



**515th REPORT OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE TO SENATE
on the APC meeting of October 20th, 2022 and the APC e-vote of November 18th, 2022**

I. TO BE APPROVED BY SENATE

(A) NEW TEACHING PROGRAMS REQUIRING SENATE APPROVAL - none

(B) ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ISSUES / POLICIES / GOVERNANCE/AWARDS

Office of Academic Reviews

Regulations on Academic Reviews – Appendices A and B

The Committee recommends the repeal of the current Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews, and the subsequent approval of the proposed Regulations on Academic Reviews. An executive summary of the proposed Regulations on Academic Reviews is attached as Appendix A, and they are attached in full as Appendix B. The current Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews are attached as Appendix C.

Be it resolved that Senate repeal the current Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews, as presented in Appendix C, and approve the proposed Regulations on Academic Reviews, as presented in Appendix B.

(C) CREATION OF NEW UNITS / NAME CHANGES / REPORTING CHANGES - none

(D) CHANGES IN DEGREE DESIGNATION – none

(E) INTER-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS – none

(F) OTHER – none

II. TO BE ENDORSED BY SENATE / PRESENTED TO SENATE FOR DISCUSSION – none

III. APPROVED BY APC IN THE NAME OF SENATE

(A) DEFINITIONS – none

(B) STUDENT EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS / CONTRACTS / INTERUNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

**Office of the Deputy Provost, Student Life and Learning – International Education
Student Exchange Partnerships**

APC electronically reviewed and approved, by November 18th, 2022, the following items:

- Student Exchange Partnership Proposal between the Faculty of Engineering and CentraleSupélec
- Student Exchange Partnership Proposal between the Schulich School of Music and the Universitat Mozarteum Salzburg.

(C) OTHER - none

IV. FOR THE INFORMATION OF SENATE

I. ACADEMIC UNIT REVIEWS – *none*

II. APPROVAL OF COURSES AND TEACHING PROGRAMS - *none*

1. Programs

a) APC Approvals (new options/concentrations and major revisions to existing programs)

i. New Programs - *none*

ii. Major Revisions of Existing Programs - *none*

b) APC Subcommittee on Courses and Teaching Programs (SCTP) Approvals - *none*

2. Courses – *none*

Regulations on Academic Reviews

Executive Summary

The new *Regulations on Academic Reviews* will replace the *Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews* and represent an updated framework under which academic reviews are conducted at McGill. Like all universities in the province, McGill University is required to review its academic programs on a 10-year cycle, to align with the requirements of the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI). Previously the University adopted a relatively narrow or strict approach in that all reviews of academic programs would be captured within a review of the relevant academic unit, via the Cyclical Unit Review process.

The new *Regulations* represent an expanded and more flexible process so that Faculties have more options around conducting academic reviews to support their own strategic plans. For example: a Faculty may wish to review a specific program or group of related programs in addition to, or instead of, a full Unit review before the 10-year requirement; a new academic program needs to be reviewed after five years; a Faculty may wish for a more streamlined internal review that can be done more quickly to respond to a specific challenge or opportunity. While the new *Regulations* have been updated to allow more flexibility in our review framework, the overall governance processes associated with Academic Reviews remain unchanged, notably that Academic Reviews do already report to the Academic Policy Committee and are overseen by the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic).

Key changes reflected in the new *Regulations* are:

- Annual planning meetings with Faculties to determine priorities and plans for academic review for the upcoming 2-3 years.
- Clarification that new academic programs require a program review after five years.
- Updates to the review criteria to include discussion of academic environment, inclusion of assessment of online education, program governance, and initiatives related to university priorities.
- Revised and updated timelines for submission of required review documentation.
- Inclusion of a follow-up mechanism for tracking review recommendation implementation, through the Academic Policy Committee (APC).
- Rebranding the Cyclical Unit Review Office to the Office of Academic Reviews to reflect the expansion of types of reviews.
- Update to the senior administrator responsible for academic reviews – the Associate Provost (Teaching and Academic Programs).

