

DELAWARE COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

# Academic Program Review Process

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June, 2011

**Delaware College of Art and Design  
Academic Program Review Process**

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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE

The DCAD Academic Program Review examines past achievements, current status, and makes recommendations for the future direction of Programs and areas of study. The review identifies strengths and challenges within the context of the Program, and serves as a guide to planning. All Programs and academic areas will be reviewed once every five years on a rotating basis. The Dean may call for an Academic Program Review to be conducted out of cycle for a program that may need a more timely and rigorous review

The Academic Program Review includes:

**Program/Area Self-Study:** Each area conducts a self-study of its work and prepares an Academic Program Review Report that analyzes the program's characteristics, strengths and challenges, and presents an academic plan (including identified priorities) for future work in the area. An External Review is also conducted a part of this process.

**External Review:** one or two external practitioners or scholars give their perspective based on an examination of the self-study materials and through an onsite visit.

**Implementation:** Faculty and administration, based on the self-study and the external review report as a part of the planning process, devise specific strategies for implementing the prioritized next steps to benefit the area and the school as a whole.

## ROLES

The **Dean's Office** coordinates Academic Program Reviews in collaboration with the Area Coordinators and consultation with the President. It specifies the reviews, provides institutional data for the reviews, facilitates the external reviewers' visit, reviews the Self-Study Reports, participates in external review interviews, and facilitates communications among stakeholders.

The Dean and President discuss the nominations for the External Reviewer. The **President** affirms or selects reviewers, and the Dean extends the formal invitation to serve as the reviewer.

The **Area Coordinator and Program/area faculty** are to develop the self-study and APR report, which includes recommendations for implementation. The Area Coordinator is the contact person and responsible for the day-to-day management of

this review. This includes nominating and soliciting an external reviewer, working with the Dean to schedule the external review.

The **Area Coordinators** across the College have the responsibility of reviewing the Self-Study, the External Review Report, and providing perspective with regard to the external reviewer's recommendations.

## **OVERALL PROCEDURE**

Adjustments can be made to this procedure, as necessary, with mutual agreement of the Program, Dean, and President.

### **Fall Semester (1)**

The Dean notifies the Program of the review and distributes the Academic Program Review Process. The Program begins preparations for self-study.

### **Spring Semester (1)**

The Dean notifies the Program of the review and distributes the Academic Program Review Process.

The Program begins preparing the self-study and nominates potential external reviewers.

The Program prepares a Self-Study, to be given to the External Reviewer. The Program submits the Self-Study to the Dean, who along with the President reviews and either approves or requests that changes be made. When approval is granted, the Dean notifies the Area Coordinator of this.

### **Summer/Fall Semester**

(July/August) The Dean mails a packet of materials to the External Reviewer. The packet contains at least the following: DCAD Educational Assessment Plan (which contains information on DCAD in general, program information, and assessment strategies); the area's Self-study Report; and a list of questions which the reviewer should address.

The Dean and Program develop a schedule for the visit, which will ordinarily last two days

### **Fall Semester (2)**

The onsite visit is conducted and the reviewers send a written report to the Dean/President within one month of the visit. A specific list of issues to be addressed and a format for the report is provided to the reviewers.

The Program is given a copy of the report by the Dean.

The Program reviews the external written report, and has the option to provide a written response, attached to the report. The response should be limited to correction of any factual errors.

(December) The Dean, Area Coordinators, and President all review and meet to discuss the Academic Program Review, (with External Review report) and consider adjustments to the APR and summary of next steps.

### **Spring Semester (2)**

(January) The Academic Program Review is finalized, and recommendations/ requests are included in the upcoming year's budget and planning cycles.

The Program may begin implementing action steps emerging from the recommendations. Actions not requiring budget support or additional approval can be implemented immediately, while other actions may be implemented with approvals, new budget, and other support. Actions and results are documented and used for assessment purposes.

## **APR REPORT GUIDELINES AND FORMAT**

### **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The executive summary of the Academic Program Review should be an overview of the major considerations of the APR, plus an overview of the recommendations. It should be no longer than approximately one to two pages in length. The Summary should include a brief overview of the Program, along with trends, challenges, and future directions.

