



# Academic Management Manual

## Section K

Program Review

Academic  
Affairs  
2011-12

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### **Introduction**

Through the institutional effectiveness assessment cycle, each area of Palm Beach State College must use data, information and analysis to assess and improve all aspects of the College's operations. For Academic Affairs, this means developing, implementing and refining a process to review programs and disciplines to ensure that the curriculum (courses and programs) supports student success.

Program/discipline review is the means by which each program and discipline is reviewed by the college from both a quantitative and qualitative standpoint. This comprehensive approach allows the college to not only look at the actual "numbers" that a program is producing, but also at the quality of learning that is occurring in each program or discipline. The model presented in this document takes elements from the current program review process and adds additional components to improve assessment, effectiveness and ultimately student success.

### **Program Review at the State Level**

Program review is an integral part of the Florida college system. Florida Statutes require the review of every major program in the State College system "every five years or whenever effectiveness or efficiency of a program is jeopardized." Statutes also require the Division of Colleges to "conduct periodic reviews of existing programs." Rule 6A-10.039(1), Florida Administrative Code, requires the Division of Colleges to annually submit to the Department of Education "a five-year review plan or annual update of the current five-year plan."

The state program review plan consists of three levels. Level I includes the annual production of a data display for each certificate and degree program. The data displays are used by each college and the Division of Colleges to review programs to determine which programs and elements within the programs need additional review. The data display for the Associate in Arts degree program shows the performance of students in the State University System (SUS) upper division programs, and compares SUS native students with transfer students from Florida colleges, and with other transfer students. The performance measures are grade point averages, suspensions, graduations, average course loads, and credits earned for a degree.

Level II program review is the review of certificate and degree programs by the individual colleges, either independently or in cooperation with independent and outside groups. It is this level of program review that the college designs to meet its needs for program review and assessment. Courses in the AA degree program are divided into academic disciplines for purposes of Level II review.

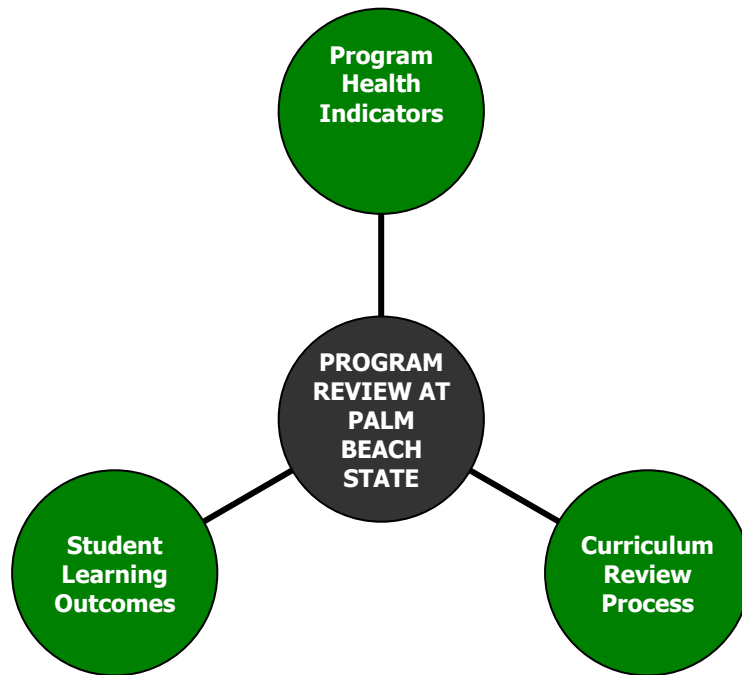
Level III program review is the college system-wide review of selected programs by the Division of Colleges to address any concerns regarding these programs. The programs and issues for such reviews are determined by the Department of Education based on Level I and Level II information, Department of Education priorities, legislative and other interested parties or emerging issues.

The focus of the model presented in this program review document is how Palm Beach State College fulfills the requirements of Level II program review and for the college's commitment to institutional effectiveness.

**Components of the Palm Beach State Program Review Process**

The model for program review at Palm Beach State is based on three major components: 1) Program/Discipline Health Indicators; 2) Student Learning Outcomes and 3) Curriculum Review Process. Program/Discipline Health Indicators are primarily quantitative measures of discipline and program performance; student learning outcomes seek to provide qualitative measures of student learning; and finally the Curriculum Review process ensures that the program content in career programs is current and in demand by local business and industry.

The following section of this document will provide a detailed explanation of each of these three components.



