

APR Data Reference Guide

Making Sense of Academic Program Review Data

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I. Background

The Academic Program Review (APR) process has generated a wealth of data held in several places. A lot of what is now available is new and some of it is complex. This brief guide is meant to help those who are new to review processes of this kind, or to dashboards and spreadsheets. It will also help reviewers understand component parts and available resources.

II. How to get started

Deans and department leaders now have available several tools to assist them in Academic Program Review, as listed below. Over the past couple of weeks, Institutional Research and Enterprise Data Management (IREDM) and the Provost's Office held training sessions on each tool, which can be accessed by clicking the training link below:

- a. The populated APR Rubric: [Training Video](#)
- b. The Cost and Revenue Analysis: [Training Video](#)
- c. The Academic Data Dashboard: [Training Video](#)

These resources should provide everything necessary for forming a data-informed understanding of where each program stands vis à vis the Academic Program Review.

Additionally, the information in these three tools can be supplemented by several other data elements, many of which are accessible on IREDM's [website](#). If reviewing data from **any** other source, please note that different methodologies, data sources, and data timings are used to create reports/dashboards, and therefore may not match the data presented in the tools listed above.

III. I have a low score on a metric, what does that mean?

It may help to get a sense of what the metrics in the rubric mean. The APR Rubric Training Video explains the scoring process in detail, with examples, so start there.

Then, as you work to interpret and understand your scores, there are some things to keep in mind regarding the scoring methodology of each individual metric. Because percentiles are used to assign scores, by definition there will always be approximately 15% of programs listed with a score of 4 – Needs Examination. In many cases, there may be good reasons why particular programs fall into the bottom 15% for some metrics, such that a relatively low score is expected. Therefore, a low score for any given metric is not immediately a cause for concern if there is a contextual argument that can be made for why the score is low.

IV. I need help contextualizing a score

The PRTF has provided an excellent [Contextual/Qualitative Data Guide](#) to help with this. Also, a great deal of data resources are available to help answer the types of questions listed in the guide.

For instance, the Academic Data Dashboard shows median section size. [Grade Distributions](#) and [Undergraduate DFW Rates](#) are available on the IREDM website in Power BI for every section of every course beginning in Fall 2018.

These data resources can be used to offer nuanced contextual explanations for student success outcomes. Similar resources are available that provide important background information for other Rubric categories. For instance, the [Teaching Productivity Dashboard](#) contains rich information on credit hour production at the university, college/school, department, and individual instructor levels.