target (i.e., rubric percentages by category; overall test and item performance; licensure exam scores; etc.). Rationale for choosing target is articulated (e.g., based on local standards, historical trends, external standards, etc.).	Clear student-focused target; target is not delimited (i.e., lacks rubric percentages by category; overall test and item performance; licensure exam scores; etc.). Rationale for choosing target is articulated (e.g., based on local standards, historical trends, external standards, etc.).	Clear student-focused target; target is not delimited (i.e., lacks rubric percentages by category; overall test and item performance; licensure exam scores; etc.). No rationale for choosing target is articulated (e.g., based on local standards, historical trends, external standards, etc.).	Unclear target OR not student-focused target; target is not delimited (i.e., lacks rubric percentages by category; overall test and item performance; licensure exam scores; etc.). No rationale for choosing target is articulated (e.g., based on local standards, historical trends, external standards, etc.).
Findings				

	Exemplary	Good	Developing	Needs Improvement
Data Reported (e.g., data collection/method of sampling, item analysis, frequency counts, instrument norming statistics, etc.)	Results presented in a clear, easy to interpret format; explanation of data collection method clearly articulated to include such items as sample size, sampling method and background of students.	Results presented but take some time to find and/or interpret; some information about data collection methodology provided.	Results presented but were not clear or easy to interpret; very little information about data collection methodology provided.	Results are not presented.
Analysis & Reflection	Interpretation of results clearly presented and appropriate based on analysis of the data; if possible, combines analysis of direct and indirect measures.	Interpretation of results is somewhat clear and appropriate based on analysis of the data.	Interpretation of results is unclear or inappropriate based on analysis of the data.	Interpretation of results not reported.
Action Plan	Clearly identifies plans for action based on assessment results, including timeline for implementation and persons responsible for implementation; action plans may include the following scenarios: 1) Target Exceeded—Consider longitudinal data and whether the assessment method should change, 2) Target Met—Continue to monitor over an identified timeline, 3) Target Not Met—Improvement Plan articulated, OR recognition of invalid/unreliable assessment process changes needed.	Evidence of plans for action tied to assessment results, but may not identify a timeline for implementation or persons responsible for implementation and/or all possible scenarios of assessment results.	Evidence of plans for action not clearly tied to assessment results and does not identify a timeline for implementation or all scenarios of assessment results.	Does not specify plans for action based on assessment results.
Personnel	Personnel are listed and more than the assessment leader are involved in the full assessment process. The Process is described.	Personnel are listed and more than the assessment leader are involved in the full assessment process.	The assessment leader is listed.	No personnel are listed.

	Exemplary	Good	Developing	Needs Improvement
Evidence (e.g., raw data, rubrics, meeting minutes, student artifacts (free of all identifying information), etc.)	Sufficient evidence is provided to corroborate all data reported, such as rubrics; spreadsheets with rubric scores; spreadsheets with rubric scores; interrater reliability information; aggregated test/item analysis; test psychometric statistics; disaggregated test/item analysis by groups of students with relevant characteristics; licensure exam scores; surveys; survey results; focus group themes/transcripts; meeting minutes; advisory board feedback or analysis; etc. Evidence is a mixture of direct and indirect measures. This is true for ALL findings.	Supporting evidence provided is linked to data, but partially substantiates data reported and is a mixture of direct and indirect measures; this is true for MOST findings.	The link between finding and supporting evidence is difficult to determine; this is true for SOME findings. There is not a mixture of direct and indirect measures.	No substantiating evidence provided.
Curriculum Mapping				
Completion	All courses map to at least one outcome on the curriculum map; All maps (i.e., University Learning Outcomes, curriculum, accreditation, etc.) are complete within the workspace.	All courses map to at least one outcome on the curriculum map, but no other maps are complete.	The curriculum map is incomplete.	No work appears on the curriculum map.
Assessment Over Time	Assessments appear consistently throughout the curriculum map (some assessments appear in lower-level courses while others appear in upper-level courses).	Assessments appear inconsistently on the curriculum map.	Assessments are concentrated in one area of the program.	Assessments do not appear on the curriculum map.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This page answers common questions about the academic program review process at Arkansas State University. Whether you're preparing a self-study, selecting external reviewers, or submitting materials to ADHE, the FAQ provides quick access to essential information about timelines, expectations, documentation, and policies. Use this resource to clarify procedures and ensure your department is on track throughout the review cycle.

Q: What is the purpose of Academic Program Review?

