

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

**-- D R A F T --  
INTEGRATED PROGRAM REVIEW &  
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE  
MANUAL**



**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**

**2007-2011  
*2006 Process Revision***

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## I. Introduction

Eastern Michigan University's mission and philosophy are built upon shared values that define and nurture the institution's intellectual, ethical, and aesthetic environment. The institutional mission statement asserts, "Eastern Michigan University is committed to excellence in teaching, the extension of knowledge through basic and applied research, and creative and artistic expression" ([www.emich.edu](http://www.emich.edu)). By focusing on excellence, the institution encourages the promotion of personal and academic merit as a foundation for institutional quality. The University is committed to achieving the highest standards through ongoing assessment and continuous quality improvement.

Program review is a significant component of improvement efforts and decision making processes at colleges and universities across the country. As Eastern Michigan University aligns various continuous improvement focused and quality related activities, such as strategic planning and AQIP accreditation, program review and annual planning become fundamental tools in maintaining academic quality, enhancing student learning, and supporting an evidence-based decision making process. The integrated program review and continuous improvement cycle at EMU provides the opportunity for departments/schools to examine and evaluate program related activities and components on a regular basis; identify and make improvements; and focus on future plans that will enhance the academic experience of students, while allowing faculty, staff, and administrators to manage the institution in a responsible manner.

## II. Academic Continuous Improvement.

### A. Definition

Continuous improvement has become a core theme in discussions on the future of higher education (*Change*, May/June 1993; *Measuring Up 2006*, Sept. 2006; Department of Education, Sept. 2006). Continuous improvement is an ongoing effort to improve products, services or processes. These efforts can seek "incremental" improvement over time or "breakthrough" improvement all at once. In today's postsecondary institutions, an atmosphere of continuous improvement is considered to be a demonstration of institutional effectiveness and a commitment to excellence, accountability, and efficient stewardship of funds.

In the business community, quality is generally measured in terms of "bottom-line" results and client satisfaction. In the higher education context, however, results include both students' performance and the satisfaction of those whom the program serves; most notably students, alumni, and employers. The Department of Education report, *A Test of Leadership: Charting the Future of U.S. Higher Education*, recommends "that America's colleges and universities embrace a culture of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies to improve learning" (p. 34). The report goes on to urge "the creation of a robust culture of accountability and transparency throughout higher education" (p. 30). Similarly, accrediting agencies are encouraged to open their processes and reports to the public and take assessment and accountability seriously when developing performance criteria, and when reviewing programs and institutions for accreditation (p. 34).

In support of the above objectives, the University was accepted into the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) in February 2004. This institutional accreditation process is more intense and efficient, uses shorter improvement cycles, involves faculty more directly in all academic improvement processes, maintains EMU's status with the Department of Education, and emphasizes the institution's distinctive needs and aspirations.

As part of the preparation to apply for AQIP accreditation, the Office of Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement was established. The vision for the office includes the use of participatory, collaborative, creative, and flexible processes that support the refinement and implementation of the University's mission, values and guiding principles, along with supporting the application and laying the groundwork for the new accreditation process. The activities of the office demonstrate an organizational culture that reflects a commitment to quality and accountability, and is supported by an evidence-based approach to organizational management characterized by:

- Ongoing assessment, planning and evaluation.
- Data driven decision-making.
- Widely published university metrics.
- Ongoing continuous improvement activities.

Program review is an evaluation process that is integrated into and supportive of the Office of Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement activities.

### ***B. Purpose of Program Review***

When defining the purpose of program review, it is important to point out that program review is a separate process than that of determining program viability. The most obvious differences are observed in the goals and outcomes of the two processes.

Program review is a curricular management tool primarily used by faculty to make programs stronger and more effective. Goals of program review include evaluation and assessment of established desired outcomes, providing a mechanism for evidence-based decision-making, and laying a foundation for strategic planning and continuous improvement activities. The process helps establish a useful tool for linking strategic planning, resources, and performance through the evaluation of program mission and goals, future plans, resources (human, financial, and physical), the degree to which the program addresses regional needs, out-of-class activities, assessment activities, and student learning outcomes. Program review is intended to identify areas of weakness and ways in which academic programs can be enhanced and improved.

In contrast, program viability is a cost-benefit management tool primarily used by senior decision makers to determine how best to employ limited academic resources. Program viability decisions are made using multiple tools, including but not limited to: review results; productivity measures; cost efficiency and

effectiveness analysis; regional and political priorities, needs, and demands; and technology and workforce development projections. A formalized process for determining program viability at EMU is currently being developed under the purview of the Board of Regents and the executive divisional leadership. The formalized process will be completely separate from the IPR cycle, although data from the IPR cycle will be taken under consideration as only one of the tools in the program viability “tool box”.

The purpose of program review is to provide a forum for evaluation and assessment of student outcomes, programmatic goals, and the overall strengths and weaknesses of an academic program. The process increases “the self-consciousness of faculty members and administrators about their educational practices so they can improve the quality of teaching and learning” (Association of American Colleges (now the AACU), p. 1). Program review provides a venue for evaluation and improvements to academic programs and students’ educational experiences. An effective program review process is a useful tool in supporting quality and continuous improvement endeavors. It is a tool that encourages growth and development, in an effort to enhance the learning environment and student experience. A productive review process is one that is systematic and cyclical, and is rooted in ongoing efforts to make rational and informative decisions about academic programs and curricula. Best practices literature indicates program review “should be a continual process: of goal identification and review, of faculty conversation about teaching and learning strategies, of assessment and revision” (Association of American Colleges (now the AACU), p. 16).

