IV. Perceptions of program review and the purpose it serves—for faculty, the administrators, and the college.

Do you think PR is important for faculty? Why or why not?

I believe PR is essential for faculty, and I am happy to do it. PR is both a T5 (10+1) and compliance item, but, beyond the regs, faculty should take responsibility for ensuring the relevance and success of their program for students and the community we serve. Our right to primacy over “processes for PR” [and also, relatedly, curriculum, program development, and policies regarding student preparation and success] comes with the responsibility to engage—as discipline experts—in analysis of our program, its objectives, and its effects in the context of our college and community.

In your opinion what purpose does it serve for administrators?

I’m not sure. Administrators need timely completion of PR, and the document is used as a factor in budgeting and planning decisions. However, the document could be put to whatever end(s) are served by the user. There could, unfortunately, be a conflation of PR with program elimination, which I believe is the case at our college. Or, despite well-evidenced areas of need or merit, PR recommendations seem to carry no weight in administrators’ budgetary priorities and decisions.

In what ways do you believe PR integrates with college planning?

PR is included in college planning at a basic level; distribution of resources such as class sections, faculty lines, or instructional equipment/technology can only be made after scrutiny of PR. But I have not witnessed a clear connection with PR and decisions made at the college. There is no meaningful integration of PR with college budgeting and planning.

V. Recommendations

What one or two things do you find useful about writing program review?

I am usually always studying our program against other programs in the region and nation. Self-study is an iterative process that PR simply formalizes.

If you could change one thing about the program review form, what would it be?

The “peer review” has no value; retain it if there is a connection between the review and the outcome (resource distribution based on reviewer’s recommendation). I am also unsure of the value of the signature page; there are affected constituents, including a single student signatory (much the same as with the Student Success Task Force), but what is their charge in reading, shaping, and signing off on PR?

If you could change one thing about the program review process, what would it be?

Thank you!
Unless there are accountability mandates such as for CTE programs, the PR cycle is six years. The forms devised for annual and comprehensive program reviews (every 3rd year) are bloated, especially for annual review. The shrinking numbers of tenure track faculty who write PR, coupled with the lack of efficacy of PR in shaping planning and budgeting, lead to a lack of will and resources to implement PR recommendations.

VI. Reflection

A colleague is about to begin drafting your department’s comprehensive program review. What one or two key pieces of advice would you offer?

I put 33 hours into comprehensive PR the first time it was approved, spending most of my time researching institutional documents and priorities and comparing our program with others in the division and across the college. Our program saw no change as the result of PR and reviewers’ recommendations.

Thank you!