*Figure 1 – Components of Program Review at Palm Beach State*

**Program Health Indicators**

The Program/Discipline Health Indicators (PHI) report constitutes the major quantitative portion of program review at Palm Beach State. This yearly report reviews each major division of the Palm Beach State curriculum, including degrees, certificates and developmental studies. Each area of the curriculum includes data that is germane to the particular area of study.

The three major ways in which curriculum can be divided at Palm Beach State is in terms of disciplines, programs and courses. Disciplines are defined as major areas of emphasis in the Associate in Arts degree and in general education; disciplines include areas such as mathematics, humanities and science. Programs are defined as career credit and noncredit programs of study that result in an award that does not necessarily transfer to another college or university. In addition to the curriculum embedded in disciplines and programs, there are continuing education courses that are designed to provide additional training or skills to a person employed in a particular vocation.

A major component of all degree and discipline area PHI reports is the concept of success rate, which is defined as the percentage of students who earn A's, B's and C's.

### **PHI Data by Curriculum Area**

**Associate in Arts degree and College Preparation.** The PHI report provides, for each Associate in Arts discipline and campus, a five-year trend showing enrollment data, course success and course withdrawal rates. For the college preparatory disciplines, the PHI report presents data on student headcounts, full time equivalents (FTE) and average success and withdrawal rates for courses within the discipline.

**Career/Technical Programs.** For career-credit programs and clock-hour programs (Associate in Science/Applied Science degrees, College Credit Certificates, vocational certificates, Applied Technical Diplomas, Advanced Technical Certificates and Bachelor's degrees), the PHI report presents a more comprehensive data review. Here, the report contains five-year trend data on program completers, FTE, headcount, success rate in core curriculum, average student ratings of the instructors and other program measures, if applicable.

See <http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/x17030.xml> for a link to the most recent PHI report.

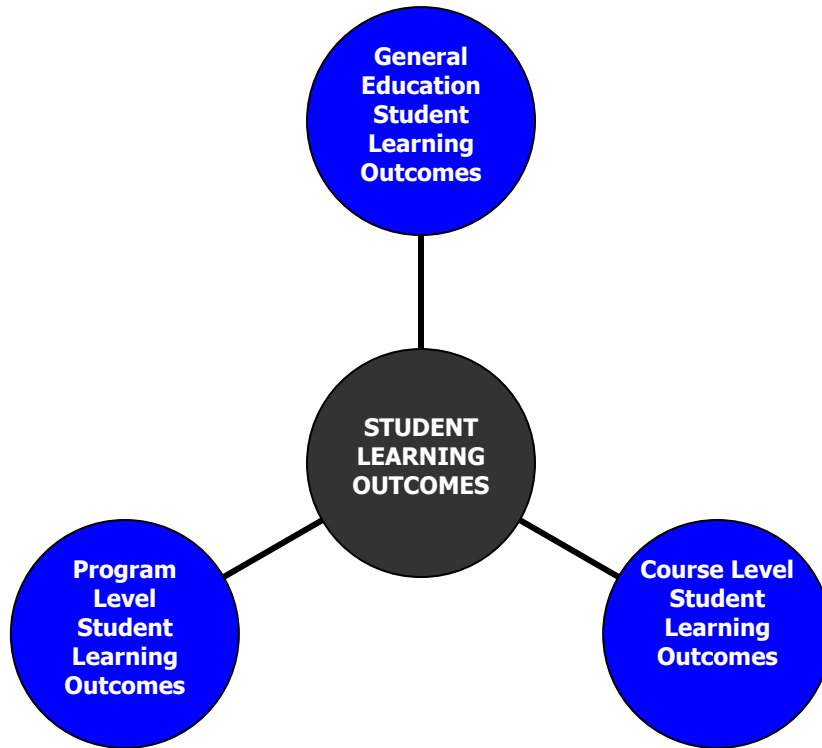
### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes can be thought of as the knowledge, skills, and abilities students have attained as a result of their involvement in a particular set of educational experiences. The learning outcomes approach reflects a conceptual shift towards making learning more meaningful and effective for both students and faculty. Making education more meaningful for students requires that they gain a view of education that education can enable them to enrich their lives by learning. This is in contrast to the viewpoint that education is a task primarily done to satisfy the demands of others, such as faculty or the institution.

By developing educational experiences based on what students should be able to do with their knowledge, the learning outcomes approach helps faculty, staff and students understand the point of the educational activity, be it a program or course.

