

Questions? Please contact Kathy Wallace, Undergraduate Affairs, 919-515-9769, kathy_wallace@ncsu.edu

North Carolina State University
Guidelines for Undergraduate Academic Program Review
Effective January 2001

Part 1: Background

It may be tempting to skip Part 1 and jump directly to Part 2 (Topics to be included in the portfolio). Don't. The information in Part 1 will help you understand what the portfolio is for and how it will be used.

Scope of the portfolio: In this document, "program" refers to all interdisciplinary and departmental undergraduate activities. In addition to undergraduate degree programs, minors, and honors activities offered by the department or official interdisciplinary academic activities, these include

- contributions to the university's general education requirements (GER),
- "service" offerings—e.g., GER courses and courses that are required of majors from other departments even if they may also be taken by the department's own majors,
- distance education offerings,
- services for undergraduates such as advising, research and/or internship opportunities, library facilities, etc., and
- other activities in which undergraduates participate as part of their education or which otherwise influence the education of undergraduates.

The review process

The material in the portfolio should reflect *continuous and ongoing* planning, information gathering, self-review, and use of results, which are not processes that occur only once per review cycle. The portfolio captures the program's ongoing **outcomes assessment** to answer the following questions:

- What are we trying to do?
- How well are we doing it?
- How do we know?
- How do we use the information to improve?
- Do the improvements work?

The portfolio should first be reviewed and approved by the department and then submitted to the department's college for review. The college submits the portfolio and the results of its review to the Provost who will forward it to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and the Committee on Undergraduate Program Review.

Timing

- Portfolios will be reviewed at least once every seven years and may be reviewed more frequently at the program’s discretion.
- If the portfolio is based on material developed for an external accreditation review in the program’s discipline, the portfolio may be submitted for NC State review as soon as the external review team’s response is received. See II.B. (above) for information about other material that the portfolio may require.
- A summary of ongoing activities should be started at least one year before the portfolio is to be reviewed. The Provost’s office will notify programs when five years have passed since the last review. If the portfolio is being submitted before the seventh year to synchronize with an external review cycle or for other reasons, the Provost's office should be notified when preparations for the portfolio review begin.
- For a seventh-year review, the portfolio should be submitted to the college at the start of the seventh year since the last program review was submitted and to the Provost no later than the end of the seventh year.

Year	Activity
1 st – 5 th	Continue ongoing program review and address questions to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and Director of University Planning and Analysis.
6 th	Receive notification from the Provost’s office that the program review is to be completed in the 7th year. Summarize ongoing activities of the program. Continue ongoing program review.
7 th	Submit portfolio to the college at the beginning of this year. Submit reviewed portfolio to the Provost by the end of this year. Continue ongoing program review.

College, school, and division-level reviews

Each college, school, or division will identify a committee to conduct the review. The college, school, or division

- reviews

- the adequacy of the portfolio,
- the adequacy of the department's self-review processes, and
- the quality of the department's programs including evaluation and assessment.
- takes whatever actions it deems appropriate, including but not limited to,
- rewarding exemplary undergraduate programs,
- recommending future changes to the department's undergraduate activities and/or self-review process, and
- requesting additional information and/or changes in the portfolio and a re-submission.
- includes a summary of its findings and actions when it submits the portfolio to the Provost.

The Committee on Undergraduate Program Review determines whether

- the portfolio is complete
- the required activities – assessment of outcomes, course actions at the various levels (departmental, college, cross-college), etc. – are being carried out
- the quality issues have been adequately addressed

Actions that may be taken as a result of the Provost's review:

- If the Committee on Undergraduate Program Review determines that the portfolio is incomplete or that the required activities are not being carried out, the unit is given three (3) months to provide evidence that the situation has been addressed. If Committee on Undergraduate Program Review determines that the response is insufficient, the case is referred to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs and appropriate dean.
- If the review identifies problems with program quality, the Committee on Undergraduate Program Review recommends the appropriate action to the Provost. The Provost will discuss his/her decision with the college, school dean, or division head.

