

# Diné College Academic Program Review Handbook

**Rev: January 2024**

**Office of Assessment & Curriculum**

---

Approved by:  
Provost Council  
Executive Team  
Academic & Student Success Committee  
Board of Regents



## **Dine College**

### **Who we are**

Diné College is the first tribally controlled and accredited collegiate institution in the United States. Established in 1968 as Navajo Community College, it was later renamed Diné College. The Navajo Nation sought to create an institution of higher education that encouraged Navajo youth to become contributing members of the Navajo Nation and the world.

### **Mission**

Rooted in Diné language and culture, our mission is to advance quality post-secondary student learning and development to ensure the well-being of the Diné People.

### **Vision**

Our vision is to improve continuously our programs and services to make Diné College the exemplary higher education institution for the Diné People.

# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	iii
Glossary of Assessment Terms .....	1
Introduction .....	2
The Purpose of Assessment at Diné College.....	2
2024 Revisions to the Assessment Process at Diné College .....	2
College Stakeholders and Programs Affected by the Revisions .....	3
Diné College Philosophy of Assessment .....	4
Annual Academic Program Assessment Cycle .....	4-5
Who Does What and When in Academic Assessment.....	6-8
Program Assessment in Canvas .....	9
References .....	10
Appendix A: Academic Assessment Reporting Template .....	11-14
Appendix B: Academic Assessment Reporting Template Review Rubric .....	15
Appendix C: Suggested Elements of an OIPR Program Profile .....	16
Appendix D: Suggested Elements of an OIPR School Annual Budget Snapshot .....	17
Appendix E: Four Pillars of Institutional Learning Outcomes .....	17-18
Institutional Learning Outcomes.....	18

## Glossary of assessment terms

DC – Diné College

HLC – Higher Learning Commission

ILO – Institutional Learning Outcomes

OAC – Office of Assessment and Curriculum

OIPR – Office of Institutional Planning and Reporting

PSLO – Program Student Learning Outcomes

# Introduction

## The Purpose of Academic Program Reviews at Diné College

The purpose of Academic Program Reviews (APR) at Diné College (DC) is to assess evaluate the quality, viability, and effectiveness of academic programs within each academic school, on a 4-year cycle comprehensively. Dine College conducts APRs through an internal, faculty-driven self-study, use of an external reviewer, and comprehensive evaluation that involves a strategic action plan. The APR process is intended to provide a thorough evaluation of the programs specific needs by examining its history, current status, and future goals that incorporate alignment to Dine College's mission. In addition, the faculty-driven self-study examines activities and achievements since its last program review while also identifying strengths and weaknesses in its curricula and pedagogy; assessment of programs student learning; provides an analysis of faculty status, performance, contribution and support; an overview of resource availability and needs. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the program review should allow the academic program, in conjunction with the institution, to build on existing strengths, maximize opportunities for growth and innovatively problem solve.

The review process at Diné College is designed to demonstrate alignment with educational standards as required by our accrediting body, the Higher Learning Commission. Additionally, an academic program review is intended to facilitate degree program improvements and implement long---term strategic planning for the benefit of its students.

## Institutional Strategic Goals

APR at Diné College directly addresses all six of the stated Diné College Strategic Goals and Objectives 2022-2027:

1. QUALITY GROWTH FOR NAVAJO PEOPLE
2. ACCESSIBILITY
3. CAMPUS HEALTH AND WELLNESS
4. HOLISTIC INTEGRATION
5. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
6. FACILITIES.

## Diné College Educational Philosophy and Assessment

Nihina'nitin, Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhóón bit hadít'éego, dóó índa Diné yee iiná íí'ínígi át'éego nahasdzaán bikáa'gi dóó yádihit biyaagi bohónéedzánígi át'éego yee hiná. Díí binahjį' t'áa altsodéé' bik'í hwiinít'įį'go bitah yá'áhoot'éehgo yee iiná íí'įį dooleet.

Our educational principles are based on Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhóón, the Diné traditional living system, which places human life in harmony with the natural world and universe. The system provides for protection from the imperfections in life and for the development of well-being. The principles are four-fold:

- Nitsáhákees. Thinking. Baa nitsídžíkees. Apply the techniques of reasoning. Analyze alternative solutions through the use of the principles of logic and creativity.
- Nahat'á. Planning. Nahat'á anitsíkees bee yáti' dóó íishjání óolzin. Develop and demonstrate communication skills. Nahat'á nahaaldeet. Demonstrate systematic organization skills.
- liná. Implementation. T'áa hó ájít'éego hózhóogo oodáá. Demonstrate self-direction based on personal values consistent with the moral standards of society. T'áa hó ájít'éego hózhóogo oonish. Demonstrate quality, participation, work, and materials.
- Siihasin. Reflection and assurance. Siihasingo oodáá. Demonstrate competency. Siihasin nahaaldeet. Demonstrate confidence.