### **III. Campus Program Assessment Background**

#### ***A. History of Program Review at Eastern Michigan University***

Program review has existed in various forms for over twenty years at Eastern Michigan University (see Figure 1. on next page). Over the years, the process has been transformed, with significant improvements being made with each iteration, in an effort to utilize the process as a productive tool for both improving academic programs and administrative decision making. The process provides an opportunity for faculty to reflect on their programs and for department heads or school directors to reflect on the performance of their departments. Results from program review provide feedback about the relevancy and efficacy of academic programs to make improvements. Information is also used to make administrative planning decisions and allocate resources in an informed, responsible manner. More recent changes have been particularly responsive to institutional accreditation obligations, as well as public calls for more accountability and transparency in higher education. The process of aligning program review with all continuous improvement activities on campus will help ensure that academic programs stay current, faculty are up to date in their disciplines, resources are used responsibly and efficiently, and that the overall academic experience for students is not only a positive one, but that it is a priority at EMU. Implementation of the modified integrated program review and continuous improvement cycle will allow for continued growth and increased quality both inside and outside the classroom.

## HISTORY of PROGRAM REVIEW AT EMU

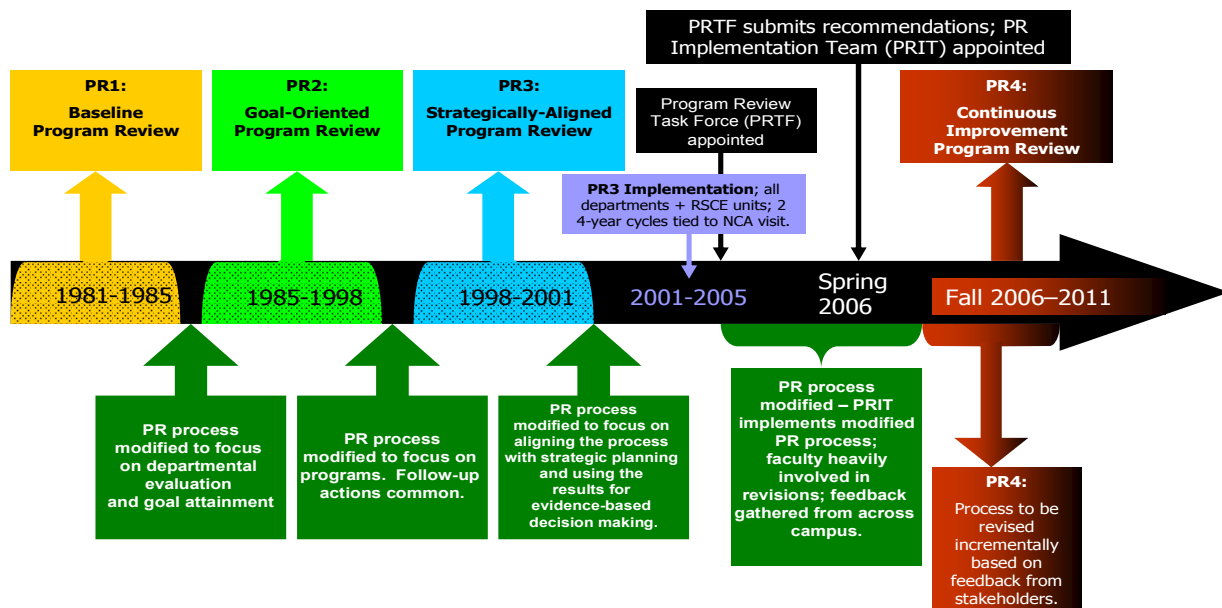


Figure 1.  
Timeline

### B. Issues and Concerns

Although the intent of the 2001-2005 program review process was appropriate and consistent with the criteria of the Higher Learning Commission, based on feedback from across campus, its weaknesses overshadowed its strengths. The level of satisfaction with the process was minimal, with both faculty and administrators expressing resentment over the amount of time required to prepare program review reports every four years. The 2001-2005 program review process did not result in strategic outcomes or follow-up on critical needs or changes. In addition, the process did not align well with recently established strategic planning process initiatives, nor did it effectively support the atmosphere of continuous improvement the institution was looking to espouse.

At the time of the revision and implementation for the 2001-2005 program review process (academic year 1999-2000) the University was in the midst of significant environmental changes, including the appointment of a new president, new provost, and two other vice presidents, followed by several more changes in 2001. One of the critical restructuring outcomes was the establishment of the Office of Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement, whose responsibility was to facilitate the campus planning process, and support directions and processes as the institution moved toward an evidence-based, continuous improvement organizational culture.

Based on the shortcomings and challenges mentioned above, the Provost again suspended the existing program review process in 2004, while allowing the final year of the ongoing cycle to be completed. He established the Program Review Task Force; a team that included faculty members, department/school heads, administrators, and staff from across the division, whose charge was to evaluate the existing process and recommend improvements. The Task Force began meeting early in 2005 and submitted their final report to the Provost in spring 2006.

