

Information for Completing Academic Program Reviews for Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE)



The information contained in this packet offers guidance on completion of both specially accredited and particularly non-specially accredited academic programs to meet the requirements of Arkansas Code §6-61-214.

The Office of Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness coordinates all program review processes and acts as a resource to departments undergoing program review. Call or email the OAIE at caustin@atu.edu or 479.880.4282 for any assistance.

Academic Program Review Overview

Arkansas Code §6-61-214 requires that the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) review existing academic programs. All certificate and degree programs offered by public colleges and universities in Arkansas will be reviewed every 7 – 10 years. Institutional program review schedules are on file at ADHE, and any schedule change must be submitted to ADHE.

- I. Accredited/licensed/state certified programs will follow the usual review practices and schedule of the accrediting/approval body.
 - A. The site team's written evaluation and/or approval documentation and institutional response will be sent electronically to ADHE.
 - B. Comments/concerns addressed by the accrediting/licensing/approval body should be addressed in writing and sent electronically to ADHE along with the written evaluation and/or approval documentation.
 - C. The two documents listed above should be sent electronically to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

- II. Academic programs which are not program-specific (accredited/licensed/state certified) will be reviewed by external reviewers/consultants.
 - A. Institutions will select a minimum of two out-of-state reviewers affiliated with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review.
 - B. At least one consultant is required to conduct a site visit and meet with program faculty, students, and administrators.
 - C. For undergraduate career and technical education (CTE) programs, one reviewer will be a local industry expert (not affiliated with the institution) to conduct an on-site evaluation of the programs. An out-of-state CTE faculty consultant/reader also will review the self-study documents, industry experts' recommendations, and program curricula.
 - D. The consultants' written evaluation and institutional response will be sent electronically to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

Required Information:

- I. Name and credentials of the external reviewer(s)/consultants must be included with the external reviewer(s)/consultant(s)' report;
- II. List of the degree programs that were reviewed must be in the report, e.g., not just the College of Business, but specifically BSBA Accounting, BSBA Marketing, etc.;
- III. The external reviewers/consultants must get together and submit one report to the institution; and,
- IV. The institutional response must address comments/concerns addressed in the reviewer(s)/consultant(s)'s written evaluation and provide to ADHE a plan of action/timeline (not just a statement accepting the report and acknowledging that the reviewers' comments/concerns will be addressed).

***ADHE will submit an annual report on academic program review to the AHECB. These are due to AHECB June 1. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Christine Austin who will contact ADHE on your behalf.**

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What is the purpose of Academic Program Review?**
To establish a process for the statewide review of academic programs; and to identify certificate and degree programs not meeting minimum standards of quality or viability and establish schedules for either resolving these concerns or removing the programs from the AHECB approved program inventory.
- **Is Review of Existing Academic Programs in the Arkansas Code?**
§6-61-214
- **Where can I find the AHECB policy for Review of Existing Academic Programs?**
AHECB Policy 5.12
- **Which programs need to be reviewed? Which programs will be reviewed by external reviewers?**
All certificate and degree programs (both active and inactive) offered by public colleges and universities in Arkansas will be reviewed through the Existing Academic Program Review Process. Academic programs which are not program-specific accredited will be reviewed by external reviewers/consultants.
- **What is the frequency for external review of programs?**
AHECB policy states that institutions will schedule an external review of all existing academic programs every 7-10 years, beginning Fall 2010.
- **Who will pay for program reviews?**
The institution pays for the program review.
- **What documents must the institution prepare for the review? What information should be included in the institutions' self-study report?**
The institution must prepare a self-study document for the review. Components of the self-study will include, but not be limited, to, information related: program need/demand, curriculum, faculty, resources, course delivery methods, student outcomes, and recent/planned program improvements.
- **When do I send the reviewers' report to ADHE?**
The reviewers' written evaluation and institution's response will be submitted to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.
- **When will the findings of the Academic Program Review be submitted to the AHECB?**

Findings from academic program reviews will be reported annually to the AHECB.

- **What will ADHE do with the findings?**

ADHE staff will recommend that the AHECB receive the reviewers' report and acknowledge that the contents may be consulted as a resource when decisions must be made by the Board regarding institutional role and scope, budget requests, new program approval, and statewide funding issues. The staff may propose other general resolutions that address statewide issues.

