

2022

Kansas Board of Regents Program Review

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

University of Kansas Program Review Institutional Overview

The University of Kansas is a major comprehensive research university that serves as a center for learning, scholarship, and creative endeavor. A member of the prestigious Association of American Universities since 1909, KU consistently earns high rankings for its academic programs. Its faculty and students are supported and strengthened by endowment assets of more than \$2 billion. Students are split almost equally between women and men and come from all 50 states and 103 of Kansas's counties. At Lawrence/Edwards, more than seven percent of students are international and students of color comprise more than 24% of the student body.

KU's program review is based upon the belief that the academic unit is the locus of program excellence for any institution of higher education. The faculty, with their expertise and involvement in teaching, research, and service, are in the best position to assess KU's academic programs and to improve those programs. As such, KU's program review is structured around a detailed self-study conducted by the academic unit with summary information and well-substantiated assessments reported to the deans and provost.

Kansas Board of Regents program review asks institutions to evaluate programs based upon the following criteria:

1. Centrality of the program to fulfilling the mission and role of the institution;
2. The quality of the program as assessed by the strengths, productivity, and qualifications of the faculty;
3. The quality of the program as assessed by its curriculum and impact on students;
4. Demonstrated student need and employer demand for the program;
5. The service the program provides to the discipline, university, and beyond; and
6. The program's cost-effectiveness.

In response to these criteria, University of Kansas program review employs a standard self-study template, managed through an online system, with questions addressing each criterion, on topics such as:

1. Departmental mission and how it aligns with the mission and role of the institution
2. Faculty productivity, impact of department scholarship, grant awards and expenditures, honors and awards, community-engaged scholarship
3. Assessment of student learning, pedagogical innovations, curricular changes, student satisfaction
4. Effectiveness of degree and program demand
5. Faculty service to the discipline and contributions to university committees
6. Teaching loads, recruitment and retention of students, ideal size for programs, faculty/student mentoring

Units at the school level respond to the KBOR prompts, while units at the department level respond to the KU prompts. For each question posed, relevant data are provided to the respondent from a variety of sources, including Academic Analytics, Academic Information Management System (AIMS), Visual Analytics, degree-level assessment, senior and graduate student surveys, Survey of Earned Doctorate, Doctoral Completions Survey, Doctoral Placement Survey, and the Progress

to Degree system.

For the professional schools, self-studies for programmatic accreditation and reports from such accreditors are central to the review process. For programs within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, an external review has been conducted following the completion of the self-study – though this was paused briefly in response to the pandemic. For each program and school, reports and supporting materials were reviewed by the dean and by the Office of the Provost. Given the length of the reports and materials, the Office of the Provost condenses the findings and submits summarized reports to the Board office. The summarized program review report is reviewed by the department chairs and Dean’s office prior to submission to KBOR.

As part of the current eight-year cycle, KU completed its review of all programs in AY 2021, a year early, and thus has no programs to report in AY 2022. However, KU will return to submitting programs for review in AY 2023 as part of the new eight-year cycle (AY 2023 – AY 2030). In anticipation of this new cycle, KU has begun discussions with Faculty Senate about possible refinements to the existing review process. Relevant to the program review process, the Office of Institutional Research, Analytics, and Effectiveness has created an “Academic Leader” dashboard for academic leaders to have easy access to much of the data important to program review, as well as other data important to decision-making. The University also has a new “Research Insights” dashboard which provides high-level information about externally sponsored research activities to campus - including deans, directors, chairs, the provost, and other university leadership.