General instructions about portfolio format

These guidelines include a list of topics to be included in the portfolio materials (see Part 2. Topics to be included in the portfolio). The organization of the portfolio and the form in which each topic is addressed may vary. However, the portfolio must display as its initial contents:

- the identifying information (see Part 2-A)
- the executive summary (see Part 2-B)
- an index, table of contents, or concordance that indicates where the material on each of

the topics is located in the portfolio.

If the department or college is undergoing an external accreditation review, the bulk of the portfolio for NC State's Undergraduate Program Review Portfolio may be the materials that are submitted for external review. Similarly, if materials are being produced for the University's periodic accreditation review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), those materials may be used in the NC State review portfolio. In these cases, the NC State review portfolio must also include:

- the review team's response to the materials if one is available,
- materials on any topics listed below that are not included in the external review materials, and
- an index, table of contents, or concordance that indicates where the material on each of the topics is located in the external review materials or elsewhere in the portfolio.

If a program does not undergo external accreditation review, it is strongly encouraged to set up its own review team from outside the program or outside the university for purposes of assessment.

Part 2: Topics to be included in the portfolio

- A. Identifying information: department, contact person,
- B. Executive Summary (this should consist of a summary of findings that resulted from this review and the planning and any changes that resulted from this review)
- C. Method

Think of this as the Methods section of a research article in your discipline. It should include the who, what, when, where, and how of your ongoing assessment and internal review process. Detailed assessment results and how you used them go in later sections of the report, not here.

This section should include, but is not limited to, topics such as

1. Who is involved in your assessment and review process? E.g., how is your departmental review committee structured? Who else is involved in the process?
2. What sorts of data do you collect? Under what circumstances? When, and how often?
3. How do you review the data and its implications for your program? Who is involved in the review? When does this occur, and how often?

- D. Program description

1. In addition to the catalog description of the undergraduate degree programs, minors, and honors programs offered by the department, provide a general description of

- a. additional undergraduate activities mentioned in I. Scope of the portfolio (above)
 - b. the broad subject matter areas and levels covered by the courses taught
2. Mission and goals
 - a. the department's mission, including the relationship of that mission to the college and University missions
 - b. the department's goals for undergraduates, including the relationship of those goals to the department's mission
3. Undergraduate degrees offered and the requirements for each, including college and department requirements for all students regardless of curriculum and curriculum-specific requirements, in
 - a. the major area
 - b. general education
4. Courses and faculty - In addition to the information on undergraduate program requirements and GER offerings mentioned above, indicate
 - a. how frequently and in what sequence courses are offered to accommodate the requirements
 - b. prerequisite sequences
 - c. courses offered in cooperation with other departments or programs, such as university honors course offerings.
 - d. the current faculty of record for each course
 - e. other faculty, if any, teaching undergraduate courses in the department
5. Admission and transfer requirements: in addition to the program requirements (IV.B.3., above), include information on
 - a. requirements for admission to the program
 - b. procedures for acceptance of credit from elsewhere (advanced placement, transfer)
 - c. procedures for awarding credit to experiences other than traditional instruction (experiential learning, undergraduate research, etc.)
 - d. process for altering transfer requirements
6. Nontraditional instruction
 - a. Describe nontraditional (not face-to-face) instruction methods used by the

department, including modes of delivery and off-campus sites for such courses

- b. If half or more of a program's courses may be taken off-campus, address SACS's distance education requirements regarding student records, faculty, comparison of student learning experiences, consortia relationships or contracts, library access and facilities, instructional support, and student development services
- c. Provide evidence of no duplication for courses off-site that may be offered by other UNC institutions or NC community colleges. If duplication exists, a rationale must be offered.
- d. Provide assurance that nontraditional instruction is in accordance with the UNC-GA stipulations on Academic Program Development.

