



Manual of Policy and Procedures

Title PROGRAM REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	Number 101	Page 1 of 3
	Date August 12, 2024	

Purpose

Consistent with its mission, the Vermont State Colleges system (VSC) is dedicated to providing academic programs that are of high quality and remain current. Towards that end, the VSC Board of Trustees adopts this policy in order to ensure that VSC institutions regularly engage in practices designed to foster the continuous improvement of programs. Through the procedures outlined in this policy, faculty involved in delivering VSC academic programs periodically, systematically, and collaboratively review evidence regarding their effectiveness in achieving desired student learning outcomes and commit to making the changes needed to ensure continuous program improvement.

Thus the Board of Trustees charges the colleges with, and establishes guidelines for, the regular review and continuous improvement of academic programs. This policy applies to Title IV-eligible certificates, associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree programs. Generally, four to six disciplines will be reviewed annually, establishing a five-year review cycle for all programs.

In adopting this policy, the Board affirms that the responsibility for program improvement rests ultimately with the institution President, who may at his/her discretion utilize additional procedures in order to improve the quality of one or more academic programs.

This policy is designed to complement Policy 109: Annual Enrollment Review.

Academic Program Review: Policy and Procedures

Standards

The VSC Board of Trustees has adopted the following standards for high-quality programs. The purpose of Academic Program Review will be to determine the extent to which degree programs:

1. assist in meeting regional, state, and/or student needs;
2. integrate liberal, professional, and career study;
3. maintain currency;
4. achieve defined student learning outcomes as demonstrated through valid and reliable assessment processes;
5. utilize effective strategies for continuous improvement; and

6. help students prepare for life after graduation.

Schedule and Process for Review

1. In the spring of each year, the Council of Presidents (COP) will recommend to the Board of Trustees' Education, Personnel, and Student Life Committee (EPSL) the programs/disciplines to be reviewed during the following year, how these programs should be clustered for review, and the report template and data metrics to be used. COP or its designees will also provide an orientation for program report lead writers.
2. During the report-writing year, program report leads will assemble information; draft report and future 5-year improvement plan; gather feedback from program faculty and external partners; and finalize the PReCIP report for review by the institution Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and approval by the President.
3. In the fall following the completion of the report, the institution CAOs will work together to convene program cluster review committees to review reports. The VSC will assess programs clustered by discipline on a system-wide bases to determine (1) how well they meet the Board's standards for high-quality programs (listed above), (2) how the programs might be strengthened by specific improvement measures, and (3) if and how collaboration across colleges might benefit the programs and their students. New programs in their first three years are ordinarily exempt from review, although a president may choose to have new programs reviewed. Review committees will summarize the results and improvement recommendations to COP; COP will report the results of the process to EPSL.
4. Programs that are nationally accredited as well as those approved by the State of Vermont's Results Oriented Program Approval (ROPA) process are required, as a condition of continued accreditation, regularly to engage in program outcome assessment and continuous improvement processes. For this reason, these programs will be exempt from completing a separate PReCIP report in step 2 above. CAOs will direct program cluster review committees to include the self-studies and/or follow-up reports received from accrediting associations in their consideration and summary report to COP and EPSL.
5. General education programs will complete PReCIP reports following a specific template that incorporates assessment of shared VSC general education categories and core competencies.
6. Each year EPSL will review the summary results and recommendations from COP and report on its review to the Board.
7. Each year following completion of a PReCIP report, programs will implement annual activities per the approved continuous improvement plan. Records of and data collected through these activities will serve as the primary sources of information to be used for the preparation of the next 5-year PReCIP report.

Signed by:



Chancellor

Date	Version	Revision	Approved By
3-22-02	Review and Approval of Existing Academic Programs	Adopted	VSCS Board of Trustees
2-21-2013	Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees
8-12-2024	Program Review and Continuous Improvement Process	Revised	VSCS Board of Trustees