Seven-Year Academic Program Review (APR-7) Guidelines
(approved 3/16/2026)

The seven-year academic program review (APR-7) process is an important part of Idaho State University's overall assessment efforts. The APR-7 helps the institution fulfill its mission in several ways. For example, it provides valuable insights into the state of a program's resources, staffing, facilities, scholarly productivity, department climate, enrollment, outreach, etc. The APR-7 also allows academic units to assess the effectiveness of instructional practices, plan and implement actions to enhance student learning, and document ongoing improvement in programs and curriculum delivery. These things help strengthen programs and help the university comply with expectations from the state board and institutional accrediting bodies.

Specially accredited programs undergo review processes as required by their respective accrediting bodies. Required for all programs that are not specially accredited, the APR-7 is a periodic, in-depth examination of all aspects of a program's work. The review is, first and foremost, an opportunity to identify and share program successes. It is also an opportunity to consider ways a program could grow and improve, and it can help Academic Affairs and college leadership better understand how to leverage support for that growth and improvement. The APR-7 meets the expectations of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) Standards 1.B.1 and 1.C.1 through 1.C.7. Additionally, this process supports the State Board of Education III.G. Postsecondary Program Review and Approval requirements and the Idaho State University's institutional strategic plan goals.

Scope of Reviews

The APR-7 will usually be conducted at the departmental level, considering all degree programs housed in the department. Though the APR-7 is typically a department-level review, it should still acknowledge and focus on distinct program offerings within the larger department and should consider the full range of departmental activities.

Note: Many programs offer courses that contribute to the university's General Education requirements. Although the General Education program undergoes its own separate review process, some program courses may be included in both reviews. Information about this review process can be found on the General Education Requirements Council webpage.

Scheduling of Reviews

An APR-7 schedule will be posted on the university's Academic Program Review web page. Reviews may be initiated earlier than scheduled for a variety of reasons, such as a program undergoing significant change or other unique program circumstances warranting closer monitoring. Colleges should communicate any adjustments to the review schedule to Academic Affairs.

Reviewers

The APR-7 review team must include at least two members, and at least one must be external to the university with expertise in the field. Any review team member from ISU must be from a department or program other than the one under review. Review team members are to be selected from a list of candidates provided by the department.

Selecting external reviewers with any recent connections with the program under review should be avoided. If this is not possible, full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest should be formally acknowledged and communicated. External review guidelines to help programs identify and select external reviewers are available on the Academic Program Review webpage.

Process Timeline

The APR-7 process is guided by the following general timeline.

- In the spring, approximately one year before the review/campus visit, programs that need to begin the APR-7 process should receive notification from Academic Affairs and/or the University Assessment Review Committee. Programs then begin collecting the data needed for the self-study report, relying on ongoing program assessment data and other information from the past 7 years (or since the last APR-7).

- In the fall prior to the review/campus visit, reviewers are recommended and selected. Programs work collaboratively (faculty and other relevant stakeholders) to write the self-study. The self-study should be shared broadly with faculty for input and comment before being finalized and shared with reviewers in preparation for the review/campus visit.

- In the spring, the review/campus visit takes place. Reviewers write and submit their APR-7 report to the program, typically within one month of the campus visit. The report is shared with all program faculty.

- In the spring semester following the review/campus visit, program faculty meet to discuss the findings and submit an APR-7, including the program's response (if any), by May 1.
- Fall semester following the site visit, program faculty submit the Action Plans that will serve as the basis for the new 7-year review cycle (APR-A, Year One) by May 15.

The following is a more detailed timeline with a recommended schedule for actions/deliverables and the responsible parties.

Idaho State University

APR-7 Detailed Timeline with Responsibilities			
Recommended Schedule	**Who is Taking the Action?**	**Actions/Deliverables**	**Reporting to Whom?**
March 15 of the academic year before the review visit	Chair of the University Assessment Review Committee	Notifies college leadership and department chair of the program to be reviewed in the upcoming academic year	College leadership and department chair
One year before the review visit	Program	Begins assembling self-study document	(Collaboration among program faculty)
Six months before the review visit	Department chair or designee	Submits a list of potential review team members	Dean or dean's designee
Four months before the review visit	Dean or dean's designee	Selects/approves review team members	Program
Three months before the review visit	Dean or dean's designee	Finalizes arrangements for a review visit (e.g., contract, travel arrangements, expectations, and/or template for final report, report submission deadline, etc.)	Review team
January (at least one month prior to the site visit)	Program	Submits completed self-study	Dean or dean's designee and review team
February site visit	Review team	Visits campus and conducts program review	(Interaction with program faculty, students, staff, etc.)
March 15	Review team	Submits a report based on self-study and visit	Dean or dean's designee/college leadership
March 15 through April	Program Faculty	Review, discuss, and write a response to the review report, outlining a new action plan	
May 15	Program faculty or college leadership	Submits a copy of the complete review package (self-study, reviewer report, and program response)	Academic Affairs and the dean or the dean's designee

November 1 of the academic year following the review visit	Program faculty	Submits APR-A detailing the Action Plan that will guide the new reporting cycle	Academic Affairs and the dean or the dean's designee
As needed or requested	Academic Affairs or program faculty	Meets regarding the plan of action	College leadership and department chair

Note: During the years between APR-7 reviews, programs will submit APR-A reports to Academic Affairs and college leadership. College leadership will review these reports annually. If trends or significant points of concern are noted, college leadership will recommend departmental action and collaborate with Academic Affairs to support programs.

Resources

ISU Assessment and Academic Program Review webpage
Contact Institutional Research for self-study resources