7. Service – provide a list of

- a. GER courses offered for students in other programs
- b. Honors course offerings for students in other programs.
- c. Non-course offerings to the University and surrounding communities, such as performances, exhibits, and outreach and extension programs, that influence the planning and operation of undergraduate curricula

8. Accreditation

- a. External professional organizations
 - 1. that currently accredit any of the department's undergraduate programs
 - 2. from which the department is trying to get accreditation
- b. Materials developed for a current external accreditation review should be accompanied by
 - 1. information about accreditation cycle(s)
 - 2. the review team's evaluation
 - 3. the department's plans to respond to the evaluation

9. Limiting factors that prevent the program from fulfilling its mission and/or achieving its goals.

E. Undergraduate enrollment and retention

- 1. For the period since the last review, indicate and interpret trends in
 - a. enrollment

- b. demand (application, acceptance, and yield)
 - c. Second Fall persistence for new freshmen
 - d. four-year and six-year graduation rates for the general student population and for under-represented students
2. Other information, if appropriate to the program. This might include, but is not limited to,
- a. flow through the major
 - 1. sources of majors (new freshmen, new transfers, other NC State colleges/departments) and
 - 2. proportion of majors transferring out to other NC State colleges/departments
 - b. other college/departments' courses taken by high proportions of your majors
 - c. participation in internship and co-op programs

F. Outcomes assessment

1. This information answers the questions asked in the Review Process section on Page 1.
2. What student learning outcomes are associated with the department's goals for undergraduates?
 - a. What skills, abilities, and areas of knowledge should graduates of the department's programs demonstrate? How were these determined?
 - b. What skills, abilities, and/or areas of knowledge are the department's GER offerings for non-majors intended to produce? How were these determined?
3. What methods does the department use to determine
 - a. whether graduates achieve these outcomes
 - b. how the outcomes of individual courses come together in graduating students into the intended outcomes of the program
 - c. whether individual courses are effectively meeting their stated learning outcomes
 - d. whether individual courses effectively contribute to program goals

- e. whether students write and speak competently in the discipline
- f. how program alumni apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired
- g. whether GER offerings for non-majors produce the intended outcomes
- h. whether the department's nontraditional (not face-to-face) instruction methods, including those used for off-campus instruction, produce the outcomes intended for these courses as effectively as traditional methods do

NOTE: <http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/asmt.htm> has information about outcomes assessment methods and activities in use at NC State.

NOTE: In considering how to prepare a portfolio that can also be used in the University's self study for SACCS, departments should be aware that SACCS's 1996 statement of Criterion 3 (Institutional Effectiveness) for educational programs includes the following language developed for compliance with Federal higher education legislation: The institution must evaluate its success with respect to student achievement in relation to purpose, including, as appropriate, consideration of course completion, state licensing examinations, and job placement rates.

- 4. What information resulted from these methods?
 - 5. How is the resulting information used in program planning?
 - a. How are individual faculty, planning and curriculum committees, etc. informed about the results?
 - b. What decisions have been made based on this information? What changes in curriculum, courses, supplementary activities, student support, etc. have been made as a result?
 - c. How does this information affect classroom teaching and faculty development?
 - d. How does this review suggest that the program is able to meet the goals of the planning process.
- G. Course and curriculum changes since the last review – This is a summary in addition to other information about how outcomes assessment contributed to specific changes (see IV.D.4., above). It does not need full details, rationales, etc. It should include
- 1. Description of internal process used to periodically review course offerings
 - 2. a list of course and curriculum changes
 - a. the level at which each change was approved prior to obtaining the Provost's approval (college, for changes that do not affect GER courses or departments outside of the college; UCCC, for changes affecting GER

courses or programs in other colleges)

- b. copies of the relevant Course and/or Curriculum Action Forms as supplementary material.

H. Changes planned, on the basis of the current review, in:

1. Undergraduate Programs

- a. courses and curricula
- b. faculty characteristics
- c. instructional facilities
- d. student support
- e. funding priorities

2. The review process

- a. Structure of the departmental review committee
- b. Timing of the entire review process
- c. Data collection process
- d. Data review process

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