***C. Recommendations of the Program Review Task Force***

The Program Review Task Force met regularly for nearly a year, analyzing data, collecting feedback, and discussing ways to make improvements to the program review process. The goal of the Task Force was to provide recommendations that were both acceptable and implementable. The Task Force was asked to evaluate the old process, making recommendations as to how to improve the process and increasing efficiency. The Provost reviewed the recommendations of the Task Force, added a few of his own, and appointed an implementation team to lead the effort.

Below are recommendations of both the Program Review Task Force and the Provost:

- Continuous Improvement and Strategic Planning. The program review process should align with an institutional continuous improvement process (i.e. AQIP). Specifically, it should focus on continually improving university programs that contribute to student learning. Additionally, the program review process should align with both university and department/school strategic plans. By doing so, the process will emphasize the goal-oriented and focused nature of program review.
- Evaluation. In order to align with the AQIP continuous improvement processes and to serve the goals of strategic planning, program review will primarily serve as a formative evaluation undertaking. The purpose of formative evaluation is to assist programs in addressing weaknesses and enhancing strengths in order to continually improve and to reach institutional and department/school goals. Nonetheless, for administrative decision making and resource prioritization purposes, summative evaluation will be utilized, linking decisions to the criteria set forth.
- Department/School Goals. To ensure that programs and the program review process remain goal-focused, it is incumbent upon each department/school to ensure that it has a defined mission and vision that guide goal setting, specific strategies or action plans designed to reach goals, and assessment processes to measure progress and goal attainment.
- Availability of Accurate Data. The accessibility of accurate data is necessary to support departments/schools and programs in setting goals and in measuring progress and goal attainment. The university must develop an

efficient system for collecting, organizing and disseminating data for these purposes. Specifically, composite data relevant to all programs, as well as data germane only to select or individual programs are necessary. In order for sound decisions to be made and for sensible goals to be set, it is essential these data be accurate, easily accessible, and well-matched to decision-making needs.

- Integration with Accreditation. To support the continuous improvement efforts on campus, the Task Force recommended that the program review process be integrated into the AQIP accreditation process. The new integrated program review and continuous improvement cycle (IPR) emphasizes the commitment to excellence made by EMU faculty and administrative staff. The new integrated program review and continuous improvement cycle is a systematic, continual, and comprehensive evaluation of the academic departments/schools and programs. For those departments/schools with programs that are nationally or state accredited, the integrated program review and continuous improvement cycle will augment, rather than duplicate, accreditation review.
- Electronic Reporting. The volume of work required by the 2001-2005 program review cycle was an additional concern to the Task Force. Based on the feedback received, it was recommended that an electronic reporting process or template be developed. In response, an electronic reporting template has been developed by members of the implementation team, with the twofold goal of reducing the amount of paper other office supplies used for the process; and providing a limited venue for reporting that encourages efficiency and focused conversation, along with controlled input that avoids the superfluous reports of the past.

The recommendations of the Task Force were considered throughout the Implementation Team's planning process and have been successfully included in the new process. The Implementation Team continues to meet on a bi-weekly schedule to ensure that the process is fully implemented, welcoming feedback from across campus regarding changes made to the old process.

## **IV. Integrated Program Review & Continuous Improvement Cycle Process Definition**

### **A. Overview**

The Implementation Team chose to call the new review process the Integrated Program Review and Continuous Improvement Cycle (IPR Cycle). The IPR Cycle was developed by incorporating the recommendations of the Program Review Task Force and the Provost with multiple, deliberate discussions over several months. Four academic departments (Art, Biology, Chemistry, and the School of Health Promotion and Human Performance) were identified early on as test departments, and also provided guidance and feedback to develop and refine the IPR cycle.

The Program Review Implementation Team worked diligently to develop a process that is effective, efficient, and that provides enough information and data to be useful to programs, departments, and divisional administrative leadership as they work toward improving and enhancing the educational experience for EMU students. The process evolved over time to its current state, and the intent is for the Program Review Implementation Team to regularly address concerns and specific needs expressed by faculty and department heads/school directors as they use the IPR Cycle to continuously evaluate their academic programs.

### ***B. Electronic Template***

An electronic template was created for the IPR Cycle, meeting one of the specific directives of the Provost and Task Force. The electronic template is the medium through which all information and data will be presented by programs, departments, college deans, and other interested parties. The electronic template underwent several revisions and refinements during the spring 2007 and summer 2007 terms. The revisions and refinements were the result of multiple discussions within the Implementation Team and feedback from the four test departments. The Office of Institutional Research and Information Management (IRIM) was instrumental in the development of the template. IRIM took responsibility for developing connections to specific data, essential to providing insight into the nature of the programs' and departments'/schools' performance in a variety of areas.

The electronic template resides on a secure server located in the Office of Institutional Research and Information Management (<https://www.emich.edu/irim/programreview>). Security features have been added to the template, allowing only those with the appropriate permission to access reports in their respective departments/schools. The security scheme is directly linked to Banner login ids and passwords, as well as to the appropriate college and department/school. It will be up to the department/school head to determine the level of access each person is allowed. The Senior Analyst for Academic Program Review will create new accounts and make appropriate changes to access per directions from department/school heads.

