Frequently Asked Questions About the APR Process:

1. What is considered an academic program?

An academic program is an organized sequence of learning experiences and related activities designed to teach students a defined body of knowledge and skills leading to a recognized level of mastery in an academic discipline or applied field. Academic programs include academic disciplines that offer certificates and/or degrees approved by the Connecticut State College and University System, the State of Connecticut, the New England Commission of Higher Education, and other programmatic accreditors. They also include academic disciplines that offer coursework but not degrees.

2. What is Academic Program Review (APR)?

Academic Program Review (APR) is a structured, cyclical, ongoing, and dynamic process for assessing the mission, goals, infrastructure, operations, and outcomes of academic programs and their relation to the missions of the Connecticut State Community College and the Connecticut State College and University System.

3. What is the purpose of Academic Program Review?

The purpose of APR is to strengthen academic programs through inquiry, assessment, and reflection. It is our primary means of ensuring that our programs are of high quality and that they provide the best possible services to our students. The Academic Program Review process in intended to evaluate:

a. The extent to which program goals, objectives, and student learning outcomes are aligned with the institutional mission of CT State.
b. The degree to which students achieve the learning outcomes that programs are designed to teach.
c. Student success in terms of access, retention, progression, completion, and post-completion attainment.
d. The adequacy of program infrastructure and resources.
e. The degree to which program outcomes are equitable across all student groups.

4. How often are academic programs reviewed?

At a minimum, the CSCU Board or Regents requires that all credit-bearing degree and certificate programs and non-degree-granting academic disciplines undergo APR once every seven-years.

5. Do all academic programs have to undergo an Academic Program Review?

All academic programs are required to participate in the APR process. However, programs that are independently accredited may submit the self-study report required by their external accreditor in lieu an APR self-study report. However, if a program's external accreditation self-study report does not respond to all the sections listed in this BOR APR Policy, then it must attach an addendum report that responds to any unaddressed sections.

6. How will the results be used?

The results of APR provides data that reveal the degree to which: a) programs accomplish their missions, b) students experience success, and c) learning outcomes are equitable across all student groups. The the Academic Leadership Team uses APR results to make decisions about how to most effectively allocate resources to improve programs and deliver high quality services to students. In addition, the APR process may be used to make programmatic changes such as credit or contact hour adjustments or modifications to curriculum objectives, learning outcomes, course content, linkages across program components, and/or teaching strategies.

7. Do APR results affect faculty and/or staff performance evaluations and/or progress toward promotion and/or tenure?

The APR process is focused on the performance of *programs,* not personnel. As such, it has no impact on the evaluation of faculty or staff and will not affect progress toward promotion or tenure.

8. What is the timeline for completing the APR self-study?

The APR process is designed to be completed over three semesters as illustrated in the following table:

Activity	Timeframe
BOR APR Form 1, *APR Scheduling Form*, prepared by CT State Academic Leadership Team and submitted to BOR by CT State Provost, or designee, to confirm program(s) that will be reviewed that academic year.	December 31 AY1
CSCU Administration presents the *Annual Academic Program Review Schedule* to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the BOR for approval.	February AY1
Annual Academic Program Review Schedule is approved by the full BOR.	May AY1
Program Coordinators (PCs) complete APR Self-Study Reports, including comments from external reviewers (if applicable) and submit them to their Chief Academic Officers.	September – April AY2
Chief Academic Officers review APR Self-Study Reports and prepare summaries for CSCU BOR.	May - August, AY2
BOR APR Form 2, *APR End-of-Year (EOY) Report* from the prior academic year, submitted by CSCU Chief Academic Officers.	August 15, AY2
BOR reviews BOR APR Form 2, *APR End-of-Year (EOY) Report* and responds accordingly.	Fall Semester, AY3

The self-study report is developed during the fall and spring semesters of the academic year in which the program is due for review. It is then submitted to the Chief Academic Officer and the Board of Regents, who review the report and respond by the end of the subsequent fall semester.

10. Who is responsible for preparing the self-study report?

APR Self-Study Reports are intended to be collaborative efforts, facilitated by program coordinators and/or department chair, which involve all key stakeholders – faculty, staff, students, administrators, and external partners. Roles and responsibilities are to be determined by Systemwide Discipline Committees (SDCs) in collaboration with their respective Area of Study (AOS) Academic Deans.

11. Who provides the quantitative data required for the self-study report?

Data on enrollment, student characteristics, employability, and student success will be provided by the CT State Office of Research and System Effectiveness (ORSE). Data from the assessment of student learning outcomes in the academic and employability domains must be provided by the faculty and staff of the academic programs themselves with assistance from ORSE and the CT State Director of Academic Program Review and Assessment.

12. Are there specific topics that must be addressed in the APR Self-Study?

Full APR Self-Study reports are expected to include the following sections (see the CT State APR Timeline and Self-Study Report Template for additional details):

Section I: An overview of the program that includes the following:

- Program mission and goals
- Program description
- Curriculum description
- List of essential student learning outcomes (SLOs)
- Curriculum map
- Instructional modalities (e.g., Traditional, Online, Hybrid, LRON, FLEX
- Description of program resources
- Enrollment trends since last APR
- Student characteristics
- Summary of program operations

Section II: An appraisal of the program that includes:

- Description of current and projected employment trends for program graduates
- Assessments of student success Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Assessments

Section III: Feedback from external reviewers and/or advisory committees
Section IV: Discussion of appraisal results
Section V: An executive summary and action plan
Section VI: Response from administration/leadership of the institution
Section VII: Appendices

13. Does APR differ based on program type?

The degree to which the topics listed under FAQ #12 apply to a program will vary by program type (e.g., externally accredited certificate and degree programs, non-externally accredited certificate and degree programs, and academic disciplines that do not offer degrees or certificates) and area of study (e.g., Arts & Humanities, Business & Hospitality, Health Careers, Nursing & Health Careers, Math & Science, Engineering and Technology, and Social & Behavioral Sciences). Program Coordinators, Department Chairs, and Campus Deans should consult with their AOS Academic Deans to determine the requirements that are applicable to each program.

14. What are the qualifications for external reviewers?

Many of the diverse degree programs offered throughout CT State require that external advisory committees and/or external reviewers with discipline specific knowledge participate in the academic program review process. The Statewide Discipline Committees (SDCs) will establish external reviewer requirements and procedures, in collaboration with the School Academic Deans, and in accordance with the unique missions, cultures, and professional norms. External reviews, when required, should include a site visit and a report of findings.

15. How do we recruit external reviewers?

External reviewers include, but are not limited to, program alumni, external partners, individuals in the community with specialized expertise, and/or faculty and staff who work in similar programs at other institutions. They are identified through professional networks, trade associations, or regional and national conferences.