

Academic Affairs and Standards Council

Procedures for Reviewing Academic Program Sustainability

This process establishes protocol for reporting and determining academic program efficacy in light of program sustainability. The intent of the process is to ensure that procedures are in place to act accordingly to the needs of the students, college, and academic programs.

During the in-service week at the beginning of the fall semester of each academic year, academic program faculty will receive information regarding the efficacy of their program in the form of a Program Sustainability Report based on program effectiveness criteria (see below). The purpose of this information is to provide faculty and administration with trend data so that the college can assess the programs and discuss their strengths and weaknesses. If the weaknesses indicate a problem with viability, the college has 2 years to take corrective actions to improve the efficacy of at-risk programs.

Programs will fall into 3 levels of effectiveness: the Green Level, the Yellow Level, and the Orange Level. Programs in the Green Level will score 5-6 positive notations in the program effectiveness criteria. Green-level programs should continue with self-assessment as indicated in the assessment and/or program review process to maintain noted status. Programs in the Yellow Level will score 3-4 positive notations. Yellow-level programs should target their assessment process towards noted deficiencies to achieve a Green Level status. Programs in the Orange Level will score 1-2 positive notations. Orange-level programs are “At-Risk” and will need immediate supportive action. Orange-level programs will meet with administration to initiate sustainability actions.

The following effectiveness criteria, listed in alphabetical order, will constitute information given in the sustainability report. Although the items listed may have impact on the program’s efficacy, not all criteria will carry the same weight for all programs. Data of immediate importance will reflect program FYE, graduate/FTE, cost ratio, FYE/FTE, instructional cost study, percentage full by section.

- **Advisory Committee** (Current state of the program as seen by advisory committee.)
- **Current Industry Needs** (Current demand for graduates.)
- **Current Technology** (Is the program current with the times? What changes would make the program current and attractive?)
- **Curriculum** (Is the curriculum current with expected needs? Has the curriculum been updated?)
- **Integration with Other Programs** (Extent of coring with other programs, what would the impact be on those programs, general education courses taken by majors.)
- **MnSCU Cost Study** (Compare program to like programs in the state).
- **Number of Sections and Average Section Size**
- **Program Fill Rates** (Based on accreditation issues, maximum class/lab size, faculty/student ratios.)
- **Program History** (Historical Data)

- **Student Enrollment** (FYE by Program, FYE by Major, FYE/FTE)
- **Student Success** (Job placement rates, transfer rates, graduation rates, etc.)
- **Tuition/Cost Analysis** (The estimated tuition earned divided by the estimated costs - more than 100% is best.)

Should programs need supportive actions, program faculty and administration will meet within the first two weeks of the fall semester to discuss the Sustainability Report and to form a Program Sustainability Committee that will create and facilitate a plan that will improve the program's health. The following representatives will form the Program Sustainability Committee:

- Administrators (President, Academic Deans, Chief Academic Officer)
- Program Representative(s)
- A member of the Academic Affairs Committee
- Marketing Director
- A representative from the advisory board (if deemed applicable)
- Public Relations Director
- Recruiters
- Faculty representatives (a division chair and member not teaching in the program)
- Advisors
- Counselors

The Program Sustainability Committee will work to improve the program using a variety of methods, which may include but are not limited to the following:

- Advisory committee recruitment,
- Consult current and former students for their input in how the program can be made more viable,
- In-depth look at successful programs that are similar in nature,
- Marketing methods that include program brochures, inclusion in media ads, etc.,
- On-sight visits to program area with possible hands-on activities,
- Personal recruitment sessions involving faculty, current students, and possible former students who have graduated from the program,
- Other actions as needed.

In January of the academic year of notification of "At Risk" status, the academic deans will meet with the "At Risk" programs' faculty and a member of the Academic Affairs Committee to assess the effectiveness of actions taken to improve the programs. By this date, all parties should demonstrate movement in completing the plan established at the beginning of the school year by the Program Sustainability Committee. By October of the following academic year of notification of "At Risk" status, the academic deans will again meet with the at-risk programs' faculty and a member of the Academic Affairs Committee to re-assess program status. Program faculty and administration may determine the necessity for and number of follow-up meetings

throughout the course of the plan. These meetings will not replace the regularly scheduled meetings nor the Program Sustainability Report given to each program during the in-service week at the beginning of the academic year.

Timeline Summary Table	
Fall in-service of 1 st academic year	Information sharing on program effectiveness with respective program faculty
Within the first two weeks of September of the 1 st academic year	Meeting with Sustainability Committee for “At Risk” program to create plan to improve the health of the program
January of 1 st academic year	Assess actions taken to improve program health and decide whether to continue with the plan or make alterations
Within the first two weeks of September of the following the 2 nd academic year	Re-assess program and decide on further action as per contract
October 31 st of 2 nd academic year	Lay-off notices as per contract
Fall registration of 2 nd academic year	Program Recovery or Program Closure

Because the Procedures for Reviewing Academic Program Sustainability policy was deemed workable, the Shared Governance Committee decided to implement it immediately. Consequently, the timeline for the academic year of 2008-09 will be truncated as follows:

Timeline Summary for Academic Year ‘08-‘09	
January 2008 In-service	Information sharing on program effectiveness with respective program faculty
First two weeks of January 2008	Meeting with Sustainability Committee for “At Risk” program to create plan to improve the health of the program
Within first two weeks of October 2008	Assess actions taken to improve program health and decide whether to continue with the plan or make alterations
Within first two weeks of October 2009	Re-assess program and decide on further action