As each year ends and modules are completed, they will be locked and the appropriate data (i.e. goals, objectives, etc.) will roll forward into the next year's template. This will save time and prevent redundant effort. In addition, items that can be linked electronically, such as the online catalog and the data warehouse, will be. Prior year's reports will be archived and made available either as a .pdf file or in a "read only" format, to ensure the integrity of the data and other information presented.

### ***C. Higher Learning Commission Criteria***

A noteworthy change from the old process to the new one is the direct connection between the IPR Cycle and the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) institutional accreditation criteria. The criteria from the Handbook of Accreditation for the Higher Learning Commission (<http://www.ncahlc.org>) provide the foundation for the criteria

adopted for the new IPR Cycle (See Appendix A). This approach opens the door to reciprocal relationships between the IPR Cycle, institutional accreditation, disciplinary, programmatic, departmental/school, and college accreditation, and strategic planning and continuous improvement activities already in place at EMU. The HLC criteria provide consistent guidance across other processes so that information and data is transferable and able to be used by others for decision-making and improvements to auxiliary areas of the university.

The Higher Learning Commission uses five criteria to guide accreditation. The five criteria are listed below and have been adapted to provide guidance to the process at the program level:

1. Criterion One – Mission and Integrity
2. Criterion Two – Preparing for the Future
3. Criterion Three – Student Learning and Effective Teaching
4. Criterion Four -- Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge
5. Criterion Five – Engagement and Service

Each criterion is followed by several components and evidence statements, which programs and departments/schools will respond to in the course of their review. The criteria and their components are linked to the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) criteria, via a matrix developed by the Higher Learning Commission (Appendix XXX). AQIP is an alternative institutional accreditation process, which operates through the Higher Learning Commission and alongside the Program to Evaluate and Advance Quality (PEAQ), the Higher Learning Commission's traditional institutional accreditation process.

As part of the IPR Cycle, programs and departments are required to develop goals that are directly related to specific criteria. Two goals must be linked to Criterion Three – Student Learning and Effective Teaching; one goal must be linked to Criterion Four – Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge; and one goal must be linked to Criterion Five – Engagement and Service. Programs and departments have the option of developing two additional goals, each of which also must be directly associated with one of the five criteria.

#### ***D. Goals versus Objectives***

For the purposes of the IPR Cycle, the Program Review Implementation Team felt it necessary to define the terms “goals” and “objectives”. Providing a specific framework for departments/schools to use when creating goals and objectives will make it easier to sort out the quadrennial perspective versus the annual tasks to be completed. Goals therefore, should be broad and forward looking for a four-year time span. Objectives, on the other hand, should be more defined and directed toward focused efforts that can be completed within an academic year (approximately).

Goals and objectives should be measurable, but in different ways. Again, measurement of goals will be in broader terms. Successful outcomes will result from efforts compiled over the four-year period the goals encompass. Outcomes of

objectives will be more specific and focused. Ability to gather data and tangible results during the short term will be key to measuring success. Additionally, the outcomes of goals will be reported quadrennially while the outcomes of objectives will be addressed annually.

### ***E. AQIP Process Framework***

The AQIP accreditation process allows for the infusion of the principles and benefits of continuous improvement into the culture of participating institutions by providing an alternative process through which an already-accredited institution can maintain its accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission. AQIP categories are based directly on the standards set forth by the Higher Learning Commission. The Integrated Program Review and Continuous Improvement Cycle framework is intricately linked to the AQIP process, including the three-year annual report cycle and the timing of the completion of the first round of program review reports, which are directly tied to EMU's AQIP Reaffirmation of Accreditation, scheduled for 2011.

### ***F. IPR Cycle Framework***

Within the construct of continuous improvement, the new Integrated Program Review and Continuous Improvement Cycle is comprised of three primary activities or modules, operating both continually and concurrently. They include the *Annual Planning*, *Program Review*, and *Campus Comment* modules, which are supported by the *Information* module. Each module plays an integral role in building a sequence on which continuous improvement, department or school level decisions, executive administrative decisions, and future planning can be based (see Figure 2. below).

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*Figure 2.*

*Integrated Program Review & Continuous Improvement Cycle Model*

Of the cycle components, the Annual Planning Module provides a short-term, recurring, systematic process for reviewing and gauging progress on 4-year goals and intermediate annual objectives. The Program Review Module includes the program review compilation – a quadrennial comprehensive assessment of the program and its alignment with established criteria, which are directly tied to the Higher Learning Commission's institutional regional accreditation criteria. The Campus Comment Module consists of responses to the analysis generated in the Program Review Module. The Campus Comment Module includes: the dean's assessment and recommendations, campus peer comments, notes from roundtable discussions, and recommendations from the Provost and Associate Provost regarding the future direction of each program. The Campus Comment Module lays the groundwork for the determination of a final set of goals for each department/school to focus on over the next 3 years.

Determination of which programs will be reviewed and how they will be grouped will be decided within each department/school based on how they want to handle

programs versus concentrations. The program review grouping decision made by each department will remain the same for the entire cycle, including the Annual Planning for the subsequent three years. That is, annual plans will be developed based on the same program groupings used to complete the Review Module. The online template will be adapted based on their decision (see Appendix ???), to include program descriptions and program requirements.

