

APR-7 External Review Expectations and Procedures

Who, What, Where, and Why

1. *Who*: One or two faculty members from peer programs and institutions prepared to apply professional standards of evaluation to support Idaho State University's seven-year academic program review (APR-7). Programs should 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.)
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 the 2025-2026 APR-7 year, an external reviewer should visit during the fall of 2025 or early spring of 2026).
4. *Where*: Idaho State University's campuses and/or, where appropriate, remotely.

External peer review offers objective qualitative feedback from respected colleagues as part of the seven-year academic program review (APR-7). 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.

Each program under review must provide external reviewers with sufficient and relevant information concerning the program. In addition to the self-study report, common requests for information include:

- the previous APR-7 reports (self-study report, external review report, and action plan, if applicable),
- the current academic year course catalog (providing a link to relevant webpages),
- most recent course syllabi,
- representative examples of course and **assessment materials** (e.g., examinations, assignments),
- the program's student assessment and learning outcomes plan,
- evidence of student learning outcomes (e.g., for example, samples of student work, national standardized testing results)
- and any other materials the program deems necessary to assess itself.

External Reviewers may conduct on-site or virtual visits on-site or virtually, where appropriate. Both types of visits provide the reviewer with the opportunity to evaluate the program in an applied manner that cannot be achieved to the same degree through document review.

When a reviewer is visiting ISU, the program should plan activities such as:

- individual and/or group meetings with all program faculty (across multiple campuses and, if possible, including part-time);
- meetings with any office personnel or faculty that manage the 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;
- observations of representative classes of both lower- and upper-division course offerings for undergraduate programs and courses at multiple graduate levels for graduate programs;
- the opportunity to review program resources (e.g., facilities, library resources, equipment, etc.); and
- examination of additional documentation that may not have been included in the pre-visit information packet, but is deemed relevant by a reviewer and/or the program.

A reviewer should affirm the program's declared strengths and weaknesses, validate the evidence supporting student learning outcomes, critically evaluate its capabilities and resource needs, and address academic rigor. A reviewer should also evaluate the overall quality of the educational experience. for program graduates.

Within a month of the visit, the reviewer or review team must submit a written report detailing the reviewer's conclusions to the Department Chair/Program Director and the Dean's Office. **This report is an essential supporting document and a critical resource for future planning.**

Review Questions

Although the seven-year academic program review (APR-7) should address all aspects included in the guidelines and template documents, it is expected that the external reviewer should evaluate the program using a SWOT analysis and/or based upon the merits of the following questions:

1. Goals and Objectives

- A. Are the program's mission, long-term strategic plan, and vision aligned with the College/School's and the University's? Are there any areas where misalignment of potential areas of conflict may exist?
- 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, if one has been conducted?

2. Program

- A. Are the goals and objectives of the degree program clearly defined? How effectively is the program achieving its stated 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 program's structure hinder or enhance emerging trends in the discipline?
- D. What are the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges?

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 a balance between breadth and specialization?
 - ii. What evidence indicates whether course offerings meet student needs?
 - b. What opportunities for experiential learning (e.g., practicum, clinical rotations, internships, service learning, research, field experiences) are available for students?
 - 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 stated student learning objectives?
 - e. What curricular and pedagogical modifications would enhance student learning?
- B. What resources are in place to support student learning, and what evidence demonstrates their effectiveness?
- C. What are the efforts to improve student success? If so, are they effective?

4. Facilities, Support, and Administration

- A. Does the University demonstrate commitment to the program, its students, its faculty, and the resources necessary to ensure academic rigor?
- B. Does the program have appropriate expertise and sufficient staffing to serve its students and accomplish its student learning outcomes?
- C. Do current resources, including facilities and equipment, effectively and adequately support student learning outcomes and program goals?
- D. Do the library and other information resources adequately support the program?