These new *Regulations* serve to broaden the scope and types of reviews available to the Faculties from the Office of Academic Reviews (OAR) and will replace the previous *Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews* (see Appendix for previous *Regulations*) as soon as they are formally approved by the University.

POLICY NAME	<i>Regulations on Academic Reviews (previously the Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews)</i>
Approving Body	Senate
Initial Approval Date	Senate - December 7, 2022
Date of last review	
Date of next review	December 2027
Executive Sponsor	Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic)
Related Documents	N/A

PART I – PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of the *Regulations* is to provide the framework under which academic reviews are conducted at McGill in order to align with the requirements of the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI). These revised regulations serve to broaden the scope and types of reviews available to the Faculties from the Office of Academic Reviews (OAR).

PART II –CONTENT

Rationale

McGill has an obligation to conduct academic reviews to ensure quality and accountability and to comply with the Policy adopted by Quebec universities within the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI, previously Conférence des recteurs et des principaux des universités du Québec [CREPUQ]) framework in September 2000. In keeping with McGill’s commitment to excellence in research and in undergraduate and graduate teaching and program delivery, as judged by the highest international standards, there is a need for a procedure to assess the quality of our programs and academic units in relation to the teaching and research of the professors, as well as the student experience.

Academic reviews are possible for units, existing programs, and as applicable, research and/or teaching centres or facilities. New programs will also be reviewed five years after their launch. Reviews are tailored to the needs of Faculties, in consultation with Deans on an annual basis.

Review criteria

Each academic review (unit or program) is conducted by a committee, reporting to the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) and the relevant Faculty Dean. The following criteria should be addressed in the unit or program self-study document, as appropriate, as well as in the review committee's report. These criteria may be adapted to meet the needs of the Faculties.

1. Objectives, Priorities and Activities:

- The academic unit or program's objectives and priorities. A multi-year plan, including strategies for maintaining and/or further improving the performance of the unit or program and a consideration of whether current activities are the best means for achieving the unit or program's objectives.
- The relationship of these objectives and priorities to Faculty and University strategic plans. Strategies for ensuring alignment with Faculty and University priorities and plans.
- The unit or program's current strengths and areas for improvement.
- Degree of involvement of students and student groups in the unit or program's activities.

2. Research, Scholarship and Creative Work, as applicable (for unit reviews):

- Extent and quality of the unit's research, scholarship, and creative work (publications, research contracts, patents, etc.).
- Success in obtaining peer-reviewed external funding for research (as applicable), including collaborations and interdisciplinary research.
- Impact of research, as indicated by citations, honours and awards, and other evidence of recognized achievement.
- Involvement of members of the unit in external scholarly activities, such as professional journals and associations.
- Other contributions toward enhancing McGill's position as an internationally recognized, research-intensive institution.

3. Academic Programs, Teaching and Learning, as applicable

- Learning objectives of the unit or program.
- Quality of undergraduate and graduate programs, considered in light of learning goals and outcomes, enrolment trends, disciplinary trends, graduation rates, and other relevant performance indicators.
- Program Governance (for program reviews).
- Integration of research into the curriculum (for program reviews).
- Success of the unit or program in a) academic excellence (academic environment, promotion of internationalism and interdisciplinarity); b) focus on students (student-centred learning environment, scope and quality of advising); c) pedagogy (critical reasoning, inquiry-based pedagogy, experiential learning, professional training [where relevant], assessment strategies); and d) promotion of research at the undergraduate level
- Effectiveness of graduate teaching and supervision; nature and extent of graduate student funding; success rate regarding graduate student employment in the field.
- Student satisfaction, success, and overall performance

4. Alignment with broader University priorities, good governance, and community engagement:

- Demonstrated commitment to a respectful and inclusive learning and work environment
- Governance framework for decision-making in the program or unit is effective and collaborative
- Unit leadership is premised on transparency, accountability, openness, and trust

- Initiatives and contributions of the unit or program to institutional priorities such as commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, Indigenous initiatives, anti-Black racism, and sustainability
- Contributions of the unit or program to relevant external communities, professional bodies, and disciplines.

