

New Policy

This policy aligns with UNC Policy 400.1, Policy on Academic Program Planning, Adopted 5/23/24.



NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIVERSITY
CHAPTER 300 – ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AP325, ACADEMIC PROGRAM
REVIEW**

SECTION AP325.1 POLICY STATEMENT

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (“NC A&T” or “University”) shall regularly review the University’s academic programming to ensure the maintenance of high-quality and balanced educational programs that are consistent with the functions and mission of the institution.

SECTION AP325.2 PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the academic program review process is to enhance student learning and preparation by undergoing continuous improvement in program quality, cost effectiveness, resource alignment and future program planning. This Policy provides requirements for academic program review to ensure continuous program improvement.

SECTION AP325.3 SCOPE

This Policy applies to all academic programs awarding baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees, regardless of the program’s mode of delivery.

SECTION AP325.4 DEFINITIONS

- (1) “Program continuation as is” means an academic program will continue as currently designed. Program continuation does not preclude programs from practicing continuous improvement and innovation.
- (2) “Program expansion” means the program will be enhanced or will be expanded to include the addition of specializations, course offerings, or number and expertise of faculty.
- (3) “Program contraction” means reducing the size or scope of an academic program, and may include streamlining or reducing specializations, reducing course offerings, consolidating with other departments or programs, or reducing faculty.
- (4) “Program discontinuation” means ending an academic program when the program is no longer viable, sustainable, or aligned with the University’s strategic goals. Discontinued

programs will be phased out over time and will include a teach-out plan as part of the action plan.

SECTION AP325.5 ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW SCHEDULE AND CRITERIA

- (a) All academic programs must be reviewed at least once every seven (7) years. The review schedule must be staggered so that no more than one-third (33%) of all programs are reviewed each year.
 - (1) The Office of Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness (“OSPIE”) shall publish the initial seven-year review cycle in January of 2025.
 - (2) For the 2025 implementation, programs selected in January of 2025 must submit self-studies on or before September 1, 2025. In subsequent years, programs will be notified by July 1 of the year prior to the self-study year; e.g., those notified July 1, 2025 will submit self-studies by September 1, 2026.
 - (3) OSPIE must maintain the academic program review schedule and post any revisions on or before July 1 of each year.

- (b) All academic programs must be reviewed against criteria specifically developed by the UNC System to determine program productivity, including:
 - (1) Current and projected student demand, as measured by enrollment in the majors and degrees produced;
 - (2) Current and projected workforce demand, as measured by projected job growth and existing data on student employment outcomes;
 - (3) Student outcomes, including persistence, graduation, time to degree, and, where possible, post-graduation success;
 - (4) Program costs and productivity, including research, scholarship, creative activity, and student credit hours produced compared to the number of faculty and staff, and related expenditures;
 - (5) The program’s contribution to professions that are critical to the health, educational attainment, and quality of life of North Carolinians; and
 - (6) Any other considerations identified by the Chancellor or the President.

- (c) In addition to the criteria provided, program reviews should ensure measures are applied appropriately to recognize the unique mission and contribution of each program under review. Each program review should consider multiple measures of a program’s quality.

SECTION AP325.6 ACADEMIC PROGRAM SELF-STUDIES

- (a) In consultation with the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, OSPIE must select a subset of programs for review in 2025, and provide a schedule to the Deans of the colleges or schools in which the programs reside.
 - (1) Program self-studies must be submitted no later than September 1 of the academic year in which the program will be reviewed (year 7).
 - (2) The Chancellor’s written status decision completes the academic review phase, which will be followed by implementation of actions based on the status.

- (b) Information to be included in the academic program self-studies include but are not limited to:
 - (1) Data and metrics as defined by OSPIE;
 - (2) Quantitative and qualitative data to capture program evaluation criteria;
 - (3) Student learning outcomes as performance data;
 - (4) Curriculum review methods, results and trends;
 - (5) Faculty qualifications, workload, research output and professional development; and
 - (6) Student, alumni and external stakeholder feedback assessing satisfaction and program relevance.

- (c) OSPIE must develop and maintain a current template to be used for self-study reporting.
 - (1) The self-study report must be submitted to OSPIE on or before September 1 of the year scheduled for University review.
 - (2) Programs may use data and information from self-study reports used for accreditation purposes if aligned with the requirements in this policy (325.6a and 325.6b).
 - (3) Each self-study report must assess academic program strengths; identify areas for improvement; delineate future goals for the program; and include the program's status recommendation and rationale: *continuation as is, expansion, contraction or discontinuation*.