### **G. Annual Planning Module**

Departments/schools will regularly assess progress they are making toward achieving their programmatic goals through the Annual Planning Module, as part of the continuous improvement process. The module will require a short annual plan focused both on individual programs and department/school's goal-setting and self-appraisal. At the department/school level, each annual plan will be integrated with that of the prior year and used for long-term planning. Department/school heads will use the annual plans as a vehicle for developing departmental objectives and strategies to attain them.

Annual plans will be submitted to the college dean who will, in turn, merge all department/school plans in order to assess and prioritize the college's needs, set budgetary goals, and approve strategic initiatives. College deans will use the annual plans to define their strategy when identifying short term objectives and developing courses of action to attain those objectives, which will ultimately roll up to the divisional level through budgetary planning and strategic operations efforts. Combined with other divisions' priorities, strategic planning, and budgetary goals, the university will be able, as a whole, to manage its funding priorities in a responsible, evidence-based manner.

Annual plans will also be shared with the Office of Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement, who will review the materials, identify themes from across departments, schools and colleges, and will use this information to respond to, prioritize, and guide strategies for institutional level strategic planning, potential continuous improvement endeavors, and specific AQIP projects.

The department/school and program Annual Plans are the basic element of the IPR process. The plan provides continuity between quadrennial completion of the Review Module. The plans are due to the appropriate dean by October 1<sup>st</sup> and will cover progress during the prior year and set objectives for the upcoming year. This scheduling allows the Annual Plans to be compiled during the summer months for presentation to the entire faculty team at the department/school's fall meeting, with time for any necessary revisions prior to finalization.

The Annual Planning Module template is provided at Appendix ?? or is available at: <https://www.emich.edu/irim/programreview>. It includes a summary of the department/school goals and the goals for the various programs within the department/school. The template consists of a department/school overview and subsequent sections to be completed by each program within the

department/school. The individual program section of the Annual Plan consists of an input window devoted to each of the IPR criterion, and provides a brief interim assessment of where the program stands with respect to that criterion. The plans essentially consist of updating the department/school and program goals and objectives; each plan will consist of four to six goals with two goals linked directly to criterion 3, and one goal each linked to criteria 4 and 5. The additional two goals may be used as needed, as long as they are directly linked to one of the five criteria.

The Annual Planning Module explores the background, status, and future direction of each goal for the upcoming year and beyond. After the plans are submitted, the dean, department/school head, and faculty are encouraged to discuss any areas of concern. The Annual Plans with objectives and strategies to attain those objectives at the program, department, and college levels, will ultimately roll up to the divisional level through budgetary planning and strategic operations efforts.

#### ***H. Program Review Module***

The Program Review Module is comprised of a program review process template which compiles pertinent information gleaned from the previous three annual plans, plus data (provided by IRIM and other sources) from the previous four years. The purpose of the program review process is to provide a forum for evaluation of student outcomes, achievement of programmatic goals, and identification of overall strengths and weaknesses of an academic program. It is an opportunity to evaluate and describe the performance of the program over time and should address future plans and resources.

The program reviews will be grouped and submitted by department/school, like the annual plans. The department/school head will complete the department/school portion of the Program Review Module. The review will move into the Campus Comment Module at that point.

The Program Review Module is the primary vehicle for updating the Academic Affairs leadership on the overall welfare and future direction for a department/school's family of programs. The reviews are due as a department/school grouping to the appropriate dean by the second Friday of the winter semester for the preceding three July to June academic years and the current reporting year. A department/school is not required to complete an Annual Plan in a Program Review year.

The Program Review process consists of essentially eight phased steps: process overview; program definition; accreditation cross-walk; data analysis and validation; program compilation; department/school compilation; submission. The process will primarily be completed online.

The department/school program review compilation process is formally initiated by a faculty orientation presented by the Academic Programming, Program Review, and Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement offices. This overview presentation

and discussion will typically be conducted in January, one full year prior to program review report submission. The orientation will cover the Program Review Module and the reporting roles and responsibilities of the Program Review and IRIM offices and the department/school faculty.

Program definition will be addressed prior to the department/school beginning work in the electronic template. Programs will be defined institutionally through the academic program nomenclature policy, but departments/schools will make the final decision as to how the programs will be listed or grouped for Program Review and Annual Planning purposes. The online template will include a list of the program and subject codes based on the department/school's decision and the department head will verify the list within the electronic template. Any changes to the list will be addressed with the Office of Course & Program Development. Once the list is finalized, IRIM will provide the appropriate data templates for the faculty to review and analyze for each program or group of programs.

One of the new and challenging aspects of the IPR Cycle Program Review Module is an effort to recognize the program evaluation benefits of program, department, and college accreditation. The goal is to prevent redundant effort by the faculty that prepare similar materials for both IPR Cycle and accreditation submissions. In order for programs to be exempted for work performed in preparation for external accreditation, the program faculty, working with the Program Review staff, will develop an accreditation to program review requirements cross-walk analysis. The analysis will match accreditation requirements to program review requirements. The analysis will be submitted to the Associate Provost not later than April 30<sup>th</sup> for review and approval not later than May 31<sup>st</sup>. Based on approval, the department/school leadership can then finalize their data analysis and review compilation plans. Areas of the review may be replaced with appropriately matched accreditation data via a hyperlink, a reference, or by cutting and pasting the information directly from the accreditation report.