Preparation of the self-study document

Each academic unit or program will prepare a self-study document. The head of the academic unit or program under review will be responsible for overseeing the preparation of the self-study and will ensure that the process is inclusive, involving academic and non-academic staff, as well as students.

In order to minimize workload and duplication, to the maximum extent possible, the self-study will draw on existing data and information.

Self-study documents should be concise and supporting documentation should take the form of appendices. The self-study (including appendices) is to be submitted in electronic format.

Timing and committee structure

Academic reviews, whether unit or program, will be conducted on different timelines, depending on the type of review and Faculty needs, but will be done at least once every 10 years. The review committee for a full review will normally consist of the following:

- the committee chair [from another Faculty, nominated by the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) or delegate];
- at least two external members chosen from comparable academic units/programs in peer institutions;
- at least one McGill faculty member from a different unit normally within the same Faculty, who is not a member of the Faculty Administration, nominated by the Dean;
- at least one student member from a different unit, normally nominated by the relevant student society.

Full reviews will hold site visits, planning of which will be coordinated by the academic unit in collaboration with the Office of Academic Reviews. Faculties may opt for an internal, streamlined review and the composition of the committee will be determined in consultation with the Office of the Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic), through the Office of Academic Reviews, and with the Faculty. All review committees normally include a Chair drawn from the academic staff from another Faculty or, in the case of program reviews, another Unit. Streamlined reviews do not normally include site visits.

The unit or program's self-study documentation is to be submitted three weeks prior to the site visit.

The review committee will prepare a concise report, due no later than three weeks after the site visit. The report should align broadly to the review criteria (see above). Units or programs will provide action plans and implementation timelines based on the review committee report recommendations before the dossier is forwarded to the Dean and Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) for action. Outcomes of the reviews shall be reported to the Academic Policy Committee (APC) for follow up and to Senate for information.

Administration of the reviews

Reviews are overseen by the Office of Academic Reviews (OAR), which reports to the Associate Provost (Teaching and Academic Programs). Templates and other administrative procedures are available on the OAR website (<http://www.mcgill.ca/aptap/oar>).

PART III – AUTHORITY TO APPROVE PROCEDURES

The Provost and Vice-Principal (Academic) or his delegate is vested with the authority to approve procedures as they relate to these *Regulations*.

PART IV – REVIEW

These *Regulations* shall be reviewed every five (5) years.

DRAFT

Regulations on Cyclical Academic Unit Reviews

Last revised by: Senate	December 3, 2014	Minute IIB3
<i>Full history appears at the end of this document.</i>		

Rationale

McGill has an obligation to conduct program reviews to ensure quality and accountability, in keeping with the Policy adopted by Quebec universities within the CREPUQ framework (1991-1999). Furthermore, in keeping with McGill's commitment to excellence in research and in undergraduate and graduate teaching, as judged by the highest international standards, there is a need for a procedure to assess the quality of our programs in relation to the research and reputation of the professors who offer them, as well as the student experience. For these reasons, cyclical reviews of academic units were introduced in 2011, to replace the academic program reviews that were implemented from 2004 to 2009.

Cyclical academic unit reviews are intended to go beyond program reviews; they allow the University, the Faculties, and the units themselves to assess their objectives, priorities, activities and achievements, and to compare themselves to equivalent units in peer institutions, with a view to improving quality and maintaining excellence. Academic unit reviews help to ensure that the unit's objectives are aligned with Faculty and University priorities and plans, as well as meeting the requirements of the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire.

Review criteria

Each cyclical academic unit review is conducted by a committee, reporting to the relevant Dean and to the Provost. The following criteria should be addressed in the unit's self-study document, as appropriate, as well as the review committee's report:

1. Objectives, Priorities and Activities

- The academic unit's objectives, and priorities. A multi-year plan, including strategies for maintaining and/or further improving the performance of the unit and a consideration of whether current activities are the best means for achieving the unit's objectives.
- The relationship of these objectives, and priorities to Faculty and University strategic plans. Strategies for ensuring alignment with Faculty and University priorities and plans.
- The unit's current strengths and weaknesses, including, where feasible, comparison with equivalent units elsewhere (normally in the U15 and/or American Association of Universities (AAU)) identified for 'bench-marking' purposes.
- Degree of involvement of students and student groups in the unit's activities.

