

Memo for IP&B: What do the ACCJC Standards say about Program Review?

In addition to the standards, themselves, ACCJC also provides us with a “Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions¹.” Intended for use both by visiting teams and by colleges writing their self-evaluations, the Guide lists the standards along with *sample questions* to help gauge how well the college is meeting them. These are **not** the only questions evaluating teams may ask when determining whether the college is meeting the standards. ACCJC has also included a list of “potential sources of sample evidence” for each standard.

In this memo I’ve provided reference to the areas of the Guide that make explicit mention of “program review.” There are many other standards for which program review may be relevant/useful during our evaluation and documentation of proficiency, but are not included here for sake of brevity.

★ It’s worthwhile to notice that in several cases, although a particular standard may not explicitly mention program review, the corresponding sample question(s) DO – i.e. just because a standard doesn’t identify program review by name, it doesn’t necessarily mean we aren’t expected to use program review to meet that standard.

★ It’s also important to note that in several instances, program review is listed as a sample source of evidence even when program review is not mentioned in the standard or the corresponding sample questions.

My takeaway: I think ACCJC would say...

- We have to use cyclical program review to evaluate how well we’re accomplishing our mission.
- It needs to include data on student learning and achievement, improvement planning, implementation, and re-evaluation.
- It needs to be tied to budgeting and resource allocation; program review needs to provide the basis for decisions about human, physical, technology, and financial resources.
- Criteria need to include relevancy, appropriateness, achievement of student learning outcomes, currency, planning for the future
- The program review process needs to be consistently followed for all college programs, regardless of the type of program (collegiate, developmental, etc.)

And here's the relevant language from ACCJC...

Standard I: Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness, and Integrity

B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

5. The institution assesses accomplishment of its mission through **program review** and evaluation of goals and objectives, student learning outcomes, and student achievement. Quantitative and qualitative data are disaggregated for analysis by program type and mode of delivery. (Guide, page 16)
 - *Does the college have a **program review** process in place? Is it cyclical, i.e., does it incorporate systematic, ongoing evaluation of programs and services using data on student learning and achievement, improvement planning, implementation, and re-evaluation? How does college budgeting of resources follow planning? How is planning integrated?*
 - *To what extent are institutional data and evidence available and used for **program review**?*
9. The institution engages in continuous, broad based, systematic evaluation and planning. The institution integrates **program review**, planning, and resource allocation into a comprehensive process that leads to accomplishment of its mission and improvement of institutional effectiveness and academic quality...

Sample sources of evidence listed for Standard I - Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness include: "Evidence of current, systematic **program reviews** and use of results" and "Evidence that **program review** processes are systematically evaluated"

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services

A. Instructional Programs

2. Faculty, including full time, part time and adjunct faculty, ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. Faculty and others responsible act to continuously improve instructional courses, programs and directly related services through systematic evaluation to ensure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success. (Guide, page 25)
 - *Do criteria used in **program review** include relevancy, appropriateness, achievement of student learning outcomes, currency, planning for the future? Is this process consistently followed for all college programs, regardless of the type of program (collegiate, developmental, etc.)*
 - *What types of data are available for **program review**?*
 - *How are results of **program review** used in institutional planning? What changes and improvements in programs have occurred as a result of the consideration of program review?*

3. The institution identifies and regularly assesses learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates and degrees using established institutional procedures...

- *Has the institution defined and assessed learning outcomes for all courses and programs? How are assessment results for learning outcomes used in course and **program review**?*

16. The institution regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and continuing and community education courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location. The institution systematically strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement for students. (Guide p. 30)

- *Do criteria used in **program review** include relevancy, appropriateness, achievement of student learning outcomes, currency, planning for the future? Is this process consistently followed for all college programs, regardless of the type of program (collegiate, developmental, etc.)*

There are no explicit mentions of “program review” in the sample sources of evidence listed for Standard II.

Standard III: Resources

Neither the standards nor the sample questions for this section specifically mention “program review.” However, the **sample sources of evidence list** for Standard III includes:

- “Evidence that human resource decisions are based on the results of **program review** and the evaluation of program and service needs, and are integrated with institutional planning” (p. 58);
- “Evidence that physical resource decisions are based on the results of **program review** and the evaluation of program and service needs, and are integrated with institutional planning” (p. 59);
- “Evidence that institutional **program reviews** and plans determine technology resource priorities” (p. 61)
- “Evidence that technology resource decisions are based on the results of **program review** and the evaluation of program and service needs, and are integrated with institutional planning” (p. 61);
- “Evidence the institution ensures that financial decisions are developed from **program review** results, institutional needs, and plans for improvement” (p.62)

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance: This section makes no specific mention of “program review” in the standards, sample questions, or sample sources of evidence.

“Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness”²

In the Manual for Institutional Self-Evaluation, ACCJC lists criteria to be included as evidence of “Quality Program Review” (p. 25):

- Program review cycles/timelines
- Policies on curricular review
- Evidence that SLO assessment data are used for institutional self evaluation, planning, and improvement of teaching and learning
- Action taken (improvements) on the basis of program review
- Connection to the budgeting and resource allocation processes
- Impact on institutional effectiveness, educational quality, and student success

The manual also lists “student support services **program reviews**” as evidence of Quality of Student Support Services

¹ Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions, July 2015. ACCJC. http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Guide_to_Evaluating_and_Improving_Institutions_July_2015.pdf

² Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness (for institutions being evaluated beginning Spring 2016). February 2015. ACCJC. http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Manual_for_Institutional_Self_Evaluation_Feb_2015.pdf