### **Levels of Learning Outcomes**

Learning outcomes are defined at several curriculum levels: general education learning outcomes, program-level learning outcomes and course-level student learning outcomes. All of the outcomes are posted on the College website: <http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/x10269.xml>. Outcomes are nested such that every program-level learning outcome indicates the general education learning outcome(s) supported (if any) and every course outline indicates which general education learning outcomes are supported by that course.



*Figure 2 – Student Learning Outcomes at Palm Beach State*

The concept of this student learning outcomes model has at its center the idea that each part is interacting with the rest of the parts, not on how each part is performing individually. The knowledge, skills, and abilities that students achieve at the end of their programs and courses are affected by how well courses and other experiences in the curriculum fit together and build on each other.

Learning outcomes are measured by faculty and staff through an assessment process. This process allows Palm Beach State to continually assess the learning outcomes of courses and more importantly allow faculty to adjust teaching methods and classroom activities to improve learning outcomes. Section L of this manual provides a more complete description of the development and assessment of Learning Outcomes at Palm Beach State:

[http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/documents/academic\\_services/sectionl.pdf](http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/documents/academic_services/sectionl.pdf)

### **Curriculum Review Process**

When faculty members, with input from program managers, administrators, or business partnership councils, create or update a course or a program, the first step of a continuous flow of information and quality control is initiated. Because all changes, deletions and new creations to curriculum have the potential to affect more than just the discipline proposing the change, a carefully constructed process ensures that any changes implemented will benefit the institution and will limit potential unintended negative consequences.

Any curriculum action to courses or programs must be voted upon by the faculty cluster for that group. After faculty cluster approval is received, the proposed action is sent to the Associate Dean liaison, the Academic Dean, the Cluster Chair, and the Director of Computing Services. This level of review evaluates

the content and impact on the general discipline and identifies any concerns with software or computer hardware installation.

If the proposed curriculum action is a new course or program or a significant change to an existing program, it must then go to the Academic Dean’s Council for a vote. This group will determine what the impact of this curriculum action will have on the College as a whole, such as budget, facilities or need for additional faculty.

The curriculum committee, comprised of faculty and administrators, votes on the action and, if approved, makes a recommendation for acceptance to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Program additions, deletions and extensive revisions must be also approved by the Palm Beach State Board of Trustees and new programs not currently offered in the State of Florida must be reviewed and approved by the Division of Workforce Education, in addition to adhering to the substantive change process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

For new career programs and when needed for existing programs, an additional process called a DACUM may be required. This process utilizes a focus group of experts in a storyboarding workshop where the end product is a comprehensive job analysis. This job analysis identifies the duties, tasks, knowledge, skills and traits related to a specific job or occupation in a chart format which provides input for needed curriculum revision or development.

**Program Review Process: What, When, Who and How**

The table below illustrates the components of the review process for career programs and disciplines and how frequently they are assessed.

<b>Review Component</b>	<b>Review Cycle</b>	<b>Applicability</b>
Program Health Indicators	Annual	Career Programs & AA Disciplines, General Education
Learning Outcomes	Annual	Career Programs & General Education
Curriculum Review Process	Ongoing	Career Programs & AA Disciplines, General Education

**Process and Timeline**

**Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree.** The general education learning outcomes constitute the student learning outcomes for this degree. The general education learning outcomes are assessed annually using a multi-measure approach and the results, along with a set of institutional measures such as average grades in general education courses, are reviewed early in spring term by the General Education Assessment Committee. This committee recommends improvement strategies which are forwarded to Dean’s Council, Academic Leadership Council and Executive Leadership Council for implementation.

**College Prep.** College preparatory offerings are assessed with a set of institutional data provided by the IRE office for the college preparatory cluster. The cluster reviews the data on an annual basis and devises improvement strategies.

**Career and technical programs.** Program staff and faculty assess and document their program learning outcomes annually. The IRE office prepares the Program Health Indicator annually. Early in the calendar year, the Associate Dean meets with program staff and faculty to review both sets of data (program learning outcomes and program health indicators), along with any additional data they have relevant to

the program (e.g., Business Partnership Council, Curriculum Review Process) and to draft improvement plans based on the results. The associate dean prepares a summary of the program review and presents the summary to a campus review committee. The campus committee (provost, deans and associate deans) makes an overall recommendation regarding the program and incorporates into the campus budget process any improvements that require additional resources.

#### **Assessment Management System**

All of the assessment data and improvement plans are entered into WEAVEonline, an online product that systematically documents all of the College's assessment activities. Further information about WEAVEonline can be found at the following website: <http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/x17030.xml>.