Using the program data templates developed in the program definition, the IRIM staff will provide completed and populated data templates for the faculty to review and analyze. The faculty program coordinators should review the program data results to ensure the data is complete and accurate. Any discrepancies should be addressed with the IRIM staff to determine the nature of the issue: data definition, template design, or data validation. The data definition is how the various fields are defined to ensure a common understanding of the data displayed. The template design is to ensure that the data displayed is accessing all the correct program and subject codes to support a program's process analysis. The data validation is comparing the centralized data shown in the templates to departmental/school local data to identify and resolve serious disagreements. Once these issues have been resolved, the department/school can begin their data analysis and program assessment.

The Program Review Module will be compiled and submitted electronically. The Program Review Module report template is provided at Appendix ?? or is available

at: <https://www.emich.edu/irim/programreview>. It includes reporting templates for each Program Review criterion as outlined in Appendix A. Each program's faculty team will consult the data inferences gained from both the data templates and local program or department/school related data, and will use those insights to guide and support the responses to the Program Review Module report templates.

The basic building blocks of the Program Review Module are the individual academic program reviews. However, for administrative coherency, the reviews are grouped by academic department/school. The Departmental/School Review serves as both the introductory and closing document for the department/school grouping of program review reports. Through the Department/School Overview, each program will be considered both individually, and as part of the greater whole. This section of the review provides the department/school head the opportunity to make observations and insights from the department/school perspective and considers issues that affect groups of programs or the department/school as a whole.

The department/school set of Program Reviews, along with the Departmental/School Review, is to be completed and submitted to the appropriate dean by the second Friday of the winter semester. Submission of these materials to the dean will mark the end of the Program Review Module and the beginning of the Campus Comment Module.

Review Module templates or formats:

- Accreditation cross-walk. See example at Appendix ??.
- Program review report. See Appendix ?? or visit: <https://www.emich.edu/irim/programreview>.
- Department/school review. See Appendix ?? or visit: <https://www.emich.edu/irim/programreview>.
- Dean comments. See Appendix ?? or visit: <https://www.emich.edu/irim/programreview>.

***I. Campus Comment Module***

The Campus Comment Module is the evaluation mechanism for the Program Review Module of the IPR Cycle. It involves a number of steps, beginning with a set of comments from the dean and culminating with the Provost's findings about the program. The steps include:

Dean's Comments

Following submission of the program reviews and department/school review, the dean will comment on them. This is the first of two sets of comments provided by the dean and should be directly related to the reviews and the outcomes outlined by the departments/schools, much as are those in the department/school review. They should not include recommendations regarding the findings continuum assignments,

which come later. This initial set of dean's comments will become part of the overall review considered by interested departments/schools or administrative offices.

#### Interested Departments/Schools and Administrative Units

The completed department/school review set, dean's comments, and supporting documentation will be sent electronically to the Associate Provost, who will make it available to the campus community for comment, especially to those who have a specific interest in the programs reviewed. For example, the Graduate School will be advised and encouraged to review and provide feedback about graduate programs; interdisciplinary programs that make use of courses from multiple department/schools will be made available to the contributing department/schools; and reviewed programs that are significantly similar to programs in other areas will be made available to those other programs. Those who choose to review a program's or department/school's report will have the opportunity to submit written comments, electronically through the template. All responses will be compiled by the Associate Provost and used to help guide the agenda for the Roundtable Discussion.

#### Roundtable Discussion

After feedback has been submitted, departments/schools will participate in a Roundtable Discussion; an open discussion of all pertinent program review data, findings, and assessments, facilitated by the Associate Provost. Invitees will include members of the Provost's Council, department/school heads, program coordinators, faculty, representatives of those areas that have submitted comments on the program reviews, and any other interested parties. The emphasis of the meeting will be on validating observations and recommendations presented in the review materials, as well as clarifying or responding to comments from across campus.

#### Dean's Findings Continuum Recommendations

Following the Roundtable Discussion, the college dean will comment on the Program Reviews a second time. Based on the Program and Department/School Reviews, campus feedback and the Roundtable Discussion, the dean will make recommendations regarding the program, using the Findings Continuum as a guide. The dean's recommendations, along with all relevant review materials, will then be forwarded to the Associate Provost.

#### Associate Provost Findings Continuum Recommendations

After receiving all relevant materials, the Associate Provost will consider the reviews, the dean's recommendations, and all other pertinent information, and will develop a set of Findings Continuum recommendations. All materials, including the Associate Provost's recommendations, will then be forwarded to the Provost.

#### Leadership Appraisal and Guidance Meeting

The Provost will meet with the Associate Provost, Associate Vice-President for Academic Programming, and the dean of the appropriate college to discuss and decide upon final findings continuum assignments and any required follow up

actions. Explanation of the findings continuum assignments and the follow up actions required will be sent to the college dean and the appropriate department head, who will share them with the faculty. The Associate Provost will then attend the fall meeting for the department/school to discuss the findings continuum conclusions and answer questions. The department/school will take the findings, make any necessary adjustments to their goals, and move back into the Planning Module rotation for the next three years.