A further resolution will encourage institutional administrators, faculty members, and boards of trustees to consider implementing the recommendations made by the consultants for program improvement.

If appropriate, a resolution will be offered concerning program deletions, modifications, and/or follow-up.

- **What recourse does the institution have to ADHE staff recommendations to the AHECB?**

The president, chancellor, or chief academic officer may respond to ADHE staff recommendations in writing or request a conference to discuss the recommendations prior to consideration by the AHECB. The discussions will be limited to those issues that concern the state's interests, i.e., program closings and broader statewide issues that the AHECB may wish to address. Any recommendations in the consultants' reports that are not included in the ADHE staff recommendations would pertain to matters of campus concern and, therefore, would represent suggestions to be considered locally.

- **When must an out of state reviewer be used? How many are required? What credentials/qualifications must they possess? Is there a different guideline for reviewers of CTE programs?**

Academic programs which are not program-specific accredited will be reviewed by external reviewers. Institutions will select a minimum of two out-of-state reviewers affiliated with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review. At least one reviewer is required to conduct a site visit and meet with program faculty, students, and administrators. Individuals selected as reviewers must be well-qualified and without bias toward the institution(s) under review. The reviewers must hold appropriate academic credentials and/or professional licensure/certification, and have experience with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review.

For CTE programs, one reviewer should be a local industry expert (no affiliated with the institution) to conduct an on-site evaluation of the programs. The local reviewer for CTE programs may not hold an academic credential, but must hold professional licensure/certification in the field. An out-of-state CTE faculty consultant/reader also must review the self-study documents, industry experts' recommendations, and program curricula. The out-of-state reviewer for CTE programs will not be required to come to Arkansas;

however, the local and out-of-state reviewers must work together to prepare the external reviewers report.

- **Does ADHE have to approve the reviewers used for external review of programs?**
No. The reviewer should not be a person who initially started the program or who has been involved in the operation of the program. The reviewer can be from a contiguous state and could even be someone with whom you have written an article or book as long as the person is professionally qualified to complete the review.
- **What information should be included in the reviewers' report?**
The external reviewers' template is only a guide. You may include more information in your report.
- **How will the report for accredited/licensed/state certified programs be used?**
Accredited/licenses/state certified programs will follow the usual review practices and schedule of the accrediting/approval body. Their report and your responses must be sent to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.
- **To minimize costs, can institutions get together to employ out-of-state reviewers, e.g., for the Associate of Arts/Associate of Science transfer degrees?**
Yes. Each institution participating in such an arrangement should submit their own reviewers' written evaluation and institution's response to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.
- **Can I change my review schedule once it's submitted to ADHE?**
Yes, send an email to ADHE of your schedule change(s). The changes will be made to your review schedule and you will receive a revised copy.

Schedule for Non-Accredited Program Review at Arkansas Tech

Revised Aug. 1, 2019

2019-2020 General Studies (AA), Information Technology (AAS, BS, and MS), Cultural and Geospatial Studies (BA), Ozark/Ouachita Studies (AS), Strength and Conditioning (MS)

2020-21 Foreign Language (BA), International Studies (BA), Fisheries and Wildlife (BS and MS)

2021-22 Nuclear Technology (ASNT), Communication (BA), Multi-Media Journalism (MA), Master of Engineering (ME), Liberal Arts (MLA), Psychology (MS)

2022-23 Advising (GC), Online Teaching (GC), Professional Leadership (CP), Applied Science (BAS), Professional Studies (BPS), Cybersecurity (AAS, and BS), Environmental Science (BS), Biology (BS), Mathematics (BS), Geology (BS), Medical Technology (BS)

2023-24 Criminal Justice (AS), Journalism (BA), Engineering Physics (BS), Physical Science (BS), Physics (BS), Nuclear Physics (BS)

2024-25 Early Childhood Education (AS), Applied Sociology (MS)

2025-26 College Student Personnel Services (MS)

2026-27 Political Science (BA)

2027-28 Creative Writing (BFA), English (BA), History (BA), Public History (BA)

Timeline/Deadlines

1. Identify and confirm the 2 external reviewers/consultants by October 1 (combine programs as reasonably possible or 3 people instead of 4, etc.)

