

## Academic Program Review at UNM

Until 2003, a formal review process was carried out for graduate programs only. These Graduate Unit Reviews, coordinated by the Office of Graduate Studies, ceased in 2003 following the Provost's and Faculty Senate's decision to extend the review process to all undergraduate programs, as well as graduate programs, in Academic Affairs.

The existing Graduate Unit Review procedures did not adapt well to this broader charge, so the Provost's Office, in collaboration with the college deans and department chairs, developed a new set of principles and procedures. After extensive review, the new Academic Program Review (APR) document was completed in Spring, 2005. It has since been revised to update process, reflect current organizational structure and align with UNM's goals.

The APR process is necessary for the university's accreditation by the [Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#) of the North Central Association in order to satisfy accreditation criteria such as the following:

*2c. The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.*

The APR process is also necessary in order to give programs a regular and formal opportunity to examine their goals, show how they contribute to the overall mission of UNM, how they are viewed nationally and internationally within their discipline, and how they plan to increase their effectiveness in the future. By providing a clear record of program resources and goals, we hope that the process fosters increased collaboration and coordination among programs. For programs that are accredited by professional or other types of associations, APR provides an opportunity to obtain guidance and feedback prior to that external accreditation process.

Major features of the APR process:

- Scheduled on an 8-year cycle, or the year prior to an outside accreditation review.
- The unit prepares a self-study that describes the unit's contributions to the institution, curricula, student profile and performance, faculty, facilities and resources, comparison to peers and other programs, and the unit's plan for the future.
- The future plan includes a discussion of ways to build on strengths and remediate weaknesses, expected reallocations or ways to obtain new funds to support any planned changes, and planning for the expected needs of students, the community, and the state.
- A committee that includes a broad range of representatives from UNM administration reviews the self study and collaborates with the unit in the selection of a team of reviewers.

- The review team usually includes three experienced faculty from other institutions and one UNM member.
- The review team provides a report that is reviewed at all levels of the university and is the basis for an action plan.
- The action plan is monitored in the Provost's Office for completion of action items. A more comprehensive review of the action plan occurs three years following the APR.

If you have questions about APR, please contact APR Coordinator Bessie Gallegos [apr@unm.edu](mailto:apr@unm.edu).