While under development, all related materials will be regarded as confidential; essentially, documents should be distributed within defined communities and not be generally accessible to the university community or the general public.

#### IPR Cycle Process Feedback

Feedback from the department/school regarding the IPR Cycle process itself will also be included in this module. The information gathered will be evaluated, discussed, and if deemed necessary or useful, will be implemented by the Program Review Implementation Team, Academic Programming staff, and the Associate Provost. This will allow improvements to the IPR Cycle process to be made on a continual basis.

#### ***J. Explanation of Findings Continuum***

The Review Module will result in one of four findings for each program:

1. Fully meets criteria.
2. Meets criteria with suggested follow up actions.
3. Marginally meets criteria with required follow up actions.
4. Fails to meet criteria.

#### **DRAW THE CONTINUUM AND INSERT HERE**

The Provost will assign a findings position to all participating programs at the close of the Campus Comment Module. The position will include a description of any specific follow up actions, if appropriate. The nature of any follow up actions will depend on the position assigned by the Provost.

#### **(1) Fully meets criteria**

An assigned position of (1) *Fully meets criteria* means that the program has satisfied all the Program Review criteria and their components. The program is making satisfactory progress toward meeting its goals, and will be allowed to modify its goals and objectives without specific direction from the administrative leadership. The program will continue to be reviewed according to the normal IPR cycle.

#### **(2) Meets criteria with suggested follow up actions**

An assigned position of (2) *Meets criteria with suggested follow up actions* also means that the program has satisfied the Program Review criteria and their components. However, as a result of the review, the Provost has recommended but not required that certain follow-up actions be considered. The program is not bound

to follow the recommendations, but it should consider them seriously. Discussion of the recommendations, along with any follow up actions taken as a result, should be included in the following year's Annual Plan.

**(3) Marginally meets criteria with required follow up actions**

An assigned position of (3) *Marginally meets criteria with required follow up* means that, though the program has met Program Review criteria, there is sufficient identifiable concern that certain specified follow up actions will be required. These could be directed toward the one or more of the criteria themselves or any of their components. Identification of the areas of concern, along with an explanation of the required follow up actions, will be a part of the communication from the Provost to the program. Discussion of the steps taken by the program in response to the Provost's concerns will be a part of the program's Annual Plan, until such time as the Provost's concerns have been adequately addressed. Prior to its final submission, the Annual Plan will be reviewed by the department/school head and the college dean to be sure that the program is taking the necessary steps to respond adequately to the Provost's concerns.,

**(4) Fails to meet criteria**

An assigned position of (4) *Fails to meet criteria*, means that a program has not satisfied at least one of the Program Review criteria and will be required to take steps to correct that failure. Specification of how the program has failed to meet the criteria, along with a description of any follow up actions that might be required, will be a part of the communication from the Provost to the program. Explanation of the steps taken by the program in response to the Provost's concerns will be a part of the program's Annual Plan, until such time as the Provost's concerns have been adequately addressed. Prior to its final submission, the Annual Plan will be reviewed by the department/school head, the college dean and the Associate Provost to make sure that the program is taking the necessary steps to respond adequately to the Provost's concerns.

***K. Information Module***

The Information Module will be the last component of the IPR Cycle completed in the online template. However, it is one of the critical pieces of the cycle, as it will function as a central repository for data and any other relevant information related to the IPR Cycle process for each department/school.

The Information Module, in concept, will include the program listing in the format approved by each department. Additionally, both institutional, quantitative data collected by the Office of Institutional Research and Information Management (IRIM) and quantitative and qualitative data collected by the departments/schools will be included. The departmental/school data might also include that from program assessment; program, department, or college accreditation; or general program and department/school management.

The Information Module is still in the conceptual phase. The module will be available electronically as part of the IPR process. The intent is that it will consist of several elements, all intended to be resources that are consolidated in a single area for ease of use. As in the Program Review and Annual Planning Modules, there will be a program listing confirmation area. When any changes to this area are made, the changes will also happen within the other two modules. The Information Module will function as a central repository within a department/school's IPR Cycle online template.

## **V. Conclusion**

Strong academic programs are the fundamental building blocks of a progressive, vibrant, and responsive learning environment. The purpose of the new IPR Cycle is to enhance the learning environment, maximize the use of data for evidence based decision making, plan in a more thoughtful and deliberate manner, and review and improve, on a regular basis, the educational experience of our students. The alignment of processes will provide an environment where faculty and administration can work to make certain we are doing the best job that we can for every EMU student.

## APPENDIX A

### **EMU Integrated Program Review and Continuous Improvement Criteria** *(Adopted from the Criteria for Accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission)*

**Criterion One – Mission and Integrity:** The program operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve faculty, staff, and students.

**1a. The program clearly and publicly articulates its mission.**

- The mission statement is updated regularly using the full range of faculty, staff, and stakeholder input.
- The mission is in concert with the mission of the department, college and university.

**1b: In its mission documents, the program recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.**

- Explain how the program's mission articulates principles that recognize the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society; the program's function within a multicultural society; and how the program's mission provides a basis for strategies to address diversity.

