

## Academic Program Review Summary

### Introduction

The University of Akron has completed a comprehensive, year-long, faculty-led review of its 414 academic degrees and degree tracks in order to:

- Determine areas of academic strength and distinction,
- Better align resources with strategic goals, and
- Make strategic investments and allocations to programs that are:
  - o Distinctive, and raise the regional and national visibility of UA among competitors;
  - o Responsive to student and market demands;
  - o Successfully recruiting, retaining and graduating students; and
  - o Advancing research, technology, scholarship and creative work.

The overriding purposes of APR are to offer the best possible education to students and determine the most effective use of the University's resources; it is not a budget-driven exercise. The results of APR will help establish a baseline and foundation for the University's campus-wide strategic planning process.

In addition, the State of Ohio Chancellor's Council of Graduate Studies requires a review of all the graduate programs every ten years and regional accreditation requires that program review takes place.

### Process

In keeping with the University's commitment to shared governance, the APR has been a year-long, University-wide collaboration. It involved faculty members, chairs, directors and deans from each college, ensuring that relevant data were collected and analyzed in an open, transparent and thorough manner.

1. An Academic Program Review Executive/Advisory Committee was established to formulate and guide the APR process and oversee the review. Co-chairs were Dr. Shivakumar Sastry (College of Engineering) and Dr. Phil Allen (Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences).
  - a. Its members represented the Office of Academic Affairs, the Faculty Senate, the Akron Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Graduate School.
  - b. The APR Executive/Advisory Committee prepared and approved a template for the self-study reports and all data provided to the units were also prepared and approved by the Executive/Advisory Committee.

- c. The APR Executive/Advisory Committee selected the 24-member faculty APR committee based on recommendations from the deans to ensure representation for every college.
2. Deans and chairs appointed faculty members within their respective units to prepare the unit-level self-study reports to address the quantitative and qualitative data for each program. These data included:
  - a. Number of majors and degrees awarded at the undergraduate and graduate levels;
  - b. Student performance and learning outcomes;
  - c. General fund-centric revenues and expenditures; and
  - d. Comparative performance of the programs against other peer programs in Ohio.
3. The self-study reports addressed the above data and also supplied additional information from their units related to:
  - a. Research and creative activity;
  - b. Market demand;
  - c. Distinctiveness of the program;
  - d. Areas of concern; and
  - e. Strategic growth and opportunities using current resources.
4. Each college weighed these metrics according to its distinctive strengths, so that, for example, teaching-intensive or research-intensive units were able to emphasize their areas of contribution.
5. Beginning in the summer of 2017, APR co-chairs met with the department chairs, school directors, deans and faculty in several public and private settings to help everyone understand the expectations for self-study reports. The process was adjusted based on ideas exchanged through these meetings, with the support and oversight of the APR Executive/Advisory Committee.
6. Faculty members worked closely with their chairs/directors on the self-study reports, which were then forwarded to the deans. (November 15, 2017)
7. The deans then categorized each program depending on the current performance of the programs. The deans also assigned priorities to programs and identified programs where investments could result in advantages to UA. (January 15, 2018)
8. The self-study reports from each unit were reviewed by at least two conflict-free reviewers from the Academic Program Review Committee. Care was taken to ensure that each doctoral program was reviewed by at least one person from a unit that granted doctoral degrees. Each reviewer prepared a written report for every program reviewed.

9. The entire 24-member APR faculty team discussed all the reviews in detail over four full days. A summary of the discussion was recorded and all members cast their votes to categorize and prioritize each program. (Completed by March 1, 2018)
10. The Academic Program Review Committee then sent its own program rankings, determined according to the collective goals and mission of the University, to the Academic Policies Committee of the Faculty Senate. (March 15, 2018)
11. The Academic Policies Committee reviewed the APR team recommendations and prepared a report that expressed members' views. This report was shared with the full Faculty Senate.
12. The Faculty Senate voted on these recommendations and sent them to Interim President John Green and Provost Rex Ramsier. (May 3, 2018)
13. Interim President Green and Provost Ramsier considered the input and prepared a list of faculty hires for fall 2019 in areas of strategic importance to the University and a set of recommendations for phasing out of degree offerings.
14. These recommendations were further discussed with the deans and revisions were made based on those conversations.
15. Final recommendations are being submitted to The University of Akron Board of Trustees for consideration at its August 15, 2018 meeting.

To access Academic Program Review documents:

Final Reports:

<https://uazips.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/apr/EpNqXNN91m5KtPaeb91f5VABEP0Cd85kG3dR2ezDVAkthA?e=IXJ0GG>

College Reports:

[https://uazips.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/apr/Elp942SC\\_DZAgEz\\_WvMJky8BP6AlvGyx4wY8LS6gm6CKCw?e=HwD55k](https://uazips.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/apr/Elp942SC_DZAgEz_WvMJky8BP6AlvGyx4wY8LS6gm6CKCw?e=HwD55k)

Faculty Senate – Academic Policies Committee report (see p. 28):

<https://uazips.sharepoint.com/:b:/s/apr/ESib-blbzsBFIfIvVT0ye6wBQYJHbcDUVcVlhSxPyTtNfw?e=aNurQN>