Building a Sustainable Board of Governors Program Review by Using Data

West Virginia University, Public Doctoral University in Morgantown, WV | 28K+ students

- **Challenge:** At West Virginia University (WVU), the Board of Governors Program Review occurs every five years. WVU’s previous process was frustrating and disorganized. Program leaders submitted information in various forms from different sources, making it difficult for WVU Leadership to efficiently and accurately gain insight into program health.

- **Solution:** WVU’s Provost’s office improved the review process by requiring standardized data to be used. In the new process, program leaders completed a templated document using a data set comprised of metrics from the Academic Performance Solutions (APS) platform and WVU’s own data sources. This ensured clear expectations and consistent submissions.

- **Impact:** The Board of Governors used the APS platform to accomplish greater understanding into program health and needs in less time than was previously required. For the first time, leaders had access to uniform data to support observations and inclinations, as well as specific follow-up actions for programs.

**Leveraging Shared Governance to Support Programs Under Review**

The Director of Academic Excellence and Assessment, from WVU’s Provost’s office, partnered with stakeholders to form the University Assessment Council (UAC) – building a foundation of shared governance for the new program review process. The Council combines academic administrators from the Provost’s and dean’s offices, as well as Faculty Senate committee chairs and other faculty representatives.

**Selection of APS Metrics and Creation of Program Review Template**

In the new process, program leaders were given a standard data set to fill out the templated document.

**Inefficiency with Previous Process**

- Program leaders submitted 200+ pages for each review, making it impossible for WVU Leadership to review programs in a timely manner.
- A standard data set was not used, allowing program leaders to submit dissimilar information that was difficult for Leadership to ensure accuracy.

**UAC’s Response**

- Created a standardized template for all programs to complete, which includes a word count limit for each response.
- Conducted month-long review of APS metrics by assessing each metric’s applicability and digestibility, resulting in a set of required data that program leaders must use for the template.

**Student and Instructional Staff Metrics Chosen from APS Platform**

- Attempted Student Credit Hours (SCH)
- Attempted SCH Taught by Instructor Type and Course Division
- Distinct Student Enrollment
- Sections Taught by Instructor Type and Course Division

“APS provides accurate aggregate productivity data for all of our instructors, regardless of rank, that allows for a much more comprehensive review and understanding of a department’s instructional activity.”

Dr. Louis Slimak
Director of Academic Excellence and Assessment, West Virginia University
Board of Governors Program Review Process

In addition to the standard data set, the Director of Academic Excellence and Assessment provided program leaders with several resources to support completion of the program review template.

Supporting Resources

1. **FAQ Document**: Proactively answered anticipated questions from program leaders, such as “Do I have to use the standardized data that was provided to me?”

2. **Metric Definitions**: Located throughout the provided data set, clarified meaning and ensured program leaders understood the required APS metrics.

3. **Annual Program Review Workshop**: Director of Academic Excellence offered individual training sessions with program leaders and the UAC led an annual workshop, walking leaders through the data set and template to ensure they knew what was required.

Leveraging Resources to Write Reviews

**Program Review Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q.1</th>
<th>Faculty Composition and Productivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q.2</td>
<td>Program Title and Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.3</td>
<td>Program Objectives and Outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.4</td>
<td>Program Evaluation and Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.5</td>
<td>Program Improvement and Innovation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Document Completed by Program Leaders**

The UAC built the program review template using a survey software, which was easy to create and for program leaders to follow. Unlike in previous review processes, program leaders clearly understood what information was required and how they should provide it.

The document outlined when to include the relevant APS data, how it should be interpreted, its impact on the program, and the program’s proposed solution to remedy the discrepancy if needed.

**Program Reviews Finalized and Next Steps Determined**

Undergraduate or Graduate Council discussed the program review reports and submitted them to the Board of Governors for final approval.

Before making final recommendations and next steps, the Board of Governors used DFW and course completion rate reports in the APS platform to determine if additional context should be considered for unhealthy programs.

Impact of 2017-2018 Review at WVU

WVU’s new program review process allowed the Board of Governors to make data-informed decisions and recommendations for all programs under review.

**Key Achievements of New Process**

- New process promotes data-informed culture and transparency in decision-making
- Program leaders have guidance and understand what is expected of them
- Council able to review programs more quickly and efficiently than before
- Data provides context and guides conversations with leaders across campus

50% programs reviewed were continued with action that required follow-up, which was the first time programs were tasked with specific items and required to coordinate with the Council.

13 hours saved in Council meetings to finalize recommendations, allowing leaders to spend more time connecting program reviews with institutional planning and budgeting.