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 proficiency 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 (CT State) and the Connecticut State College and University System (CSCU).

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 is 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. Student success in terms of access, retention, progression, completion, and post-completion attainment.
   c. The degree to which students achieve the program's stated learning and employability/transfer outcomes.
   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, CT State requires that all credit-bearing degree and certificate programs undergo APR at least once every five 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. Academic disciplines and cross-disciplinary programs that do not offer degrees or certificates are not required to follow this standard. A separate review process will be developed for these programs.

6. How will the results be used?

The results of APR provide 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 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 reappointment, promotion, or tenure.

8. **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 chairs, which involve all key stakeholders – faculty, staff, students, administrators, and, if appropriate, external partners. Roles and responsibilities are to be determined through the shared governance process.

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

The quantitative data points required for an APR self-study report are of two types: 1) student success, including access, retention, completion, and post-completion metrics and 2) the results of measures of student learning in the academic and employability domains. The Division of Institutional Research and Effectiveness will provide student success data. Leaning outcome data should be collected, analyzed, and reported by the programs themselves with assistance from the CT State Director of Program Review and Assessment.

10. **What are the qualifications for external reviewers?**

All APR self-study reports are required to include comments from external advisory boards/committees and/or external reviewers with expertise in the discipline or applied field of the program. External reviewer qualifications and procedures will be determined collaboratively between the self-study team and the COS Academic Dean.

11. **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.