

# SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM REVIEW POLICY

Responsibility of	Academic Planning Committee
Approved by	Faculty Senate (February 29, 2012)
Revision History	May 20, 2014; April 28, 2017; September 7, 2018; November 29, 2019
Next Review	2023

## POLICY OVERVIEW

Systematic Program Review (SPR) is a process the College has been working with since 2002 in an effort to enhance our learning community. As a community committed to the scholarship of teaching, the scholarship of integration and discovery, and the scholarship of service, this process reflects our commitment to be accountable for the programs developed and stewarded by the College and Seminary.

## PRINCIPLES

The principles of natural justice, clarity, and transparency undergird this policy.

## SCOPE

The policy applies to all undergraduate and graduate program reviews.

## POLICY STATEMENT

At Briercrest College and Seminary (BCS) Systematic Program Review (SPR) implies a careful examination of:

- program objectives and outcomes;
- program curriculum and design and;
- program faculty and resources.

The viewpoints of evaluation should be multiple. Review should:

- allow our disciplinary peers to speak to the program content and emphasis;
- amplify the students' voice on matters of teaching and outcome; and
- articulate the perspective of our constituency in terms of outcomes and service.

SPR will benefit our learning community by:

- ensuring that program review occurs in a predictable, coordinated manner;
- encouraging listening to the church, our peers, students, and community about our work;
- requiring the development of skill and practice in forms of evaluation and review; and
- demonstrating with evidence the quality of our programs, the stewardship of our resources, and the outcome of student and constituency investment.

### *Purpose of Systematic Program Review*

The primary purpose of SPR at BCS is to evaluate the instructional programs by assessing their alignment with Briercrest's mission and values, by assessing their academic quality, and by comparing them with similar programs at other institutions. SPR will encourage departments to improve and incorporate innovations into programs. It will also be used to inform decisions on program revisions, program deletions, and resource allocations by the Academic Planning Committee and other administrators. The review process will provide accountability with respect to our instructional programs.

## **PROCEDURES**

### *Process for Systematic Program Review*

The responsibility for SPR is that of the Faculty Senate which presents the report (maximum 5000 words) to the Executive Leadership Team for awareness and final approval. The Faculty Senate assumes the lead role in establishing the policies and process for SPR, in monitoring the progress of SPR, and in approving the recommendations for change that issue from SPR.

Each summer, the Faculty Senate will establish a schedule indicating programs that will be reviewed in the upcoming school year and the faculty assignments to the various review teams. Programs are typically reviewed every 5-7 years. Each Faculty's Dean is responsible for the SPR process in her or his division.

The review will normally be done by a team. The review process will be chaired by an individual named by the Dean and department chair. The review team will include the program coordinator along with another Faculty Senate member. Should there only be one faculty member working with a program, the second review member should be from the faculty within which the program is situated. The third member should be selected based on familiarity with the discipline, credentials, and the extent to which she or he complements other members of the team. Ideally, at least one member of the team will have experience in program review at Briercrest. Other faculty members or administration may be considered that are relevant to the program being reviewed.

The Office of the Dean of the College (ODC) is available to facilitate the review team's reporting. The ODC coordinates the collection of statistical data with the goal of making it accessible and of providing education so that it can be used appropriately. The ODC responds to the information needs of review teams and aids in the development and/or adjustment of assessment tools so that they are useful in program review. It is the review team's responsibility to make use of this resource in the preparation of the report.

### *External Reviewers*

The SPR team will meet in August to determine a list of suitable candidates to perform the external review with the goal of finding three reviewers who are qualified, available, and willing to complete the review. Most commonly, these reviewers will be academics within the discipline, but when deemed appropriate could include potential employers and practitioners in the field. The team should contact and confirm the external reviewers before September 15, and send them necessary pre-reading materials prior to their site visit and in preparation for writing their reports. Materials provided to the external reviewers should include, but are not limited to:

- Briercrest SPR policy and Saskatchewan Quality Assurance Standards
- Results from student surveys from current students and graduates from the past 5 years
- Information about the history, key and unique features of the program, and program objectives
- Previous program reviews
- Any relevant institutional and departmental documents that will assist in the review

It is expected that each reviewer conduct a site visit which will include a tour of the facility, classrooms, and library. Organized interviews will be planned with multiple students within the program, faculty members inside and outside the discipline, and relevant administrators and staff. The spirit of the site visit is to allow the reviewers broad access to resources and people necessary to complete the review and report. The External Reviewers will be asked to submit their final report within 3 weeks of their site visit. The report is to address all the questions in the SPR policy and make recommendations for improvements or changes to the overall program and curriculum.