### **II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

#### **1. Mission, Brief History, Goals and Competencies**

- A. Describe the mission and goals of the Program and provide a brief overview of the Program in its current form—program offerings, faculty, students served (majors and students of other programs as applicable).
- B. Describe how the program's mission and competencies reflect DCAD's mission overall. Describe how the Program has been designed to assure congruence among DCAD's overall mission, program competencies, course objectives, and learning outcomes. Please provide 1 to 2 examples.
- C. Identify the specific competencies your students are expected to demonstrate by the time they graduate from the program. How do these competencies serve students as they graduate and transfer to other institutions to continue their education?
- D. Please describe the process through which course objectives and learning outcomes were developed.
- E. A Curriculum Map, showing the inclusion of Program Competencies within specific courses of the major and other supporting coursework of the curriculum is placed here.

## **2. Overview of Curriculum**

- A. Discuss how the structure of your Program assures that students experience sufficient and appropriate content and breadth for the area of study. Discuss processes that assure that the program is sufficiently rigorous with evidence that bears on these matters.
- B. Describe any collaborative efforts between your faculty and library staff and other campus professionals in fostering information literacy and technological competency skills in your students. What have been the outcomes of these collaborations?
- C. Briefly describe the first-year and second year experience for students pursuing this area of study. What characteristics of your program promote synthesis of learning and assure that students have a coherent learning experience? Describe any evidence that bears on these issues.
- D. Frequency of core course offerings and scheduling of classes.
- E. Describe how information literacy and applicable technology/software used are incorporated into the curriculum.
- F. Please describe any enhancements, such as field trips, guest clinicians, or co-curricular activities have been featured in the past five years, contributing to the enrichment of the curriculum.
- G. Describe the process for evolving the curriculum in response to changes in the field.

- H. Summarize ongoing efforts made in reviewing and updating course syllabi. What updates or revisions in syllabi have been made as a result of the assessment of student learning?

### 3. FACULTY/TEACHING

#### FACULTY INFORMATION

Faculty Summary	Full-time	Part-time
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*Total number of faculty assigned to the program*

*Gender and Ethnic Characteristics*

Men

Women

Ethnicity

*Credentials*

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Doctorate

Other

*Experience-Teaching at DCAD*

1 to 5 years

5 to 9 years

10+ years

- A. Describe the composition of the faculty and describe its adequacy in efficiently delivering the programs curriculum. Address:
  - Full-time/part-time status including how this has changed over time and how it compares to other programs
  - Diversity in terms of demographics such as gender, ethnicity and age
  
- B. Describe the overall level of academic preparation of faculty and professional practice experience including the ease or difficulty of hiring qualified adjuncts. Discuss how knowledgeable faculty are about current professional trends and how effectively they transmit their knowledge to students.
  
- C. Describe the faculty's service to the college, such as committee work, administrative work, public service, and other activities that contribute to the fulfillment of the program's mission in relation to the college and the community.

- D. Discuss departmental faculty support and professional and scholarly development efforts. Evaluate the effectiveness of this.
- E. Describe structures and processes that assure that adjunct faculty are adequately supervised including methods used to evaluate the quality of teaching. What feedback provides faculty with formative opportunities to increase effectiveness in teaching?
- F. Describe your program's efforts to strengthen your faculty's teaching and learning approaches; highlight faculty innovations in teaching, where appropriate, and their impact on students. Evaluate the overall effectiveness of these efforts.

**4. STUDENTS**

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS**

**Total Entering Cohort and Total Program Enrollment**

Year	Entering Cohort	Total Prog.Enroll.
2007-2008		
2008-2009		
2009-2010		
2010-2011		

**Program Retention by Year (First to Second Year)**

Year	No. of Students	Percentage
2007-2008		
2008-2009		
2009-2010		
2010-2011		

**Number of Graduates (150% time)**

Year-to-Year	Program Number	DCAD Total
2007 to 2008	_____	_____
2008 to 2009	_____	_____
2009 to 2010	_____	_____
2010 to 2011	_____	_____

## Graduation Rate

Year-to-Year	Program Percentage	DCAD Percentage
2007 to 2008	_____	_____
2008 to 2009	_____	_____
2009 to 2010	_____	_____
2010 to 2011	_____	_____

- A. Describe the students, particularly the characteristics that affect their success in the program. Consider:
- The quality of the academic and artistic preparation of incoming students. Do admission policies assure well-qualified, diverse and respective student groups?
  - Student demand for the program now and anticipated demand for the program in the future. Explain how the program responds to student demand for the program and to societal need for its graduates.

