

Periodic Program Review Guidelines

Office of Academic Affairs



LaGuardia Community College Periodic Program Review (PPR) Guidelines

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Outcomes Assessment at LaGuardia

At the core of LaGuardia’s Mission Statement “to educate and graduate” one of the world’s most diverse student populations is an idea that rests in the heart of the mission of the City University of New York (CUNY): opportunity. The central mission of CUNY provides students with the higher-order abilities and/or competencies they need to create new opportunities for themselves—and to change their world in the process.

The mission contextualizes the kinds of disciplinary knowledge students pursue in their program majors. The Associate’s Degree reflects a student education that includes program knowledge and their attendant skills, but also includes a core set of competencies, abilities, and skills that anchor each degree no matter a student’s major or career trajectory. This Degree is meant to provide students with the kinds of lifelong learning skills they will need to adapt to rapidly changing industries, economies, and social realities in the present and future.

At LaGuardia, five Core Values anchor our mission to educate and graduate our student population: diversity, responsibility, innovation, opportunity, and learning. This last value, learning, speaks to the philosophy behind LaGuardia’s culture of assessment, which follows national models of accreditation compliance *and* what’s called “assessing for learning,” which speaks to the cycle of inquiry, feedback, data collection, and evidence-based action that asks faculty and staff to continuously improve pedagogy and curriculum, partly with the expectation that such processes will lead to improvements in student success.

Outcomes assessment at our college is indeed a core process of “assessing for learning”; however, our goals exceed a focus on student learning alone. For faculty, staff, and administrators, LaGuardia strives to be a “learning college”—one that encourages all LaGuardians with student-facing responsibilities to assess their mission, goals, and outcomes on a regular basis in order to make improvements that promote student success.

Outcomes assessment is also a process accredited institutions of higher education are required to undertake by regional accreditors such as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). This process asks every unit to examine what it does, to collect data to study its practices, and to take actions based on the data to improve student outcomes.

In the context of a Periodic Program Review, the goal of outcomes assessment is three-fold:

- 1) to identify college-wide learning priorities and goals for General Education, program majors in the disciplines, and administrative and educational support (AES) units;
- 2) to collect data that documents student learning in General Education, the program majors in the disciplines, and the administrative and educational support units;
- 3) to use data to make changes in curriculum, pedagogy, and support unit activities that improve student learning measurably, in part by studying the effects of changes made through program actions.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment at LaGuardia Community College takes place through three areas:

- 1) General Education Assessment. During annual Benchmark Readings, faculty and staff

score student work related to the General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities. The College shares this data with faculty and programs, who reflect on the results to make necessary changes that strengthen student learning.

- 2) Periodic Program Reviews (PPR). All academic programs conduct Periodic Program Reviews. PPRs are led by program faculty who use their findings to recommend and implement changes in programmatic learning.
- 3) AES and Support Units. The systematic assessment of LaGuardia's administrative and educational support (AES) units is a central component of institutional effectiveness, strategic planning, and student learning outcomes assessment aligned with the College's mission.

Assessment is a way for the LaGuardia community to better understand the learning process—*what* students are learning and *how* their learning develops across semesters and disciplines. It outlines how faculty and staff work together to support student growth and development that addresses shared college-wide learning goals and to deepen their own practices through a close examination of student learning.

Periodic Program Reviews foster a culture of learning for both students and faculty, wherein faculty use the information from assessments to revise curriculum, pedagogy, and assignments in an effort to create an even stronger learning experience for all students.

The Context for Outcomes Assessment

LaGuardia's Outcomes Assessment processes have emerged organically from sustained work by faculty and staff over the past two decades. During the 2001-02 academic year, an Outcomes Assessment Plan was approved by the College's governance bodies. Guidelines for the CUNY-mandated Periodic Program Review (PPR) process have been revised to reflect this Outcomes Assessment Plan.

In 2013, then Provost Paul Arcario charged a task force with rethinking our General Education core competencies. The Task Force assembled faculty and academic chairs, Senate members, and Student Affairs professionals. They gathered college input, reviewed best practices, and designed a plan to address the College mission and prioritize the kinds of learning LaGuardia values most.

As a result of the Task Force recommendations, in 2014 the College adopted three Core Competencies that would be demonstrated through three Communication Abilities. They demonstrate complex ways of making meaning of, responding to, and articulating knowledge within a complex world. They also promote essential skills that underpin 21st Century academic and career success. This *Learning Matters* framework was passed unanimously by College governance:

- ✓ The Core Competencies are **Inquiry & Problem Solving**, **Integrative Learning**, and **Global Learning**.
- ✓ The Abilities are **Written**, **Oral**, and **Digital Communication**.

These Competencies and Abilities apply to all students and are addressed in General Education courses (the Pathways Required Core) and in selected courses in every major and program at the College.

LaGuardia's Outcomes Assessment plan is designed to address Institutional Effectiveness (IE) in terms of teaching and learning, and to use data to improve our academic and administrative support unit (AES) programs. In line with our commitment to the academic, career, and personal growth and development of every student, our assessment processes use a variety of tools to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning. A central feature of the assessment plan is an emphasis on inter-disciplinary skills development that informs every degree the College awards. This is one reason why our required Competencies and Abilities are adapted and assessed across all disciplines.

LaGuardia's Outcomes Assessment process places a strong focus on a systematic and longitudinal examination of student coursework represented in their ePortfolios or collected in the assessment depositing area of our Digication system. LaGuardia focuses its academic assessment on authentic examples of student learning, rather than standardized national tests, because the College believes that work produced in the context of the disciplines provides a more meaningful way to understand student learning, and better supports faculty making changes that strengthen student success.