2. Research, Scholarship and Creative Work:

- Extent and quality of the unit's research, scholarship and creative work (publications, research contracts, patents, etc.).
- Success in obtaining peer-reviewed external funding for research, including collaborations and interdisciplinary research.
- Impact of research, as indicated by citations, honours and awards, and other evidence of recognized achievement.

- Involvement of members of the unit in highly regarded academic or professional journals and associations.
- Other contributions towards enhancing McGill's position as an internationally recognised, research-intensive institution.

3. *Academic Programs, Teaching and Learning*

- Learning goals of the unit's undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Scope, quality and potential of undergraduate and graduate programs, considered in light of learning goals and outcomes, enrolment trends, disciplinary trends, graduation rates, and other relevant performance indicators.
- Success of the unit in encouraging a student-centred learning environment, academic excellence, critical reasoning, inquiry-based pedagogy, promotion of research at the undergraduate level, professional training (where relevant), etc.
- Quality of academic environment; promotion of internationalism and interdisciplinarity; scope and quality of student advising.
- Effectiveness of graduate teaching and supervision; nature and extent of graduate student funding; success rate regarding graduate student employment in the field, etc.
- Quality of students.

4. *Diversity and Community Involvement:*

- Contributions of the unit to relevant external communities, professional bodies and disciplines.
- Performance on issues related to employment equity and equal educational opportunity.

5. *Structure, Management and Administration:*

- Effectiveness and appropriateness of the unit's structure, management and administrative processes.
- Adequacy of staffing arrangements.
- Processes in place to ensure quality and to track how well the unit is doing.
- Quality and effectiveness of institutional resources: libraries, IT services, etc.

Preparation of the self-study document

Each academic unit will prepare a self-study document. The head of the academic unit under review will be responsible for overseeing the preparation of the self-study and will ensure that the process is inclusive, involving academic and non-academic staff, as well as students.

In order to minimise workload and duplication, to the maximum extent possible, the self-study will draw on existing data and information such as Annual Reports and other documents that are prepared routinely. The Cyclical Unit Review Office (CURO) will provide quantitative and qualitative information to the unit head.

Self-study documents should be brief and to the point. Supporting documentation should take the form of appendices. The self-study (including appendices) should be submitted in electronic format.

Timing and committee structure

Academic units (including departments, schools, institutes, and faculties without departments) will be reviewed approximately once every 7 years, commencing in September 2011.¹ The review committee will consist of the following: the committee chair (from another faculty, nominated by the Provost); two external members chosen from comparable academic units in peer institutions; one or two McGill faculty members from different units normally within the same faculty, who are not members of the Faculty Administration,

¹ Interdisciplinary programs without an administrative home unit will be reviewed separately, using a similar process.

nominated by the Dean; one or two student members from a different unit nominated by the relevant student societies.

As part of the review process, the committee will conduct a site visit. The review committee will meet with individuals/groups associated with the unit, such as the unit head, faculty members support staff and students. Planning and setting up of the site visit will be coordinated by the academic unit and CURO.

The unit's self-study documentation must be submitted not later than one month prior to this site visit. The information provided to units by CURO will be submitted to the unit not later than 4 months before the site visit, in order to allow sufficient time to prepare the self-study.

The review committee will prepare a report, due within one month of the site visit. The report should conform broadly to the review criteria (see above). Units have the option of responding to the report, before the dossier is forwarded to the Dean and Provost, for action as appropriate. Outcomes of the reviews shall be reported to APC and Senate for information.

Administration of the reviews

Reviews are overseen by the Cyclical Unit Review Office (CURO), which reports to the Associate Provost (Policies, Procedures and Equity). Templates and other administrative procedures are available on the CURO website (<http://www.mcgill.ca/curo/academic-unit-reviews>).

Legislative History:

Approved:

Senate	January 19, 2011	Minute IIB1
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Amended:

Senate:	December 3, 2014	Minute IIB3
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