External reviewers/consultants:

1. Two retained with **one designated as on-site reviewer**.
 - a. On-site reviewer: \$500 plus expenses (\$500 for additional program)
 - b. Second reviewer: \$250 (\$250 for additional program)
2. Reviewers chosen by institution must be:
 - a. recommended to VPAA by Dean;
 - b. well qualified and unbiased towards Tech (no former Tech students or faculty, etc.);
 - c. affiliated with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review.
2. Schedule the on-site visit by November 1
3. Draft of self-study should be prepared two months prior to the on-site visit
4. Final version of self-study should be prepared and mailed to evaluators one month prior to the on-site visit.
5. On-site visit: **Completed before April 1**
6. Response from evaluators should be received no later than two weeks after on-site visit.

7. Consultants' Report and institutional response to ADHE: within six weeks of Tech's receipt of the consultant's written report.

Please note that the ADHE preferred deadline for the memo I have to compile and send in is June 1. The sooner we can get all of this taken care of, the better.

Non-Accredited Program Review Checklist

- Identify two out-of-state reviewers affiliated with programs that are similar in mission and scope to the program under review.
 - One reviewer will conduct a site visit and meet with program faculty, students, and administrators; this reviewer will receive a **\$500** stipend in addition to travel expenses.
 - The second reviewer will review the self-study documents and program curricula but will not conduct a site visit; this reviewer will receive a flat **\$250** stipend.
- Submit a recommendation memo for reviewers to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (cc Dr. Christine Austin caustin@atu.edu) for approval. Memo should include:
 - Each reviewer's credentials
 - Each reviewer's current institution
 - Estimate of travel expenses for the visiting site reviewer
 - Justification for each choice
- E-mail Academic Affairs (caustin@atu.edu) with the reviewers' names, visit days, and approximate cost of trip.
- Complete and submit a [New Vendor Request](#) form from Purchasing for each reviewer.
- Have the site visitor make his or her travel arrangements, including flight and hotel reservations. **It is the policy of the institution that reviewers pay for the entire expense of the visit; the university does NOT direct bill.** However, the reviewer should receive a reimbursement check within five to seven business days following the receipt of all documentation regarding his or her travel.
- Keep a running tab of the visiting reviewer's expenses. Collect applicable receipts. After the visitor has left, e-mail a list of all expenses in a Word Document to Academic Affairs (caustin@atu.edu). Be sure to include the [Non-State Employee form](#). Academic Affairs will create a check request and pay from the Accreditation budget. The visitor will be reimbursed for all applicable out-of-pocket travel expenses.
 - Please note that program reviewers will only be reimbursed ATU's allotted meal allowance. When making hotel reservations, the ATU rate should be requested.
- If an ATU faculty or staff member will require reimbursement for mileage to and/or from the airport related to transporting the visiting reviewer, inform Academic Affairs ahead of time so a requisition can be submitted (a copy of the PO will be e-mailed to you once received). You will complete and submit the TR-1 and send Academic Affairs (caustin@atu.edu) a copy.
 - Do not forget to include applicable stipend! The stipend will be added to expense list and included on the invoice.

Accredited Program Review at Arkansas Tech

For programs with accreditation: Accredited/licensed/state certified programs will follow the usual review practices and schedule of the accrediting/approval body. **The site team's written evaluation and institutional response will be sent to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the final decision of the accrediting body.**

This information will be sent from **Dean**, to **Academic Affairs**, and **then to ADHE**.

The remainder of this document was composed by ADHE.

Existing Program Review

Institutional Self-Study Guidelines

The AHECB Existing Program Review Policy adopted in October 2008 requires the review of all academic programs every 7-10 years. A major component of the policy is an internal review (self-study) by institutions and an external review by consultants of programs that do not have program-specific accreditation/ licensure/certification. The institution's self-study, consultants' written evaluation, and the institution's response to the consultants' findings will be submitted to ADHE.

The institutional self-study to be reviewed by external consultants should contain the following information:

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

1. Describe specific educational goals, objectives, and activities of the program.
2. Explain how the program serves the general education program and other disciplinary programs on the campus, if applicable.
3. Document market demand and/or state/industry need for careers stemming from the program.
4. Document student demand for the program.