Our Assessment Framework

While outcomes assessment is required to maintain the necessary accreditation to function as an institution and provide financial aid for our students, LaGuardia is committed to a tradition of excellence in teaching and learning that goes beyond complying with the minimum expectations of national norms and accreditation priorities. The College employs assessment practices in order to support the goals of “a learning college”—a college that continuously examines, learns, and improves how it supports student learning and development. This means that faculty, staff, and administrators—like our students—should practice cycles of inquiry, undergo assessment, receive feedback, and reflect on what they learn to take meaningful actions to improve our efforts as stewards of the College.

LaGuardia’s assessment processes are meant to answer questions such as:

- ✓ What do we want our students to learn?
- ✓ What are our common learning priorities as a College?
- ✓ How do we know we are succeeding in teaching those learning priorities?
- ✓ How do we know our students are learning?
- ✓ How can we use data to improve learning for all students?

These questions are comprehensive in scope, seeking to consider:

- ✓ the *entire* purpose of college education, from first to last semesters;
- ✓ the teaching that takes place inside *and* outside the classroom; and
- ✓ the learning that happens *within* and *across* programs, majors, or disciplines.

The guidelines for Periodic Program Review included here outline the pivotal work of faculty in academic units that shape the student learning experience attached to the conferring of degrees.

The Periodic Program Review

Periodic Program Reviews reflect LaGuardia’s core value of “learning,” with the understanding that learning is not limited to students but is also a disposition of faculty, staff, and administrators. The learning college embodies the values of “responsibility” and “learning”—faculty and staff are accountable for collectively strengthening the education that the College provides to our students by implementing on an on-going basis a process that seeks to improve pedagogy, curriculum, and student support.

Periodic Program reviews are opportunities for academic programs to study, reflect, assess, and ultimately renew their pedagogy, advisement, and curriculum. Every seven year, programs institute a five-year cycle of analysis, implementation, and reflection. Every academic program at the college—our majors and key curriculum components such as Urban Studies and Composition—is required to study itself in order to make evidence-based actions to improve student learning and success.

Benefits of the PPR

Periodic Program Reviews are an opportunity for faculty to reflect and study their program learning goals, pedagogy, and curriculum. The PPR process allows faculty to assess strengths and challenges, make evidence-based evaluations, and plan for future actions. It is a time to look at the bigger mission and future of a program, as well as a period to identify new tools for student success. It is a unique chance to have a dialogue with College leaders, share accomplishments, and articulate needs. It is also a chance for all faculty in a program to collaborate on the goals, outcomes, politics, and plans for student learning in their program.

Periodic Program Reviews are opportunities for the College to offer perspective to program leaders and faculty, and to evaluate a program’s contributions toward the College mission.

Responsibilities of the PPR Team

PPRs are mandated by the CUNY Board of Trustees; each program must complete PPR reports within the established assessment cycle. Completed PPR reports are submitted to the Provost and Academic Affairs representatives, providing the College with primary evidence and documentation for accreditation. A site visit by an external reviewer who is not affiliated with CUNY is required for programs without an outside accrediting body. PPR reports are 20-30 pages, include relevant appendices, and address the Report Guidelines provided in this document as close to the required timeline as possible. Programs that submit incomplete reports will be asked to make revisions until the reports reflect the guidelines.

To prepare for the PPR, program directors and program review teams attend four meetings throughout Year One to prep for the Year Two self-study and Report writing. At these meetings, programs review the PPR processes and procedures as well as provide contextual, program-specific information on how they are incorporating assessment of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). PPR teams are eligible for up to three hours total of reassigned time during the Active Year to support faculty work on the report, and will receive \$500 to support a stipend for an External Reviewer.

Key Priorities: General Education and Program Learning Outcomes

The College assesses students' development throughout their academic careers at LaGuardia by evaluating their achievement in two broad categories: the General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities, and Program Learning Outcomes. A fundamental element of the PPR concerns measuring student strengths in both areas.

These key priorities are guided by the following questions:

1. Where in each degree program do students learn and practice the General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities?
2. Where are Programmatic Learning Outcomes introduced and mastered, and how is the program assessing their effectiveness?
3. How do we know students are graduating with competency and proficiency in General Education and program-specific learning goals?

PPRs are thus occasions for programs to assess the following:

- A mission statement that speaks to overall program goals (based on a synthesis of the already existing performance objectives for each course in the curriculum);
- The effectiveness of student learning in relation to the General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities; and
- Program Learning Outcomes, or the learning objectives that reflect the common learning priorities or goals for students specifically in the program.

Each program will provide maps that show where the General Education Core Competencies and Abilities are taught in the program, and where their Program Learning Outcomes are taught in their program. Reports will also provide methods of assessment for each Program Learning Outcome.

The PPR Calendar and Timeline

Periodic Program Reviews involve two years of planning and study followed by three years of implementing an action plan:

- In Year One, the Prep Year, PPR teams plan how to assess the program and collect data in collaboration with Institutional Research. They review PPR Report requirements for writing in Year Two. Over the year, they meet regularly with representatives of Academic Affairs to learn about the PPR process. At the end of Year One, program leaders and department chairs meet with the Provost and other representatives from Academic Affairs to explain their Year Two planning and to consider feedback on their assessment plans.
- In Year Two, the Active Year, teams analyze data they've collected and conduct all other assessments needed to write their Report. In Fall II, programs submit a draft Report to representatives of Academic Affairs to receive feedback. During this year, the team also organizes an External Review, in which an outside evaluator will come to campus, read the draft Report, interact with faculty and students, observe classes, provide perspective on the program's curriculum and Report, and recommend actions for programs to take in the future. At the end of Year Two, programs submit their finalized Report with an Action Plan that makes evidence-based recommendations

and actions that emerged from assessments and were informed by the External Review.

