

Adopted: May 21, 1996
**Superseded by AS-496-
98/PRAIC**

ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, California

Background

The purpose of external review is to provide the opportunity for objective outside input on academic programs. For some academic programs, accreditation review serves this purpose. For programs which are not subject to accreditation review, formal external review provides a mechanism for outside input.

In academic departments that offer more than one degree, external review of the degree programs may be combined into a single review. Non-degree granting academic departments will also undergo external review. Where accreditation review occurs at the College level, this review can be considered as an external review of a program within the college as long as the accreditation report makes substantive comments about individual programs within the College. Interdisciplinary degree programs may be evaluated by a single external review, as long as the review team is appropriately constituted.

RESOLUTION ON EXTERNAL REVIEW

AS-460-96/PRAIC

WHEREAS, The Commitment to Visionary Pragmatism document has identified external program review as necessary; and

WHEREAS, specialized accreditation is not available for some degree programs or available accreditation may be deemed unnecessary by the department and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that all degree programs, in consultation with their college dean, will seek either specialized accreditation or undergo external review; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the timing of external review efforts be coordinated with the Academic

Senate Program Review & Improvement Committee to minimize the workload of the program faculty in preparing for review; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the results of specialized accreditation review or external review will be communicated to the college dean, the Academic Senate Program Review & Improvement Committee, and to the President or his/her designee; and be it further

RESOLVED, that program faculty will have an opportunity to respond in writing to all findings and recommendations raised during the review process; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the President or his/her designee will report to the program, the college dean, and to the Academic Senate Program Review & Improvement Committee within six months regarding recommendations made to the program during the review process.

Proposed by the Academic Senate
Instruction Committee and the Academic
Senate Program Review & Improvement
Committee

Memorandum

To: Harvey Greenwald, Chair
Academic Senate

Date: September 23, 1996

From: Warren J. Baker
President

Copies: Paul J. Zingg
Glenn W. Irvin

Subject: Response to Academic Senate Resolutions AS-460-96/PRAIC, and AS-461-96/PRAIC

I appreciate the work the Academic Senate has accomplished on these resolutions, which will play a significant role in program improvement and efficiency. In order that these two resolutions can be adopted and implemented as quickly as possible, I am requesting the Senate respond to the following issues raised during the administrative review.

AS-460-96/PRAIC. Resolution on External Review

The process and information required for this review should be consistent with that required for program and course proposals, for Program Review and Improvement, and for Program Discontinuance.

1. Background

In the opening sentence, replace "input on academic programs" with "evaluation of academic programs and departments." Paragraph 2 indicates that non-degree granting academic departments will also undergo review.

Second sentence, revise to read, "For programs and departments which are not subject to accreditation review, formal external review should occur."

2. Whereas Clauses

Whereas 2 states that specialized accreditation "may be deemed unnecessary," but Whereas 3 indicates that all programs will seek either specialized accreditation or undergo external review." Although these two statements are not strictly contradictory, to eliminate any misinterpretation and to clarify the role of external review, the following revision to Whereas 3 is suggested: "that all degree programs, in consultation with their

college dean, either undergo external review as part of specialized accreditation or separately; and be it further"

3. Resolved Clauses

Resolved 1: drop "efforts" in the first line.

AS-461-96/PRAIC, Resolution To Approve Procedures For External Program Review

Throughout the document, references to the Vice President for Academic Affairs should be changed to refer to the "Chief Academic Officer."

References to departments should be revised to indicate "departments/programs," since some degree programs include more than one department and college. Similarly, references to department chairs should also reference program chairs or directors.

The process and information required for this review should be consistent with that required for program and course proposals, for Program Review and Improvement, and for Program Discontinuance.

First paragraph:

First sentence: "for outside evaluation of academic programs and departments."

Review schedule: Revise the statement to make clear that the scheduled internal program review should be adjusted to coincide with the schedule for specialized accreditation review so the effort is not duplicated.

The Review Panel:

The selection of reviewers should involve consultative offices beyond those of the department chair(s) and dean(s), and should include national professional associations, accrediting bodies, other institutions, and appropriate organizations to identify qualified reviewers. The list of reviewers should be determined through mutual agreement of the department, college, and chief academic officer.

Preparation for Review:

A valuable component of the program review process will be a self-study conducted by the faculty and staff of the program. Such a self-study, which is required as part of the process for specialized accreditation, goes beyond the mere collection of data and entails a thorough examination of the various aspects of the program. A self-study should be conducted as part of an external program review.

Statement 2: the statement of program/department mission, goals, and objectives should be accompanied by an assessment of how well the program has met its mission and accomplished its goals and objectives. This assessment might take a variety of forms and address several measures, such as those suggested in the WASC material on assessment, in "Commitment to Visionary Pragmatism," the discussions of the Cal Poly Plan, and other campus documents.

The information requested in this section should be consistent with information requested in program and course proposals.

Reviewer Guidelines:

1. Department Objectives: this section should include an item on assessment and the measures to be used in determining how well the goals and objectives are met.
- 2.b. Curricular Content: The self-study and report should consider whether the program/department is offering the number and variety of courses appropriate to the size of the faculty and program needs--that is, neither too many nor too few courses.

This section should address the program's relationship to the co-curriculum and Student Affairs.

3. Faculty: This section should address the department/program's statements and definitions of activities acceptable as professional development, scholarship, research, and creative activity.

Item c: revise to: "research and creative projects."

Post-Review Recommendations:

The process for responding should complement the regular review schedule of the Program Review and Improvement Committee.

Thank you again for your attention to these matters.