- (d) The Dean of the college or school must provide a separate status recommendation and rationale in writing before the self-study report is submitted to OSPIE.

- (e) Self-study reports must be reviewed by OSPIE and the Provost. The Provost will meet with program faculty, Department Chair and Dean between September 1 and December 1 of each year to discuss the results of the self-study, and request more data as needed.

- (f) The Provost must make a status recommendation with rationale, and strengths and corrective actions, as applicable, to the Chancellor with a copy to the Dean and Department Chair of the college or school in which the academic program resides, e.g., *continuation as is, expansion, contraction, or discontinuation* as to each program on or before February 1 of each year.

- (g) The Chancellor may request further inputs from the Provost and/or OSPIE and may engage a consultation process with program faculty, the Department Chair and/or Dean in order to make a final decision as to the status of each program reviewed.

- (h) The Chancellor will communicate a written decision as to each program's status on or before April 1 of each year.

- (i) OSPIE must provide a summary report of academic program reviews completed in an academic year to the Chancellor on or before July 1 of each year.

- (j) The Chancellor must provide the summary report to the Board of Trustees no later than November of each year.

- (k) The Chancellor must transmit a copy of the Academic Program Review summary report to the UNC System President no later than January 31 of the following year.

SECTION AP325.7 PROGRAM STATUS ACTIONS

- (a) After communication of the Chancellor's status decision, Deans and Department Chairs will create an action plan.
- (b) Except for the status of *continuation as is*, action plans must be submitted to OSPIE no later than 60 days after notification of the Chancellor's decision.
 - (1) Programs in *expansion* status must provide an action plan that addresses actions for expansion. The action plan must be elicited from faculty, staff, and students who will be impacted by the expansion.
 - (2) The Department Chair and Dean must develop an action plan for programs in the *contracted* or *discontinued* status. The action plan must be designed to:
 - a. Elicit inputs from faculty, staff, and students impacted by the contraction or discontinuation;
 - b. Address all areas necessary to revise a contracted program or close out a discontinued program;
 - c. Ensure current students are supported through a well-designed teach-out plan;
 - d. Implement a clear communication plan for all stakeholders;
 - e. Request and apply necessary University resources to support modifying or phasing out the program;
 - f. Comply with the relevant process described in UNC Policy Manual Code, 100.1.
- (c) Programs resulting in *continuation as is* status are not required to submit an action plan.

SECTION AP325.8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- (1) The Chancellor shall:
 - a. Review the institutional Academic Program Review policy at least once every seven (7) years;
 - b. Notify the programs of decisions regarding program status;
 - c. Submit the Academic Program Review summary report to the Board of Trustees by November of each year; and
 - d. Submit the Academic Program Review summary report to the President of the UNC System no later than January 31 of the subsequent year.
- (2) Deans shall:
 - a. Ensure Department Chairs convene program personnel to conduct academic program self-studies based on the schedule provided by OSPIE;
 - b. Review and approve self-studies, consult with program personnel, and make an independent status recommendation and rationale in writing to the Provost;

- c. Review and approve action plans before they are submitted to the Provost;
- d. Manage the action plan implementation.

(3) Department Chairs shall:

- a. Convene the academic programs personnel and assign program faculty to serve in lead roles to conduct the self-study;
- b. Ensure faculty have opportunities for input throughout the academic program review process;
- c. Complete and submit the self-study to the Dean to allow the Dean's review and recommendation to the Provost;
- d. Manage any action plan implementation; and
- e. Work with OSPIE to ensure the self-study and action plan process is followed.

SECTION AP325.9 COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with this Policy may result in the imposition of sanctions, reduction in rank, and/or termination.

POLICY HISTORY:

Eff. January 1, 2025

AUTHORITY: Board of Trustees

POLICY OWNER: Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

RESOURCES:

[UNC Policy Manual 400.1 Policy on Academic Program Planning](#)

[UNC Policy 400.1\[R\] Regulation for Academic Program Planning and Evaluation](#)

[UNC Policy Chapter VI Academic Freedom and Tenure](#)