- In Years Three through Five, the Implementation Years, programs implement the actions based on recommendations outlined in the Report. At the end of each year, programs submit a brief but formal narrative about their progress to Academic Affairs stating which Actions occurred that year, and providing any additional data generated to substantiate the efficacy or success of those Actions and any modifications made.

PPR Timeline

The PPR Process has three stages spread across five years: 1) Prep Year; 2) Active Year; and 3) Implementation Years. Prior to Planning Year, the department chair identifies a program review leader and a review committee to develop the Self-Study.

Planning Year (Y1): Teams assess 1 Program Learning Outcome over the year and implement this PPR timeline:

- ✓ October Introductory Meeting (Team Meeting 1)
- ✓ November Draft PPR Plan & Program Issues (Team Meeting 2)
- ✓ December Deposit student work for Gen Ed Assessment
- ✓ January Participate in College Benchmark Readings for Gen Ed
- ✓ February Submit PPR Plan & Program Issues Documents
- ✓ March Receive Feedback on Documents (Team Meeting 3)
- ✓ March Meet with IR (Team Meeting 4)
- ✓ April Finalize questions for Institutional Research (IR)
- ✓ May Deposit student work for Gen Ed Assessment
- ✓ May Submit PLO Assessment Report and Program Issues
- ✓ June Meet with Provost, Department Chair, and IR

Active Review Year (Y2)

- ✓ Sept Prepare Programmatic Benchmark Readings
- ✓ Sept Identify External Reviewer
- ✓ Oct-Dec Conduct Programmatic Benchmark Readings
- ✓ January Submit draft of PPR Report
- ✓ January Participate in College Benchmark Readings for Gen Ed
- ✓ Jan-April External Reviewer site visit
- ✓ March Revise Semi-final draft of PPR for External Reviewer
- ✓ April Revise PPR Report for Departmental Chairperson signature
- ✓ May 1 Submit PPR Report approved by Department Chair

First Implementation Year (Y3): In addition to assessing a different PLO over the year, the program will address the following:

- ✓ Fall I Respond to AA with a formal implementation plan
- ✓ Fall II Update Academic Affairs with PPR plan
- ✓ Fall II PPR actions inform College Strategic Plan
- ✓ Spring I Submit annual implementation reports to Academic Affairs

Subsequent Implementation Years (Y4-Y5): Continue assessing remaining or new PLOs each year and address the following:

- ✓ Continue implementation of actions
- ✓ Submit annual updates to Academic Affairs and update College Strategic Plan.
- ✓ Requirements for the final two implementation years will be agreed upon in conjunction with Academic Affairs.

Off Years (Y6-Y7): Assess any unaddressed PLOs each year.

PPR Report Outline

Section I. Introduction

In this section of the report, please identify the following:

- A. Program Overview: Please briefly narrate the recent history and status of the program, including details about its size (faculty and students), its age (in years), and its relation to the academic department.
- B. Key Questions and Program Issues: These are special issues raised in the report, which typically have corresponding data points, recommendations, and action plans in Section VI. In the spring prior to review year, the department chairperson, program director, and appropriate faculty meet with representatives of Academic Affairs to identify concerns and issues currently facing the program that will be addressed or investigated as part of the PPR. For example, are there known issues, such as low enrollment? Are there issues with facilities, staffing, etc.? Connect back to issues identified in prior PPRs or issues identified by outside accreditors where applicable.
- C. Mission Statement and Program Learning Outcomes: State the Program Mission Statement and your Program Learning Outcomes. It should be clear how the program mission aligns with LaGuardia's Mission Statement and, if applicable, the Mission Statement of the department.
- D. Other Assessments: Detail here a brief summary of the rationale for any special assessments the program undertook for the PPR. In most cases, refer to any revealing data-points and connect them, where logical, to the evidence-based Actions emerging from the Active Year.
- E. Closing the Loop: Relate action plan and recommendations from your previous PPR, where applicable, and address if the current PPR extended those plans and recommendations. If there are relevant Implementation Year reports or forms the program completed for the last PPR, please include those in the Report Appendix.

Section II. Analysis of Data and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Use this section to report and analyze program data and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). It will communicate, visualize, and analyze data about the program's students, such as demographics, enrollment, retention, and graduation.

To analyze the data, Report writers will need to become familiar with how to use and filter data about the program through the LaGuardia Institutional Research website, which will be introduced and explained. Some of the key data, or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), will come from this source. Through discussions with Institutional Research (IR), programs will be able to customize their data. The "Degree Seeking Student Dashboard" on the Institutional Research (IR) website allows teams to apply filters to sort programmatic information. Programs can retrieve student data there and download tables and charts to include in the PPR Report. As indicated below, IR provides a template of standard data for programs.

Every program must present and explain the following in their Reports:

- ✓ **Enrollment and Graduation.** Programs can find snapshot enrollment and 5-year graduation data on the website in the *Institutional Profile*, which is also distributed in hard copy during Opening Sessions. Please utilize this official document. Programs can also find degree information on the Degree Profile dashboard on the IR website. There is a parallel Graduate Profile by Academic Year.
- ✓ **Grade Distribution, Course Pass, and Completion Rates.** Programs can obtain grade distribution and course pass and completion rates, e.g. completing with a C- or better (high pass) or D- or better (official pass) for all courses in the program, and for courses in the major from the department chair.

Some standard program data will be provided by the Office of Institutional Research (IR) in the spring of the Prep Year. This data reflects Fall semesters for any enrollment or cohort studies. It includes:

1. **Enrollment** per Fall and Spring semesters and five-year trends, including New Students (first-time, full-time) and freshman transfers, as well as full and part-time students.
2. **Demographics** per Fall semester, including age breakdown and median, race and ethnicity, and gender.
3. **Cohort Analysis**, including Retention (first-time, full-time student retention rates per Fall semester), Graduation (3- & 6-year rates) & Transfer (4- & 6-year rates).
4. **Academic Momentum** reported as the percentage of first-time, full-time students earning 20+ and 30+ degree credits in the first year.
5. **Change of Major** information.