## OVERVIEW OF THE APR PROCESS

All academic programs (Certificate, Associate, Bachelor and Master) at Diné College are scheduled to complete the academic program review every 4 years. The APR process is comprised of three core areas: The Self-Study, the Site Visit, and the Strategic Action Plan. The three core areas are developed into the Academic Program Review Final Report, which is presented to the Provost Council and Executive Team. The process in its entirety takes twelve months, beginning with the APR Orientation and concluding with the final report. For minors, only the self-study is submitted and reviewed by the Provost Council.

# ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS



## APR Orientation

The APR Orientation is facilitated by the Office of Assessment and Curriculum and takes place in October, prior to the site visit in spring. School deans and program faculty should attend to prepare them for their roles and responsibilities of an academic program review. The orientation will cover the purpose of an academic program review and timeline for completing an APR cycle. This will help the APR team understand their contributions to the review, understand the criteria for selecting an external reviewer and understand the criterions of a self-study.

## External Reviewer

The External Reviewer serves on the APR Evaluation Team as a third-party reviewer whom is not-affiliated with Diné College. While internal institutional stakeholders have more knowledge of academic programs on campus, External Reviewers for the APR do not typically know the details related to operating a program within a School. External Reviewers provide a fresh pair of eyes to the programs and are a vital part of the APR process. They also bring with them the knowledge and expertise of their own field to our campus. Bringing this individual to campus

also provides opportunities for sharing a dialogue between Diné College and other collegiate institutions.

### *Nominating an External Reviewer*

Faculty within the school may consult through a list of potential external reviewers for the upcoming APR Site---Visit. While doing so, it is important that all potential External Reviewers must adhere to the following minimum qualifications:

- Must be currently employed at another accredited institution.
- Must be appropriately credentialed for the program they will review.
- Must be in a program that is closely related to the same field or discipline.

It is not entirely prohibited from utilizing a previous External Reviewer from previous years, however it is only recommended to select a new external reviewer.

Note\*\*\*External Reviewers employed by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) \*\*\*

If an academic school confirms the arrival of a BIE employee as the External Reviewer of their program, they must contact the Office of Assessment and Accreditation immediately, for Federal guidelines and policies provide specified conditions under which BIE employees may serve in this capacity.

### *External Reviewer Funding Allocation*

Funding will be allocated from both the Office of Assessment and acquired school for the approved external evaluator. External Reviewers are to be compensated no more than \$250 honorarium for their services. With the new policies and schedule implemented in the APR Handbook, some cases may have a higher honorarium compensation if more than two External Reviewers are providing their services for more than one program being presented.

The school will be responsible for per diem, travel expenses, guesthouse fee, or hotel booking fee. Lastly, the School or the Office of Assessment will not be responsible for reimbursement for: internet usage, office services, room service, laundry service, or any other additional expense incurred at a hotel.

### *External Reviewer Process*

Below are the necessary steps needed to compete for the APR External Reviewer process.

1. Schools are responsible for nominating an external reviewer, they may formally do so, utilizing the nomination form (**Appendix ?**) that ensure the nominee meets all criteria and provides a short biography and vitae. The form must be completed with signatures from the following: program lead, school dean, assessment director and the provost.
2. Once the nominee is approved, they are provided with the external reviewer packet that includes: Diné College Engagement Agreement, blank W-9 and Direct Deposit form (if external reviewer choose this or payment in check form).

3. Schools must coordinate the external reviewers travel expenses: meal and mileage per diem in accordance with Diné College policies. Reservation of Dine Colleges guesthouse or hotel booking in Chinle or Window Rock for approved date(s).
4. The APR site visit agenda will be provided to APR evaluators including the external reviewer.

## OIPR Data Request

The OIPR Data Request is conducted through the Office of Assessment and Curriculum. The office makes a request 11-12 weeks prior to the APR Site Visit, it takes the Office of Institutional Planning and Reporting about 5 weeks to gather the requested data that will then be provided to the program 6 weeks prior to the site visit.

## The Self-Study

The Self-Study Report is a document intended to assess the quality and effectiveness of the degree program for faculty, students, and the institution. The document must contain a collection of evidence and information from faculty, students, staff, alumni, and any other central stakeholders to the academic program. The Self-Study includes many facets of the program under review including but not limited to: program descriptions, student learning, personnel, facilities, resources, and co-curricular activities.