Curriculum

1. Describe how program content parallels current thinking/trends in the field/trade (best practices, advisory committee recommendations, etc.).
2. Provide an outline for each program curriculum, including the sequence of courses.
3. State the degree requirements, including general education requirements, institutional, college or school requirements, and major requirements.
4. Indicate the semester/year the major/program courses were last offered. Exclude general education courses.
5. Provide syllabi for discipline-specific courses and departmental objectives for each course.
6. Outline the process for the introduction of new courses, including all internal curriculum review processes and the findings.
7. List courses in the proposed degree program currently offered by distance delivery.
8. Describe the instructor-to-student and student-to-student interaction for distance courses (prerequisite courses, lab requirements, examination procedures-online/proctored, instructor response to student assignments).

Program Faculty (full-time/adjunct/part-time)

1. Provide curriculum vitae or program faculty information form for all full-time program faculty. The vita or form should include the following: all degrees and institutions granting the degrees; field or specialty of degrees; number of years employed as program faculty at the institution; current academic rank, if applicable; professional certifications/licenses; evidence of quality and quantity of creative and scholarly/research activity; evidence of quality and quantity of service activities; evidence of professional activities and non-teaching work experiences related to courses taught; list

of course numbers/course titles of credit courses taught over the past two academic years; and other evidence of quality teaching.

2. Indicate the academic credentials required for adjunct/part-time faculty teaching major/program courses.
3. Describe the orientation and evaluation processes for faculty, including adjunct and part-time faculty.
4. Provide average number of courses and number of credit hours taught for full-time program faculty for current academic year.

Program Resources

1. Describe the institutional support available for faculty development in teaching, research, and service.
2. Describe the professional development of full-time program faculty over the past two years including the institutional financial support provided to faculty for the activities.
3. Provide the annual library budget for the program or describe how library resources are provided for the program.
4. Describe the availability, adequacy, and accessibility of campus resources (research, library, instructional support, instructional technology, etc.).
5. Provide a list of program equipment purchases for the past three years.

Instruction via Distance Technology

This section should be completed if at least 50% of any program/major course is delivered electronically.

1. Summarize institutional policies on the establishment, organization, funding, and management of distance courses/degrees.
2. Summarize the policies and procedures to keep the technology infrastructure current.
3. Summarize the procedures that assure the security of personal information.
4. Describe the support services that will be provided to students enrolled in distance technology courses/programs by the institution and/or other entities:
 - Advising
 - Course registration
 - Financial aid
 - Course withdrawal
 - E-mail account
 - Access to library resources
 - Help Desk
5. Describe technology support services that will be provided to students enrolled in distance technology courses/programs by the institution and/or other entities.
6. Describe the orientation for students enrolled in distance technology courses/programs.
7. Summarize the institutional policy for faculty course load and number of credit hours taught, compensation, and ownership of intellectual property.

Majors/Declared Students

1. State the number of undergraduate/graduate majors/declared students in each degree program under review for the past three years.
2. Describe strategies to recruit, retain, and graduate students.
3. Provide the number of program graduates over the past three years.

Program Assessment

1. Describe the program assessment process and provide outcomes data (standardized entrance/placement test results, exit test results, etc.).
2. Describe program/major exit or capstone requirements.
3. Provide information on how teaching is evaluated, the use of student evaluations, and how the results have affected the curriculum.
4. Provide transfer information for major/declared students including the receiving institutions for transfer and programs of study.
5. Provide information for program graduates continuing their education by entering graduate school or by performing volunteer service.
6. Provide aggregate results of student/alumni/employer satisfaction surveys.
7. Describe how the program is aligned with the current job market needs of the state or local communities.
8. Provide job placement information for program graduates including the number of graduates placed in jobs related to the field of study.

For undergraduate career and technical education programs only, provide the following:

- Names and location of companies hiring program graduates.
- Average hourly rate for program graduates.
- Names of companies requiring the certificate/degree for initial or continued employment.

Program Effectiveness (strengths, opportunities)

1. List the strengths of the program.
2. List the areas of the program most in need of improvement.
3. List program improvements accomplished over the past two years.
4. Describe planned program improvements, including a timetable and the estimated costs. Identify program improvement priorities.

Institutional Review Team

List the names/departments of the self-study committee chair and committee members.