You will have an opportunity to request additional information during conversations with Institutional Research. A data request can be drafted in the form of questions the PPR report writers want to ask about the program. These questions will be discussed at the March Prep Year meeting with IR. At that meeting, the team can develop ways to customize data according to its needs. IR will also provide the college-wide averages for KPIs related to graduation, retention, and transfer.

Section III. General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities

At LaGuardia, each program has identified courses along the curriculum pathway that incorporate assignments connected to the College's Core Learning Competencies and Communication Abilities. In these courses—“earmarked for deposit”— students complete high-stakes assignments linked to our Learning Matters rubrics and then deposit them into our ePortfolio system.

By mapping assignments across the curriculum, the College is able to capture students' progress on the Competencies and Abilities at various stages of their degree, from the

First Year Seminar, through key courses at the early, mid and late stages, culminating in the Capstone course experience. By bringing faculty together across disciplines to read and score artifacts of student learning, programs can answer important questions about the impact of the curriculum over time.

All three Core Competencies and three Communication Abilities must be addressed at three places (early, middle and late) in each program. Please provide the program's deposit map, and use data from the Benchmark Readings or programmatic benchmark readings to identify places to strengthen learning in these areas. Ultimately, the report must answer the question: How do we know students in the program are graduating with competency and proficiency in General Education?

***Benchmark Readings:** We ask members of the PPR Team to participate in the College's annual Benchmark Reading during the Prep and Active Years. These faculty will score artifacts deposited by students in their majors and others. The purpose of participation is to learn how faculty in other disciplines are incorporating the Competencies and Abilities, as well as to produce data that will support writing the PPR Report.*

In this section, programs analyze the program's engagement with the General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities. This includes the presentation of all available deposit and scoring data from courses designated for deposit. **Please also include a copy of the program's Gen Ed Deposit Map.** This map identifies key courses in the program in at least three places—early, middle, and late—to address each Core Competency and Communication Ability. These key courses are identified on the Gen Ed Deposit Map as places where assignments have been developed to target a particular Core Competency and Communication Ability to support learning and longitudinal growth. Each course identified in the Deposit Map utilizes the Assessment section of Digication to upload or "deposit" student work or "artifacts." These artifacts, in turn, are scored in the annual Benchmark Reading process for College-wide assessment.

PPR report writers use outcomes data to support their claims about the program's relative strengths and challenges in relation to General Education. Outcomes should include an analysis of student performance, and at least one of your Actions should address any areas that may need revision and improvement, whether in terms of depositing or pedagogy. An analysis of Benchmark Reading data informs a robust sense of how students in each program are developing their learning for General Education.

This section should answer the following questions:

- How does the department's mission statement speak to the Core Competencies and Communication Abilities?
- Where are the Core Competencies and Abilities introduced, reinforced, and mastered? Please provide a deposit map that identifies where each competency and ability is taught and where they are assessed in the curriculum.
- What data did you receive for each Core Competency and Communication Ability taught in the program? Please provide this in table form if possible.
- What Competencies and Abilities are relative strengths for the program, and which could be strengthened?

- How do targeted course assignments related to the Core Competencies generate the level of growth we wish for our students?
- How will the results of this assessment be used to strengthen the program? (You may refer readers to your Action Plan in Section VII.)

Section IV. Program Learning Outcomes & Program Assessments

This section assessment components specific to the program:

A. Program Learning Outcomes

A fundamental element of the PPR assesses to what degree students meet key Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), which are often based on a synthesis of existing performance objectives for key courses and assignments in the program.

Program Learning Outcomes are outcome statements that describe “what students should be able to demonstrate, represent, or produce based on their learning histories” throughout the course of their education in the program (Maki 88).¹ They align with General Education and institutional intentions for student learning across the curriculum and co-curriculum (Maki 88). They flow from and support the mission of the College and the program, and are mapped to the curriculum showing where each PLO is introduced and /or mastered at the level of course and assignment. “Collaboratively authored,” they reflect the best practices of the discipline, field, professional organization, and institutions with degree articulations. Direct evidence of each PLO must be assessed systematically over seven years through quantitative or qualitative measures.

The PPR asks that programs review, justify, and articulate their PLOs and how they continue to be appropriate over the next PPR cycle. This PPR report section communicates the Mission Statement and Program Learning Outcomes, and demonstrates student performance toward those goals. **Please provide the PLO assessment plan identifying where each of your PLOs is taught and where they are assessed in the curriculum.**

Use data from PLO assessment to support claims about student learning in the program as assessed in the years prior to and concurrent with the PPR. Data and revisions based on previous annual assessments of the PLOs are discussed in this section and/or added as an Appendix to the Report.

As in the previous section, writers evaluate the overall strengths and challenges of a program in terms of appropriateness of the Mission Statement, the appropriateness of the program’s PLOs, and the actions the program has taken to improve student learning based on the available data from the previous cycle of PLO assessment.

This section of the report answers the following questions:

- How does the mission statement speak to the overall program goals?
- What are the Program Learning Outcomes and why are they appropriate?
- If there is intentional overlap or alignment among Program Learning Outcomes and the General Education Core Competencies and Communication Abilities, does this

¹ Peggy L. Maki, *Assessing For Learning*. Virginia: Stylus, 2010.

approach support the desired student learning as intended?