### *Reporting/Reviewing Process*

When the Program Review Team has completed its work the resulting report will go through the following review process:

1. The department in which the program resides will review the report and the resulting recommendations. The department may comment and/or request additional work by the review team.<sup>1</sup>
2. Once departmental approval has been granted, the Faculty Dean and the chair of the review team will present the study to the Academic Planning Committee. The Academic Planning Committee is responsible to review and approve the review, recommendations and action plan.<sup>2</sup>
3. The Dean of the College will then bring the review and action plan to Faculty Senate for approval.
4. After Faculty Senate approves it, the Dean of the College will present the study and action plan to the Executive Leadership Team for awareness and final approval.
5. In years between reviews, a report on progress and necessary adjustments to the action plan will be submitted by the program coordinator to the Faculty Dean who will pass these on to the Academic Planning Committee.

The timetable for this process is as follows:

Activity	Date
SPR team meets to determine External Reviewers and begin assembling materials for External Reviewers. Establish meeting schedule. Determine student survey contents and distribute to current students in the program and graduates from the past 5 years.	August 15
Contact External Reviewers and schedule site visits. Review Student Survey results.	September 15
Review document due to Department	March 31

<sup>1</sup> In the event ongoing difference regarding the review itself or the resulting recommendations, a written summary of the situation may be submitted to the Academic Planning Committee by the faculty dean and the review team lead.

<sup>2</sup> The program coordinator will formulate an action plan after approval has been gained from the department & Academic Planning Committee. The action plan will be approved by both the department and Academic Planning Committee before becoming part of the review document submitted to faculty senate review.



Presentation to Academic Planning Committee	April 15
Academic Planning Committee Recommendations	May 1
Report to Senate	May 15
Report to Executive Leadership Team	June 15
Report on progress and adjustments	June 1 (yearly between reviews)

### *Review Document for Systematic Program Review*

The review document provides a concise and grounded presentation of how well a program is aligned with the mission and values of Briercrest College and Seminary (BCS) and is achieving its objectives. The review should review the quality of the program, demand for the program, the efficiency with which the program uses resources, and the importance of the program to the furtherance of the BCS mission.

The review should be presented as a narrative that introduces evidence and commentary relevant to the categories outlined below (but need not be limited to them). It must not exceed 5000 words (not including appendices).

- I. Introduction
  - A. Program History (within 10 years)
  - B. Program's Key and Unique Features
  - C. Program Objectives
- II. Congruence with the Institution – Does the program support departmental, college or seminary and institutional mission and objectives?
  - A. Briercrest College and Seminary Mission and Values<sup>3</sup>
    1. Does the program perform a clear role in fulfilling the mission?
    2. Does the program perform a clear role in fulfilling the values?

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<sup>3</sup> The ODC can provide electronic and/or print versions of all applicable mission and goal statements.

- B. College/Seminary, Divisional, and Program Mission and Objectives
  1. Does the program perform a clear role in fulfilling the mission of the institution, the school and the department?
  2. Does the program perform a clear role in fulfilling the objectives of the institution, the school, and the department?

**Due: third Friday of September**

- III. Quality – Does the program exhibit an acceptable level of quality in the following areas:
  - A. Curriculum
    1. Does the curriculum provide a broad enough scope of the field relative to the level of degree offered?
    2. Does course sequence progress from foundational to advance levels of content and study?
    3. Does the curriculum evidence sensitivity to the cultural context in which students serve and work and/or is it taught with sensitivity to the cultural context in which students serve and work?
    4. Do appropriate prerequisite and/or curricular requirements exist to ensure that students are capable of pursuing advanced studies in the discipline?
    5. Does the curriculum provide an opportunity for integration and for the student to gain a mature Christian worldview?
    6. Does the curriculum adequately meet the program objectives?
    7. Does the curriculum compare favourably with similar programs at other institutions? Is the content and level of education appropriate to the degree being offered?<sup>4</sup>
    8. Does the curriculum require the appropriate level of analytical research and communications skills needed for life-long learning commensurate with the level of education?
  - B. Faculty
    1. Do faculty members have terminal degrees?
    2. Does the program have enough faculty members?
    3. Do faculty members' professional development plans contain a clear emphasis on development that is relevant to the program, department, and College/Seminary mission and objectives?
  - C. Learning Community

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<sup>4</sup> The ODC will coordinate the compilation of this information.