Keep in mind that the Self-Study Report should be a comprehensive broad picture about the current status for the program. The Self-Study is not intended to be an exhaustive, in---depth investigative analysis about the School, its personnel, or specific student issues. For example, while the APR Criteria require Schools to report about the current status of student learning assessments, this does not mean that Schools are required to submit all of their annual assessment reports or artifacts as part of the Self-Study. However, Schools should have any evidentiary material or artifacts available in the event the APR Evaluation Team requests further documentation on any statements made in the Self-Study Report. The Schools are encouraged to use their current assessment report for program student learning outcomes.

In addition, all contributors to the Self-Study Report must adhere to the standards outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). [Please see pages 24-24 for FERPA Guidelines.](#)

[Academic Program Review Self-Study Template, Appendix](#)

## The Site Visit and APR Evaluation Team

Schools are required to present the findings of their Self---Study to an APR Evaluation Team, commonly referred to as the "Site---Visit". Generally, the Site---Visit will take the form of a presentation and facilities tour (if applicable) with the APR Evaluation Team. Site Visits are conducted in the spring term, March, April and May, usually lasting 3-4 hours per APR. [Please see pages 26-27, Academic Program Review Master Schedule.](#)

The APR Evaluation Team is tasked with evaluating the extent to which the degree program meets the approved criteria. Members of the APR Evaluation Team are expected to interact with institutional staff in a professional manner and must adhere to the standards outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The role of each member of the APR Evaluation Team is to serve as colleagues in the continuous improvement of the degree program. The APR Evaluation Team will consist of a representative from the following:

- Office of the President
- Office of the Provost for Academic Affairs
- Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs
- Office of External Campuses
- Office of the Vice President of Finance
- Registrar's Office
- School Deans
- Librarian
- Office of Institutional Planning and Reporting
- Director of Information Technology
- Director of Human Resources
- An External Reviewer, TBD

### Roles and Responsibilities of the Site Visit

Academic assessment is an institution-wide endeavor that involves students, faculty, administrators, and staff stakeholders. The role of each and the timeline for their contributions is detailed in the table below.

Who	When	What
School Deans/Program Lead	8 weeks prior to site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the external reviewer nomination form.</li> </ul>
Office of Assessment & Curriculum	40 Days prior to site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete facility request for the SUB Activity Room</li> <li>• Complete IT ticket for podium set up</li> <li>• Complete Audio/Microphone request to Student Wellness Center</li> <li>• Cafeteria lunch order for APR Evaluation Team (25-30 People)</li> </ul>
Office of Institutional Planning and Reporting	6 weeks prior to site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide each program with a profile from the last four academic years.</li> </ul>
Deans	4 weeks prior to site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodations for external reviewer, to include: guest house reservation OR hotel</li> </ul>

Who	When	What
		reservation two days maximum, travel per diem meals and personal vehicle mileage.
Office of Assessment & Curriculum	Day of APR Site Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate Meeting</li> <li>• Hand out evaluation worksheets at the start</li> <li>• Collect evaluation worksheets at the end</li> <li>• Provide external reviewer with wi-fi login</li> <li>• Sign-in sheet at the cafeteria</li> <li>• </li> </ul>

## Strategic Action Plan

The strategic action plan that identifies and prioritizes the areas of improvement, an analysis for strengths and weaknesses for said degree program including a fiscal outline accompanying the plan.

Upon completion of the Site-Visit, the School will review the APR Evaluation Team's documentation and create a Strategic Action Plan that identifies and prioritizes the areas of improvement, an analysis for strengths and weaknesses for said degree program including a fiscal outline accompanying the plan. The purpose of the Action Plan is to allow Schools an opportunity to explore ways in which to improve the degree academic program. Improving degree academic programs require a number of items be considered for the future, including modifications to cost and impact to instruction, resources, materials, and infrastructure.

It can become arduous reaching goals aimed at improving an academic program, therefore schools are encouraged to develop a calculated 4-year improvement plan that prioritizes ranked areas of improvement. The School is encouraged to make data-driven decisions from their self-study, carefully consider comments offered by the APR evaluation team, including the external reviewer. The Action Plan portion of the Self-Study in the APR Final Report Template is provided to schools to guide their program improving initiatives. Please see pages 33-39, for this portion.

## Executive Team Review

The Action Plan is presented to the provost council.

## Final Report

After a plan has been created and the School has come to a general consensus, they will combine the:

Self-Study Report,  
Evaluation Report  
External Reviewer Feedback

## Updates