- How do the PLOs align with the goals of the College or department?
- Where are students learning the Program Learning Outcomes? Where are they introduced and/or mastered?
- What methods and evidence of direct assessment does the program use to assess its PLOs, and what data did the writers produce to make claims about them? (See Appendix B for details about PLOs and methods of direct assessment.)
- What data has the program compiled to analyze the effectiveness of its PLOs? What actions has the program taken to improve student learning as a result of the data?
- What PLOs are relative strengths for the program and which could be strengthened?
- How do the assignments generate the level of growth the program wishes for its students, related to the PLOs?
- How will the results of the PLO assessments be used to strengthen the program? (The writers may refer readers to their Action Plan in Section VII.)

B. Other Assessments

Many program leaders discover that they need to plan additional assessments in order to evaluate the strengths and challenges of their programs, such as tutoring services, articulation agreements, pedagogical practices, faculty and staff communications, materials and resources, and/or the creation of new courses. Typically, these assessments relate to “Program Issues” and correspond to Section D of the Report introduction (in Section I). For these assessments, consider the following questions:

- What will the PPR team investigate in its assessment, and what does it hope to learn?
- What is the project design? What is the timeline? Where and when will the members gather, collect, assess, and analyze results? Use the table below if it is helpful.

Question(s)	Outcome(s) Statement	Timeline(s)	Data Collection Methods	Results	Action Plan(s) to improve outcomes

Please inform Academic Affairs what resources or support you need as far as Institutional Research and Assessment, Center for Teaching and Learning, or Academic Affairs.

Example. The recent development of a "Core ePortfolio" practice from First Year Seminar through key courses and the Capstone provides an opportunity for “snapshots” of student development at various stages along the academic path. Programs pursuing a PPR might select random ePortfolio samples for holistic assessment of student learning, and/or examples of learning not captured by General Education or current PLOs.

Section V. Curriculum Review

In this section of the Report, please provide the following:

- A. Comprehensive Curriculum Map: This is a map or list that provides a comprehensive picture of all the courses that are required to receive a degree in the major. It provides an overall picture of the major and a foundation to see the connections between General Education courses, Pathways-required Flexible Core courses, and those in the Program Core. Please describe any recent or planned curricular changes.
- B. Degree Map: This map provides the program-specific sequence in which courses are taken in the major over time. Programs that do not have a specific sequence might choose to reflect here on how the lack of a sequence enhances affects learning. What is the program's rationale for course sequencing or non-sequencing?
- C. General Education Assessment Map: This map identifies key courses in the program in at least three places to address each Core Competency and Communication Ability. These are identified on the assessment map as places where assignments have been developed to target a particular Competency and Ability to support learning, longitudinal growth, and assessment. Each course identified in the map utilizes the Assessment section of Digication to upload or "deposit" student work or "artifacts." These artifacts, in turn, are pulled for scoring in Benchmark Readings for college-wide Gen Ed assessment.
- D. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) Assessment Map: This map identifies key courses in the Program Core where program-specific learning outcomes are taught and assessed. The PLO's articulate and communicate what skills and attributes students will demonstrate after completing a program, including concentrations and options, as well as key College priorities, such as Urban Studies or Composition.
- E. Individual Course Review: Evaluate each course in the program. For each course:
 1. *Review course proposals*. Are the course descriptions accurate and relevant? Revise as needed.
 2. *Collect a random sample of course syllabi*. Do they match course proposals? Do they meet course and institutional objectives? Are the courses marked for Gen Ed and Programmatic learning aligned with the PLOs, Core Competencies, and Communication Abilities? If not, revise the proposals to ensure greater congruence between what is intended and what is actually being taught.
 3. Review the courses in your program core sequence. Is the sequence relevant to programmatic student learning outcomes? Revise as needed.
- F. Field Scan: Please answer the following questions:
 - Does the curriculum show evidence of being responsive to changes in the field? Provide evidence that the curriculum is current with career and industry expectations, and/or national practices in the discipline. Examples of evidence include review by outside experts; review by site visit experts; and point-by-point comparison to national and/or industry standards.
 - What are the program's strategies to prepare students for fulfilling careers with

family-sustaining wages?

Section VI. Student Success

Provide information in this section to address key indicators of student success and program activities related to the College initiatives that support these goals.

A. Program Transfer and Placement. Evaluate this area for all programs. How well do the courses in the program transfer? Please include:

1. a description of how course design includes consideration of transfer;
2. information on existing transfer or articulation agreements and Memoranda of Understandings (MOUs); and
3. data to support the transferability of the program's courses.

Please provide data as to the success of the students in the program in transfer, where possible. Ideally, it is helpful to know at what rates students either transfer early, transfer after graduation, or complete their degree at the four-year college (CUNY only)? What is the correlation between performance (GPA, graduation) at LaGuardia and performance at the receiving institution? Identify any transfer issues or concerns where applicable.

B. Advisement. Evaluate the implementation of advisement in your program. How does the program provide advisement to students in the major? How is advisement conducted? When available, please review data in order to answer the following:

1. How many students are advised annually?
2. Are there particular points in the program where advisement is conducted?
3. How does the program decide what students need? What types of advisement (ex. tiers) are available to them?
4. How does advisement have an impact on successful progression in the program, timely graduation and transferability?
5. What are the most common topics discussed with students?

C. First Year Seminar. Where applicable, discuss the First Year Seminar & Experience in the program, and provide an example of a FYS syllabus. Describe any issues related to the FYS. Provide and analyze any data related to FYS/FYE.

D. Grants and Mini-Grants. Relay the goals and actions of any Learning Matters Mini-Grants the program has pursued since the last PPR.

Section VII. External Review

LaGuardia's Periodic Program Review (PPR) process is one of the College's key processes for inquiry-based outcomes assessment as mandated by the CUNY Board of Trustees and LaGuardia's accreditation agency, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). All programs must include an external review:

- ✓ If the program does not report to an external accrediting body, it must seek an external reviewer outside of LaGuardia Community College.