1. Do members (including junior and senior learners) of the program participate in dialogue with each other's work?
2. Do members of the program form a morally, intellectually, and spiritually supportive and challenging community?

D. Resources

1. Does the library provide adequate resources to facilitate the program curriculum?<sup>5</sup>
2. Do the classrooms provide an adequate environment for the stipulations of the curriculum?
3. Does sufficient equipment exist to accommodate teaching styles and curriculum objectives?
4. Does the program have adequate monetary resources (budget, scholarships, bursaries etc)<sup>6</sup>
5. Are there sufficient experiential opportunities for students in the program?

E. Learning Outcomes

1. Are program objectives being achieved in graduates as evidenced by Portfolios and Exit Interview, GPAs, Placement Surveys, Bible Content Exam, Internship Evaluations, and other relevant assessment tools?<sup>7</sup>
2. Do adequate procedures exist for assessing learning outcomes specific to the program?
3. Do students and stakeholders appear satisfied with program outcomes?
4. What is the completion/retention rate in the program and how does it compare to other programs?<sup>8</sup>

**Due: last Friday of October**

IV. Demand – What are the following groups saying about the need for this particular program?

A. Partners

1. How is the program serving the church?

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<sup>5</sup> This information will be provided by the Library Director.

<sup>6</sup> A list of currently available bursaries and scholarship will be provided.

<sup>7</sup> Requested data pertinent to this section will be researched and compiled by ODC where available.

<sup>8</sup> The ODC can generate this data based on current student information.

2. What is the nature of the program's service to the Christian community?
  3. What is the program extension work?
  4. What organizations have a stake in the program?
  5. How have the partners been allowed to have input into the program?
- B. Enrolment
1. Has there been sufficient demand to sustain the program long term?<sup>9</sup>
  2. Is there evidence of long-term demand in the future?
- C. Placement
1. What opportunities have grads had?
  2. Have they experienced success?<sup>10</sup>

**Due: last Friday of November**

- V. Efficiency – Are we maximizing the strengths and resources we have in this program?<sup>11</sup>
- A. Discuss ratios such as faculty to program student, proportion of students in core program classes enrolled in program versus students outside the program.<sup>12</sup>
  - B. Averages such as class size, graduation class size, completion rates, etc.
  - C. What unique resources does the program need to be successful (space, equipment, trips, etc.)

VI. Summary and Recommendations

Complete study due on the second Friday of January. The review document along with supporting documents should be submitted to the Faculty Dean.

VII. External Review: Each SPR will include three external reviewers who have been approved in writing by the ODC.

**Due: the second Friday of March**

VIII. Final Recommendations

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<sup>9</sup> Current information on incoming program students, current students and graduates will be provided.

<sup>10</sup> Available data from historic surveys will be compiled and assistance will be given in developing any additional tools to survey graduates to gather the necessary information.

<sup>11</sup> Necessary statistical information for this section can be provided by the ODC.

<sup>12</sup> The requested statistical information will be provided for the program review team to use as they see fit.



The final SPR document will include a formal, written response to this external review and, typically, would include a revision of the summary and recommendations. An executive summary of SPR documents will be posted to the institutional web site.

**Due: the last Friday of March**

*Strategic Program Review Outcomes*

The outcomes of the review process will result in one of the following categorical assessments:

Category A – evidences clear strength and support as a long-term, sustainable program which contributes to the mission and values of Briercrest College and Seminary.

Category B – evidences strength and support as a sustainable program with some improvement necessary to more fully contribute to the mission and values of Briercrest College and Seminary.

Category C – evidences strength and support as a sustainable program with deficiencies that must be addressed in a clear time frame in order to contribute to the mission and values of Briercrest College and Seminary.

Category D – evidences lack of strength and support of Briercrest College and Seminary's mission and values and is unlikely to improve without significant re-design or new resources.

**APPENDIX A**

Related Forms/Policies	
Where is this policy published	BCS web
Contact Information	Don Taylor, DTh Dean of the College Briercrest College and Seminary dtaylor@briercrest.ca (306)756-3296