A: To establish a process for the statewide review of academic programs; and to identify certificate and degree programs not meeting minimum standards of quality or viability and establish schedules for either resolving these concerns or removing the programs from the AHECB approved program inventory.

Q: Is Review of Existing Academic Programs in the Arkansas Code?

A: §6-61-214

Q: Where can I find the AHECB policy for Review of Existing Academic Programs?

A: AHECB Policy 5.12

Q: Which programs need to be reviewed? Which programs will be reviewed by external reviewers?

A: All certificate and degree programs (both active and inactive) offered by public colleges and universities in Arkansas will be reviewed through the Existing Academic Program Review Process. Academic programs which are not program-specific accredited will be reviewed by external reviewers/consultants.

Q: What is the frequency for external review of programs?

A: AHECB policy states that institutions will schedule an external review of all existing academic programs every 7–10 years, beginning Fall 2010.

Q: Who will pay for program reviews?

A: The institution pays for the program review.

Q: What documents must the institution prepare for the review? What information should be included in the institutions' self-study report?

A: The institution must prepare a self-study document for the review. Components of the self-study will include, but not be limited to, information related to: program need/demand, curriculum, faculty, resources, course delivery methods, student outcomes, and recent/planned program improvements.

Q: When do I send the reviewers' report to ADHE?

A: The reviewers' written evaluation and institution's response will be submitted to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

Q: When will the findings of the Academic Program Review be submitted to the AHECB?

A: Findings from academic program reviews will be reported annually to the AHECB.

Q: What will ADHE do with the findings?

A: ADHE staff will recommend that the AHECB receive the reviewers' report and acknowledge that the contents may be consulted as a resource when decisions must be made by the Board regarding institutional role and scope, budget requests, new program approval, and statewide funding issues. The staff may propose other general resolutions that address statewide issues.

A further resolution will encourage institutional administrators, faculty members, and boards of trustees to consider implementing the recommendations made by the consultants for program improvement.

If appropriate, a resolution will be offered concerning program deletions, modifications, and/or follow-up.

Q: What recourse does the institution have to ADHE staff recommendations to the AHECB?

A: The president, chancellor, or chief academic officer may respond to ADHE staff recommendations in writing or request a conference to discuss the recommendations prior to consideration by the AHECB. The discussions will be limited to those issues that concern the state's interests, i.e., program closings and broader statewide issues that the AHECB may wish to address. Any recommendations in the consultants' reports that are not included in the ADHE staff recommendations would pertain to matters of campus concern and, therefore, would represent suggestions to be considered locally.

Q: When must an out of state reviewer be used? How many are required? What credentials/qualifications must they possess? Is there a different guideline for reviewers of CTE programs?

A: Academic programs which are not program-specific accredited will be reviewed by external reviewers. Institutions will select a minimum of two out-of-state reviewers affiliated with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review. At least one reviewer is required to conduct a site visit and meet with program faculty, students, and administrators. Individuals selected as reviewers must be well-qualified and without bias toward the institution(s) under review. The reviewers must hold appropriate academic credentials and/or professional licensure/certification, and have experience with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review.

For CTE programs, one reviewer should be a local industry expert (not affiliated with the institution) to conduct an on-site evaluation of the programs. The local reviewer for CTE programs may not hold an academic credential, but must hold professional licensure/certification in the field. An out-of-state CTE faculty consultant/reader also must

review the self-study documents, industry experts' recommendations, and program curricula. The out-of-state reviewer for CTE programs will not be required to come to Arkansas; however, the local and out-of-state reviewers must work together to prepare the external reviewers report.

Q: Does ADHE have to approve the reviewers used for external review of programs?

A: No. The reviewer should not be a person who initially started the program or who has been involved in the operation of the program. The reviewer can be from a contiguous state and could even be someone with whom you have written an article or book as long as the person is professionally qualified to complete the review.

Q: What information should be included in the reviewers' report?

A: The external reviewers' template is only a guide. You may include more information in your report.

Q: How will the report for accredited/licensed/state certified programs be used?

A: Accredited/licensed/state certified programs will follow the usual review practices and schedule of the accrediting/approval body. Their report and your responses must be sent to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

Q: To minimize costs, can institutions get together to employ out-of-state reviewers, e.g., for the Associate of Arts/Associate of Science transfer degrees?

A: Yes. Each institution participating in such an arrangement should submit their own reviewers' written evaluation and institution's response to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

Q: Can I change my review schedule once it's submitted to ADHE?

A: Yes, send an email to ADHE of your schedule change(s). The changes will be made to your review schedule and you will receive a revised copy.