- ✓ Programs that report to an external accrediting body are not required to seek additional external review. Please refer to Appendix D for instructions on how to include this information in the PPR Report.

CUNY mandates that each program undertaking a PPR must host a site visit resulting in a written report from an external reviewer. This reviewer should preferably *not* be CUNY faculty at another institution. When non-CUNY reviewers are not possible, programs may ask for special permission to retain CUNY faculty. The Provost must approve program reviewers.

The external reviewer is responsible for reading a revised draft of your Report and offering feedback and evaluations relating to transfer, employability, and learning competencies. They should be prepared to discuss future recommendations and Actions with the PPR team.

Please contact an external reviewer by the fall of your Active Year (Year Two). Invite them to an on-site visit with your program sometime between January and April of the Active Year, and send them a revised draft of the program's PPR for review prior to the visit. Request that they respond to the Report and recommendations in writing by May 1.

The following guidelines are included here to help programs prepare for the site visit, and to outline the components of the written report.

1. The site visit includes classroom visits, as well as a meeting with the PPR Team, Department Chair, students, and other faculty and staff who can provide insight and feedback.
2. Within 30 days of the site visit, the reviewer should submit a written report to the Program Director that includes the following information:
 - An evaluation of the overall quality of the draft document the PPR Writing Team has produced.
 - A summary of any meetings held with faculty, students, or staff.
 - Indications of successes and best practices, as well as challenges for the program.
 - An evaluation of the program recommendations and action plan, and 3-5 recommendations on program areas that need to be addressed and strengthened.

Section VIII. Action Plan

Based on the analyses in the prior sections—along with feedback from Academic Affairs and the external reviewer—please formulate specific recommendations and actions the program will undertake to strengthen the program, particularly in regard to improving student learning outcomes, including for the Core Competencies and Communication Abilities and PLOs. Programs accredited by outside evaluators may include action steps based on issues identified in annual reports or in the outside accreditation criteria. *Provide a copy of those criteria in the appendix.*

These actions should be incorporated into the Strategic Plan for the department in the years following the PPR. Recommendations for actions should be based on specific data-points and analysis generated by the PPR. Please work with your Department Chairperson to

incorporate PPR recommendations into Action steps.

It is helpful to break down future actions into short, medium, and long-term steps or goals. PPR teams should be prepared to present a data point, a recommendation, and an action step at the spring Instructional Staff meeting.

Programs will report on their action-implementation goals in Years 1, 2, and 3 of the PPR (after the active report year).

EXAMPLE

Data Point: An assessment of student development in terms of Inquiry and Problem Solving (IPS) consisted of reviewing students' written work by taking artifacts from 80 ePortfolios and comparing samples of work in intro courses versus the Capstone course. Scoring the work with the IPS rubric revealed that scores improved by 1 point on the rubric's 1-4 scale; however, written samples from the Capstone course averaged 2.5, somewhat below the desired 3.0 score of "Competent" for graduating students. A review of assignments in the Capstone course revealed that students were not did not required to draw conclusions based on evidence, meaning that their efforts could not meet the desired criteria in that rubric dimension.

Recommendation: Review and revise IPS assignments in capstone courses in the major.

Action (short term): A team of faculty devised model assignments for the Capstone course aligned to the rubric dimensions and charretted the assignment with colleagues (September-December). Faculty incorporated the revised assignment into courses the following spring semester (March-June) as a pilot. Student work was deposited in ePortfolios and assessed in a program reading using the IPS rubric (June), and successful assignments were shared with colleagues and incorporated into all Capstone course sections in the subsequent semester.

Appendix A: Program Learning Outcomes

As part of the Periodic Program Review, programs must address their Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Some programs may need to advance their evaluation of their PLOs by conducting their own program Benchmark Readings. By the end of the PPR Active Year, programs should be able to show that they have data on one or more of their PLOs, and that they have taken actions or made revisions to assignments or pedagogy as a result.

Look at the list of PLOs. Identify one or two PLOs the program would like to address by examining how they are introduced, reinforced, and mastered at different moments of student learning, or by consulting any relevant data already possessed.

- How do the selected Program Learning Outcomes address student success as far as retention, transferability, and/or achievement of learning outcomes?
- Do faculty need to create any new resources or materials? Does the Program need to plan a Program Benchmark Reading?

Methods of Direct Assessment for PLOs

A menu with types of options for PLO assessment could include: core or course ePortfolios, essays, research papers, problem sets, oral examinations, performances, presentations, clinical experiences (Trudy and Banta 96).² Programs could pull from projects specific to the major by “asking students to create and exhibit products or present demonstrations that are representative of work done by professionals in the discipline” (Trudy and Banta 97).

Some Methods of Direct Evidence of Student Learning

- Ratings of student skills in their field experience by supervisors.
- Scores and pass rates on appropriate licensure or certification exams.
- Capstone experiences such as research projects, theses, dissertations, oral defenses, exhibitions, and performances, scored using a rubric.
- Other written work, performances, and presentations, scored using a rubric.
- Scores on locally designed multiple-choice or essay tests, such as final exams in key courses, qualifying examinations, and comprehensive evaluations.
- Score gains between entry to and exit from the program on published or local tests or writing samples.
- Observations of student behavior, undertaken and with notes recorded systematically.
- Summaries and assessments of electronic class discussion threads.
- Think-alouds, which capture the students' thought process as they work through a problem or assignment.
- Student reflections on their values, attitudes, and beliefs (Suskie 21).³

² Trudy W. Banta and Catherine A. Palomba. *Assessment Essentials: Planning, Implementing, and Improving Assessment in Higher Education*. Second Edition. Jossey-Bass, 2015.