## 5. STUDENT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

- A. Describe the administrative staff support for the department. Evaluate its adequacy to carry out the goals of the program. Consider:
- Orientation
  - Advisement and its effectiveness
  - Program activities to enhance the curriculum (program major meetings, letters of welcome and other contacts, discipline-specific seminars/presentations/guest artists)
  - Is the staffing sufficient to help the program achieve its goals and how do you evaluate it? What improvements could be made to better serve the students and the program
  - Computer/technology support;
  - Library collection in general and for the Program;
  - Staff support: administrative and program-specific staffing;
  - Student instructional support specific to program/core courses;
  - Supplemental instruction/tutors/instructional skills support.
- B. Facilities and Other Resources: Comment on the physical and technological resources the program currently has at its disposal and how they are allocated to meet curricular and other needs. Evaluate the adequacy of the resources to achieve the program's mission and educational goals as well as their effective use. Items to address may include:
- Adequacy of teaching space (general and dedicated) and studio, labs, etc. space for students

- The quality and currency of labs/studios:
  - Safety standards and practices
  - Computer resources
  - Equipment resources
- C. Discuss your participation in the creation of the institutional facilities master plan. Describe how the program influences decisions in terms of space usage, scheduling, and equipment replacement.
- D. Discuss the program's fiscal resources. Items to address may include:
- The adequacy of budget to meet program needs.
  - The budget process and the Area Coordinator's role in it.
  - How budget decisions at the program level reflect the concern for program quality, support academic excellence, and meet the needs of the Program. What information do you use to inform these decisions?

### III. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. List the methods of assessment are employed to examine student learning outcomes? (for example, critiques, portfolios, visual displays, course outcomes assessment.) What are some improvements that have come about as a result of assessment activity?
2. Discuss how well are students meeting the expectations of the Program's competencies (listed previously) and course outcomes. What is the timetable for making sure the Program's student learning outcomes are assessed on a regular basis? How is this documented and maintained over time? How is this information shared in your program?
3. Describe the planning processes to be used by your department to identify and implement changes based on the results of this program review

### IV. SUMMARY: NEXT STEPS

1. Strengths and Challenges: Based on the findings in the previous section, provide an overall assessment of the program's strengths, areas for improvement, and immediate and future opportunities and challenges. The discussion should be framed not only within the context of DCAD, but in relation to the current state of the discipline, similar programs in other institutions, and national and international trends in student demand and labor force needs. It should address the questions below and include recommendations for the future.
  - What are the program's major strengths and challenges?

- What characteristics of the program should be maintained?
- What characteristics of the program should be modified or terminated?
- What improvements are most needed?
- What issues are in need of immediate intervention?

**Please complete and attach a timeline** for these priorities that will strengthen the curriculum, teaching and learning, and student support. These are to be presented in order of priority for maximum impact on the program.

The following are suggested areas for consideration in identifying priorities:

Recruitment, Retention, Graduation

Curricular Revision and Improvement

Faculty/Faculty Development

Facilities/Equipment

It is also useful to identify *“no cost improvements, low cost improvements, and improvements that have been completed.”*

## **EXTERNAL REVIEW of PROGRAM**

Note: The written report (or summary) of the External Review is to be included as an APPENDIX to the Academic Program Review.

Either one or two External Reviewers may be called upon to evaluate the program/area’s activities, assesses its future plans, makes appropriate comparisons with departments at other institutions, and recommends whatever changes believed are appropriate, under the assumption of constant resources. Faculty members and administration use the report’s recommendations to validate strengths and establish priorities for improvement. External reviewers must be credible, impartial, and familiar with current trends and standards within the context of the program/area under review. When possible, external reviewers should be without close personal connections to the Program.

