

Academic Program Review Update

Auburn University
Office of the Provost

Background

- At the June 2005 Board meeting, President Richardson called for initiation of a system of Academic Program Review.
- Purpose today- present update on pilot test of Academic Program Review (APR) conducted this year.

2007 Academic Program Review

- Purpose of APR:
 - ensure quality and strategic relevance of academic programs offered by the university.
- Programs under review:
 - Specific degree programs and/or an entire academic department.
- Auburn University has 58 academic departments and within those departments approx. 24 programs which are not accredited.

Pilot Study Overview:

Step 1- Selection of Academic Units

- Four programs selected for 2007 pilot:
 - Animal Sciences
 - Sociology, Anthropology, Criminology and Social Work
 - Architecture*
 - Nursing*
- (*nationally accredited)

Pilot Study Overview: Step 2- Evaluation Process

- Each program/department prepared comprehensive self-study reports in Fall, 2006;
- Review teams conducted site visits in Spring, 2007;
- Review teams included AU faculty members from related disciplines. Programs/ departments without national accreditation had reviewers from AU and external to AU (UFL, LSU, Penn State, NCSU).

Pilot Study Overview: Step 3-Review Team Reports

- Review teams will provide comprehensive reports to deans by late April 2007.
- Each dean will prepare and submit recommendations and an implementation plan to the Provost.

Pilot Study Overview: Step 3-Review Team Reports --Cont'd

- The Provost:
 - forwards the report and Deans' recommendations to the Academic Program Review Committee for their input (under discussion);
 - forwards the Dean's feedback and APR Committee input to the departmental faculty for their review;

Pilot Study Overview: Step 3-Review Team Reports-- Cont'd

- The Provost:
 - reviews the input and comments of each stakeholder group;
 - forwards his recommendations to the President, and directs Dean to implement appropriate recommendations;
 - takes results into account in developing budget priorities.

Findings

- Process takes time and resources;
- Process is worth investment. One department head stated:

“I wish I had this done when I first came to Auburn to head the department. I have a much better understanding of my unit.”

Recommendations

- Recommend- Implement APR in 2007-2008 academic year.
- Implementation recommendations-
 - 1) Annually review up to 5 programs that are not nationally accredited so that all such programs can be reviewed on a 6-year cycle.
 - 2) Supplement national accreditation reviews with APR, relative to mission and centrality, to minimize duplication of departmental effort;

Recommendations- Cont'd.

- Implementation recommendations (cont'd)-
 - 3) Identify that viability or centrality questions can trigger a review;
 - 4) Start process earlier in the academic year so results can better be considered in the budget process and to allow time for Dean, APR Committee, and faculty input.