³ Linda Suskie. *Assessing Student Learning: a commonsense guide*. Second edition. Jossey-Bass, 2009.

Appendix B: PPR Budget Plan for Active Year

To support the work of the faculty members involved in their Program Review Active Year, three hours of released time per program are available, and a nominal stipend of \$500 for an external reader (non-CUNY only). **Faculty are eligible for release time only.** Team Members may decide how to divide the three hours of released time. Please report the released time to the Department Chair and indicate the hours on your workload form.

Please use the table below to fill in the Program's plan for the use of the released hours.

Name of Faculty Member	Number of Released Time Hours

Appendix C: Program Benchmark Readings: Norming and Scoring

Norming sessions can be a meaningful way for faculty to address Student Learning Outcomes, whether the Gen Ed Core Competencies and Communication Abilities or one of their own Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). Program Benchmark Readings are powerful learning experiences that help faculty and staff readers more deeply understand the learning outcomes being discussed.

During a norming session, faculty read and discuss the assessment tool (usually a rubric). Then they look at examples of range finders, or student work that constitutes different scores on the rubric (usually 1-4). Next, they look at unscored examples of student work and form a consensus on what each should score. Readers should be able to agree (within 1 point) on what constitutes different levels of student work. Once “normed,” readers can then score student work by themselves.

The purposes of norming sessions are:

- to define what constitutes student learning relative to the learning objectives and dimensions of the assessment tool;
- to promote agreement about how an assessment tool measures student work;
- to inspire consensus about how student work scores across the rubric scale.

For an effective norming session, provide participants with the following:

- An assessment tool, usually a rubric, that contains a definition, framing language, glossary, and a matrix or grid that defines learning outcomes on an 1-4 scale.
- Range-Finders, or examples of student work at each scoring level (1-4) so that scorers have models.
- Norming Samples, or unscored samples of student work for faculty to read, score, and discuss.

A Norming Session agenda might look like:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Discussion of tools or rubrics; surface clarifying questions and define terms
3. A reading of annotated student work in the Range Finders; the annotations should explain why the work scored a 1, 2, 3, or 4 (or doesn't score on the rubric)
4. Leaders solicit discussion about the Range Finders
5. Participants then read unscored Norming Samples and discuss scores until consensus is reached within 1 point (NOTE: Leaders should select Norming Samples in advance to guide consensus.)
6. When leaders ask participants to share their scores, why discover why participants gave certain work that particular score. Leaders also help participants understand why that sample was selected with a particular score in mind.

NOTES ON RUBRICS & SCORING

When scoring for the Gen Ed LaGuardia's Core Competency and Communication Abilities, a 1 means Novice and a 4 means Proficient. Nationally, a four-point score is considered statistically and intuitively feasible, reproducible, and scalable. The College's goal is for graduating LaGuardia students to reach at least a score of 3, or "Competent." It does not expect that entering students or baseline artifacts reach this level.

For scoring, the College uses sympathetic holistic scoring. This system means a reader comes up with an overall score that takes each of the multiple dimensions on a rubric into account. This is in contrast to a specific score for each dimension that's then averaged.

On a 1-4 scale, it is reasonable if readers come within *one* point of each other on their overall or holistic score for any given artifact. For example, someone gives the work a 1, while the other person assigns it a 2. Where there is *more* than one-point difference, such as an 1 and a 3, discussion must ideally bring the conversation into a one-point difference.

The "norming" process should help readers more effectively align their shared assumptions and understandings of the rubric.

Suggestions for Interpreting and Presenting Benchmark Data

The purpose of assessment is to examine growth over time, and to create meaningful data that can inform action steps. As programs plan norming sessions for Periodic Program Reviews (PPRs), Learning Matters Mini-Grants, or other initiatives, they should strategize about the data they create, and how they'll interpret and present it. Benchmark Reading leaders might consider the following guidelines and questions, below.

Suggestions for Scoring and Data Compilation

1. Artifacts receive two scores from different faculty.
2. Artifacts with divergent scores (88 and a numbered score; difference of more than 1 point (1 and 3, 2 and 4) receive third score from third reader).

Suggestions for Analysis and Presentation

As the PPR leaders review and analyze their data, keep these questions and suggestions in mind:

1. What are the primary questions involved about student learning? What is the PPR team hoping to learn from this process? What issues does the Program already know about that it is hoping to examine or better understand?
2. Consider your audience. Are the report authors presenting to other faculty in the program, or to an audience outside the program? They might make adjustments depending on the answer.
3. As the team compiles and reviews scores, it should ask: what do these data mean? What can the program learn from them? Is the data what was expected? Take note of the difference between expectations and results.

4. Where did tension emerge? What was the difference between 1s and work that didn't score? What was the difference between a 2 and a 3?
5. Consider the role of assignment(s) in building student learning and generating the student artifacts you've scored. Does the assignment effectively address the dimensions of the relevant competency and ability?
6. What data could provide the findings with context and framework? Is there contextual college-wide data that can be used for comparison? What such a comparison look like? What conclusions can be drawn from that comparison?

After the participants have scored, the PPR team lead a reflection conversation with the scorers. In the discussion, the team might consider the following clusters of questions, designed to enhance assessment as a learning process.

Student Artifacts. What did the readers learn from scoring the artifacts? What did they learn about assignments designed to address the rubric, or Competency/Ability? What factors contributed to higher scores? How could assignments be tweaked to create higher-scoring artifacts?

Learning Objectives. Have the scorers' understanding of the learning objectives changed? Were some dimensions easier to score than others? What were some of the factors that contributed to 3s and 4s?

