

Quality Enhancement Review: Undergraduate Policy Committee (UPC) Review Process

Purpose of the Undergraduate Policy Review:

The purpose of the Undergraduate Policy Committee (UPC) program review is to:

1. ensure that FSU's undergraduate academic degree and certificate programs are academically sound,
2. assist the unit faculty and administration in improving programs through timely review, and
3. provide an independent forum in which program students can bring issues to the attention of the faculty, and unit faculty can bring issues to the attention of the university administration.

The units considered for review will be taken from the official degree program inventory maintained by the Office of Institutional Research. Related programs and majors may be reviewed in clusters or combinations as determined by the Chair of the UPC.

The Review Process:

The UPC will evaluate programs based (at a minimum) on the following materials:

1. self-study provided by the unit for the Quality Enhancement Review (QER) process which provides a multi-year snapshot of the unit's activities,
2. survey of undergraduate students in the program(s), and
3. comments and recommendations made by external reviewers as part of the QER.

A three-person subcommittee within the UPC, which will consist of at least one individual from the college within which the degree program is housed and at least one from a college outside of the degree program, will prepare a report summarizing their observations of the strengths and weaknesses of the undergraduate program(s) based on the self-study. The report will conclude with recommendations for how the program(s) could be improved. The degree program is welcome to appoint a member to the subcommittee; however, it is not required.

If, in preparing the report, the subcommittee feels that it needs more information, it may set up a meeting(s) with:

1. the faculty member responsible for coordinating undergraduate curriculum, and/or
2. the program's administrators (unit chair, director of program, etc.).

Upon completion, the subcommittee will present the report to the full UPC for discussion. The UPC will invite the program's administrators to be present at this meeting. Following the UPC meeting, the UPC will report their findings to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee.

Relationship to the Quality Enhancement Review:

The UPC review is conducted as part of the Quality Enhancement Review (QER). The QER focuses on the entire unit—undergraduate and graduate programs—and has the goals of assessing how well relevant unit goals and objectives are being met, how well students are achieving expected learning outcomes, and how continuous program improvements can be fostered. While the QER includes the graduate programs in the unit, the academics of the undergraduate programs are the sole focus of the UPC review.

The Recommendations in the UPC Subcommittee's Report:

The UPC may make any findings and recommendations that it thinks appropriate. The recommendations are to be directed to the program (or unit), the Faculty Senate, and other appropriate entities. The recommendations should be drafted in such a way that a unit has flexibility in addressing the recommendations. If there are areas for degree program improvement that can be handled only by the upper administration (more faculty lines, more money, etc.), it is best to write these findings or recommendations in a form in which the unit is directed to work with the administration in addressing their need for more resources (be it faculty or money or whatever). Another way to bring certain issues to the attention of the administration is to include a section in the report directed specifically at the administration. It is useful to differentiate findings and recommendations that require additional resources from those that may not. The UPC chair will assist the committee with this aspect of writing their recommendations. The UPC may ask for a written follow-up on recommendations two years after the initial review to learn about progress made towards improving those areas identified in the report.

All recommendations will be sent to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee for consideration and, where appropriate, the full Faculty Senate. If the UPC concludes that the unit is deficient in providing undergraduates with an academically sound degree, the UPC may recommend to the Faculty Senate and other appropriate entities that the program be placed on probation, suspended, or terminated.

Questions about the UPC Review process should be directed to Daniel Mears, Chair (dmears@fsu.edu) or Ellen Crabtree (ecrabtree@fsu.edu).