### **Process**

The Dean and Area Coordinator (in consultation with the Dean) draft a tentative timeline for the External Review. The Dean is provided with a list of three professionals, one or two of whom might ultimately serve. In nominating possible reviewers, the Program should specify in writing each reviewer’s qualifications and provide clear reasons why the proposed reviewer is an appropriate choice. The Dean and President discuss the nominations, and the President affirms or selects reviewers. The Dean sends a formal letter of invitation. **(Appendix A – Sample External Reviewer letter).**

An External Reviewer typically would be one of the following:

- A senior faculty member, dean or department chair/coordinator from a similar program in another institution of higher education
- Qualified external community professional who has knowledge of the program
- Discipline/content specialist

### **One Month Prior to the Visit**

The Dean's Office mails a packet of materials to the reviewer(s). This packet contains at least the following: a set of specific instructions for the reviewers to follow, DCAD Educational Assessment Plan (which contains information on DCAD in general, program information, and assessment strategies); the area's Self-study Report; and a list of questions and concerns which the reviewers should address. The Area also develops a schedule for the visit, which will typically last from one to two days, and provides a draft of this for the Reviewers. The schedule is finalized in collaboration by the Dean, Area Coordinator, and Reviewers.

### **The Visit by the External Reviewers**

Ordinarily, External Reviewers meet with program/area members and Area Coordinator; students; the Dean; the President; and any other persons or groups whose work makes them particularly relevant to the evaluation.

At the end of the visit, the External Reviewers meets with the academic leadership and program/area members to discuss findings in a preliminary way. Meetings between the external reviewer and members of the DCAD community may include faculty, the Area Coordinator, Dean/President, and possibly students. Meetings could also include Area Coordinators from Academic Studies and Foundations.

### **Responsibilities of the External Reviewer**

The purpose of the external reviewer is to provide an objective critique of the strengths and challenges of the academic program. The Dean will provide the External Reviewer with written expectations of the report and meet with external reviewers, as needed, to answer any questions. The external reviewers may meet initially with the internal review team.

The External Reviewer will prepare a written report, based on the site visit and Self-Study/supporting materials provided by the Dean. The report will be an assessment of the program's major strengths and challenges. The document should include relevant observations, conclusions, and recommendations.

The written report should include the date(s) of the site visit, the reviewer's name, professional work, and affiliation to their home organization/institution, if applicable. Within 30 days of the site visit, the report should be sent to the Dean, who in turn will give it to the Area Coordinator for inclusion in the APR, and the President.

## **COMMUNICATION of the APR**

The results of the Academic Program Review should be disseminated to appropriate parties within DCAD.

## APPENDIX A: Sample Letter to External Reviewer

June 4, 2011

Professor \_\_\_\_\_.  
Academic Center 204  
The New School of Art and Design  
1429 Penn Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19099

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an External Reviewer for the enclosed Program Review in \_\_\_\_\_. As \_\_\_\_\_ has already discussed with you, External Reviewers are asked to submit a written report within thirty days of the site visit. In your report, you are asked to write about:

- overall quality of the program based on national standards and currency in the discipline;
- comprehensiveness, cohesion, and rigor of the curriculum;
- teaching quality and appropriateness of faculty composition;
- student profile and quality of student work;
- adequacy of the program's resources (human, physical, and financial) to fulfill its mission;
- opportunities for program improvement or external threats to the program's quality.

If you have any question about the contents of the document or the written report, do not hesitate to contact either \_\_\_\_\_ (302) 622-8867 ext. \_\_\_\_ or [XXXXXX@dcad.edu](mailto:XXXXXX@dcad.edu) or myself (302) 622-8867, ext. 419 or [jhoover@dcad.edu](mailto:jhoover@dcad.edu)

We look forward to receiving your report by \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you for your assistance, supporting our program through the sharing of your professional expertise.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Hoover, Ph.D.  
Dean

(302) 622-8867, ext. 419  
[jhoover@dcad.edu](mailto:jhoover@dcad.edu)

cc: Stuart Baron, President  
Traci Parman, Chief Administrative Officer

## **APPENDIX B: Focus Content for External Reviewer**

Areas for Visitor to Address:

- overall quality of the program based on national standards and currency in the discipline;
- comprehensiveness, cohesion, and rigor of the curriculum;
- teaching quality and appropriateness of faculty composition;
- student profile and quality of student work;
- adequacy of the program's resources (human, physical, and financial) to fulfill its mission;
- opportunities for program improvement or external threats to the program's quality.

The Program may add additional focus questions.

## **APPENDIX C: Schedule of Program/Area Reviews**

2012-2013	Interior Design and Fine Art
2013-2014	Academic Studies (General Education)
2014-2015	Photography and Animation
2015-2016	Foundation
2016-2017	Illustration and Graphic Design