Action Steps. What advice would they give faculty and program directors who are teaching to the learning objective measured by the rubric? How can the College best support faculty in assignment development for the learning objective? How can the College use what has been learned to shape teaching and learning at the College?

Faculty Insight. What insights from the discussion would be important for bringing stronger teaching and learning back to the classroom? How might this discussion inform faculty's work with the learning objective? How might these insights inform the program's engagement with the learning objectives, whether PLOs or Core Competencies and Communication Abilities?

Appendix D: Guidelines for Programs with External Accreditation

Program reports for external accreditation count as reports for the Periodic Program Review (PPR). All such programs are still responsible, however, for submitting any information normally expected for College PPR reports, such as evaluation and actions for the Core Competencies and Communication Abilities.

Programs with external accreditation must do the following:

1. Complete the College PPR cycle, including meetings with the College liaisons for Periodic Program Reviews during their Prep Year and Active Year, and annual Closing the Loop reports for Years 1-3;
2. Meet with the Provost in their Prep Year to discuss their plan and actions;
3. Provide the College with a copy of their external report.

At the end of their Active Year, programs will submit to the College a “Crosswalk Document” that lists to the pages/links where all PPR content can be found in their external report. In this Crosswalk or in an appendix, programs will submit any additional required information not otherwise included in the external report.

The Crosswalk Document

The goal of the Crosswalk is to identify the manner in which the program has met the LaGuardia's PPR guidelines and requirements.

The Crosswalk Document will provide a table that identifies where the external accreditation report addresses the areas required for College PPRs (see below).

Directions:

1. Identify the name of your program and the accreditation body to which the report was submitted.
2. Provide information that demonstrates the way in which the self-study/accreditation documents address the PPR requirements. The writers may crosswalk one or more sections of the self-study/accreditation document to each PPR section.
3. Provide comments as the team sees fit to clarify the cross-walked sections.
4. For sections of the PPR that do not have a counterpart in your self-study/accreditation documents:
 - a. Comment/note that the program's accrediting body does not require this information
 - b. Provide a narrative response to demonstrate how the program meets the PPR requirement(s)

Self-Study/Outside Accreditation Crosswalk Table

Name of Program:

Name of Accreditation Body:

PPR Section	Guidelines Page	Included in External Report (Yes/No)	Self-Study Outside Accreditation Document*	Comments**
I. Introduction A. Program Overview B. Key Questions and Issues C. Program Learning Outcomes D. Other Assessments E. Closing the Loop	11			
II. Key Data Elements	11			
III. General Education Core Competencies & Communication Abilities	12			
IV. Program Learning Outcomes and Program Assessments	14			
V. Curriculum Review A. Curriculum and Assessment Maps B. Individual Course Review C. Key Review Questions D. Relation to the Field	16			
VI. Student Success A. Transfer and Placement B. Advisement C. First Year Seminar D. Grants and Mini-Grants	17			
VII. External Review	17			
VIII. Action Plan	18			

*(Please provide the section of the document – i.e.: name, page, etc. that addresses each PPR section)

**Briefly add context or comment where necessary (for example, if the corresponding page/section of outside report doesn't clearly address PPR Guidelines, please explain or contextualize).

Additional Narrative(s). Please copy below additional narrative information and/or data to supplement the Crosswalk.

Appendix E: Preparing for the Provost Consult in Prep Year

Please send the following items to Provost Seals on or by June 1st, and copy the PPR representatives from Academic Affairs.

1. One-page executive summary containing:

- **Program(s) name(s).** The name of the program (or total programs under review) and the department.
- **Program Description.** A brief (1-4 sentences) description of the program.
- **Assessment Inquiries.** A brief *summary* of the Program Issues, including a list of 3-5 “key questions” for each issue will be studied (see “other assessments,” Section IV, B). Provide the method of data collection, and a brief timeline of how each issue will be assessed. Please also include what PLOs will be studied during the PPR process and why.

2. Please also provide:

- A revised, full description of the Program Issues, including all additional details and more detailed timelines.
- A brief outline of the team's thoughts regarding key data-points learned about your program already.
- Any other relevant materials.

Appendix F: Periodic Program Review Reports: **Standards and Formatting**

There are best practice protocols for revising and completing Periodic Program Review Reports. Please use this checklist to facilitate an accessible, legible, and standardized final Report before you submit the report to Academic Affairs.

Formatting

- Standard 1-inch margins and 12-point Arial font used for the report. Headings and sub-headings may be in 14-point font. Single-spaced text is ok.
- Page numbers are inserted.
- A title page and a table of contents are included.
- Report is organized according to the Roman numeral/Arabic numeral outline provided in the PPR Guidelines.
- Data visualization (tables, graphs) is provided when appropriate.
- Report is free of surface errors, syntax issues, and tracked changes/comments.
- Appendixes are included to organize bulky data, such as course catalog descriptions.
- Citations are in the formal reference format utilized by the discipline/program/department.
- Report is written in the past tense to reflect assessments, findings, and actions that took place in the past. The Report is a record of what took place during the Prep (Year 1) and Active Years (Year 2). The Action section of the Report might contain verbs in the future tense.
- All files are submitted in PDF.

Standards

- The Report Action Plan reflects the External Evaluator's report.
- The Introduction and other sections of the Report reference the External Evaluation as appropriate.
- The Report is self-conscious about directing readers to other parts of the Report, where possible and appropriate. (For example, the Introduction might refer to the Action Plan, or a data analysis might refer to curriculum materials; when you do so, be specific about referring to particular section – for example, Section II, B.)
- Text in the Report is not directly copied from College materials; material revised from College materials should be cited where appropriate.
- The Chairperson has read the report in full, and other key program faculty have had an opportunity to read it, prior to submission. The Chair's signature indicate their approval of the report.