Academic Program Review External Reviewers

[Insert External Reviewers' Names, Credentials, & Institution]

[Insert Department Name]

[Insert Names of Programs Reviewed]

[Review Date]

External Reviewer's Signature

External Reviewer's Signature

Academic Program Review

External Reviewers Report Template

The report prepared by the External Reviewers will be used by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) to verify the student demand and employer need for the program, the appropriateness of the curriculum, and the adequacy of program resources. The report should not include a recommendation to ADHE on program continuation or program deletion.

The External Reviewers written report must include a summary of each area examined and should provide examples that document the conclusions. The questions below should be used by the reviewers as a guide in preparing the summary for each area. Responses to the questions should not be simply “yes or no”.

I. Review of Program Goals, Objectives and Activities

- A. Are the intended educational (learning) goals for the program appropriate and assessed?
- B. How are the faculty and students accomplishing the program’s goals and objectives?
- C. How is the program meeting market/industry demands and/or preparing students for advanced study?
- D. Is there sufficient student demand for the program?
- E. Do course enrollments and program graduation/completion rates justify the required resources?

II. Review of Program Curriculum

- A. Is the program curriculum appropriate to meet current and future market/industry needs and/or to prepare students for advanced study?
- B. Are institutional policies and procedures appropriate to keep the program curriculum current to meet industry standards?
- C. Are program exit requirements appropriate?
- D. Does the program contain evidence of good breath/focus and currency, including consistency with good practice?
- E. Are students introduced to experiences within the workplace and introduced to professionals in the field?
- F. Does the program promote and support interdisciplinary initiatives?
- G. Does the program provide respect and understanding for cultural diversity as evidenced in the curriculum, in program activities, in assignment of program responsibly and duties; in honors, awards and scholarship recognition; in recruitment?

III. Review of Academic Support

- A. Does the program provide appropriate quality and quantity of academic advising and mentoring of students?
- B. Does the program provide for retention of qualified students from term to term and support student progress toward and achievement of graduation?

IV. Review of Program Faculty

- A. Do program faculty have appropriate academic credentials and/or professional licensure/certification?
- B. Are the faculty orientation and faculty evaluation processes appropriate?
- C. Is the faculty workload in keeping with best practices?

Academic Program Review

External Reviewers Report Template

- V. Review of Program Resources
 - A. Is there an appropriate level of institutional support for program operation?
 - B. Are faculty, library, professional development and other program resources sufficient?

- VI. Review of Program Effectiveness
 - A. Indicate areas of program strength.
 - B. Indicate the program areas in need of improvement within the next 12 months; and over the next 2-5 years.
 - C. Indicate areas for program development based on market/industry demands that have not been identified by the institution.

- VII. Review of Instruction by Distance Technology (if program courses offered by distance)
 - A. Are the program distance technology courses offered/delivered in accordance with best practices?
 - B. Does the institution have appropriate procedures in place to assure the security of personal information?
 - C. Are technology support services appropriate for students enrolled in and faculty teaching courses/programs utilizing technology?
 - D. Are policies for student/faculty ratio, and faculty course load in accordance with best practices?
 - E. Are policies on intellectual property in accordance with best practices?

- VIII. Review of Program Research and Service
 - A. Are the intended research and creative outcomes for each program appropriate, assessed and results utilized?
 - B. Are the intended outreach/service/entrepreneurial outcomes for each program's initiatives appropriate assessed and results utilized?

- IX. Local Reviewer Comments
 - A. How is the program meeting market/industry demands and/or preparing students for advanced study?
 - B. What program modifications are needed?

- X. Report Summary
 - A. Include reviewer comments on the overall need for program graduates/completers in the local area, region and/or nation over the next 5 years.
 - B. Include reviewer comments on overall program quality, state program review process, etc.

Academic Program Review

External Reviewers Report Template

I. Response to the External Reviewers' Recommendations

In this section, please copy the recommendations that the external reviewers provided in their report. Then, provide the institution/department/program response to the recommendation.

Recommendations from External Reviewers (copied from the external review report)	Response

Academic Program Review

External Reviewers Report Template

I. Actions Taken in Response to the External Reviewers' Recommendations

In this section, please describe the actions that will be taken as a result of the review; if any based on the recommendation from the external reviewers; note when the action will be completed and who is responsible for seeing that it is completed; and finally, list any resources that will be used to complete the action. Please add lines to the table as necessary.

Recommendation	Action	Timing & Responsible Person/Group	Resources