**1c: Understanding and support for the mission pervades the program faculty, staff and students.**

- How does the program assure that faculty, staff and students understand, support, and are able to articulate the program's mission?
- How does the program's mission influence its strategic decision-making?

**1d: The program's governance and administrative structure promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the program to fulfill its mission.**

**1e: The program upholds and protects its integrity.**

**Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future:** The program's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

**2a: The program plans for the future.**

- The program has an understanding of its capacity: past, present, and future.

- Program planning addresses change (e.g. demographics, regional needs, program demand, technology, and global perspectives).

**2b: The program receives and allocates sufficient resources to maintain educational quality and strengthen educational quality in the future.**

- The program makes effective use of fiscal resources and has identified or developed resource allocation priorities to address future education needs.
- Program uses its faculty and staff effectively, and has identified faculty recruiting priorities to address future educational needs.
- Program uses its equipment and facilities effectively. (Describe the process used to determine usage. What are your critical needs?)

**2c: The program's self-evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of educational quality, and indicate areas for improvement.**

- The program has an effective evaluation process that provides reliable evidence about program performance.
- The program uses program performance assessment data and feedback to support effective planning and continuous improvement.

**2d: Program planning aligns with the organizational mission at all levels.**

**Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching:** The program provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

**3a: The program has developed goals related to student learning outcomes that are clearly stated and make effective assessment possible.**

- The program has a defined process for establishing, validating, communicating, and adjusting program learning outcomes.
- The program faculty reviews whether student learning outcomes are met; assesses how well students are progressing through the program; and uses the information as a basis for programmatic changes.

**3b. The program demonstrates that it values and supports effective teaching.**

- Measures of effective teaching are clearly defined for program faculty and instructors and are examined on a regular basis.

- The program recognizes faculty who excel at teaching and identifies opportunities for improvement through professional development activities.

**3c. The program creates effective learning environments.**

- The program actively seeks to ensure all students are comfortable, engaged, and have the opportunity to be successful in the classroom, laboratories, and out of class experiences.
- Pedagogical variety and instructional technology play an appropriate role in creating an effective learning environment.

**3d. The program's learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.**

- Adequate financial, physical, and human resources are available and expended to make effective student learning.
- Adequate University Library resources are available to support the program.
- Special programmatic needs are being adequately addressed (e.g. out-of-class learning opportunities, specialized equipment and software, learning support staff, etc.).
- Adequate student financial aid resources are available to students; the students are aware of their availability; and systems are in place to ensure the resources are fairly and effectively distributed.

**Criterion Four - Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of**

**Knowledge:** The program promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

**4a: The program demonstrates that it values a life of learning.**

**4b: The program demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are an integral part of the program.**

- The program assesses the effectiveness of its contributions to EMU's general education program.
- Academic major curricula acquaint students with a range of approaches to disciplinary expertise.

- Faculty and other instructional staff collaborate across programs, departments, and colleges in teaching, scholarly and creative projects, and community service activities.

**4c: The program assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.**

**4d: The program ensures knowledge is pursued and applied responsibly.**

- Human Subject Review, Laboratory/Radiation Safety, and Animal Safety/Care protocols are published and understood by instructional staff and faculty.
- Courses or training in professional ethics, where appropriate, are required or encouraged.

**Criterion Five – Engagement and Service:** The program identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

**5a: The program learns from, is engaged with, and demonstrates responsiveness to its constituencies.**

- The program regularly meets with supported programs to determine their concerns and desires with regard to service courses provided by the program.
- An active effort is maintained to stay in touch with program alumni, and solicit their support and input on program issues and initiatives.
- Regular attempts are made to contact the employers of program alumni to determine their satisfaction with the program's learning outcomes.
- Does the program have an active advisory board? If no, discuss the reasons why the program does not currently have an active advisory board, and any plans to create one within the next 12 months. If yes, discuss the program's response to the recommendations made over the past 12 months by the advisory board.
- Discuss the relationship between the program and the EMU Foundation.

**5b: The program's constituencies value it.**

**Appendix B**  
**Higher Learning Commission Criteria versus AQIP Categories Matrix**  
*(developed by the Higher Learning Commission)*

AQIP Categories									
HLC/PR Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Helping Students Learn	Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives	Understanding Students' and Stakeholders	Valuing People	Leading and Communicating	Supporting Institutional Operations	Measuring Effectiveness	Planning Continuous Improvement	Building Collaborative Relationships
<b>Criterion One:</b> Mission and Integrity	X	X	X		X			X	
<b>Criterion Two:</b> Preparing for the Future				X		X	X	X	X
<b>Criterion Three:</b> Student Learning and Effective Teaching	X		X		X	X	X		
<b>Criterion Four:</b> Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge	X	X	X	X		X			
<b>Criterion Five:</b> Engagement and Service		X		X	X		X		X

**Appendix C**  
**The Annual Planning Module electronic template**

**Appendix D**  
**Program Review Module electronic template**

**Appendix E**  
**Department/School Review electronic template**

**Appendix F**  
**Dean's Initial Comments electronic template**

**Appendix G**  
**Campus Comment electronic template**

**Appendix H**  
**Accreditation cross-walk**