

Academic Program Review Self-Study Guidelines

Purpose

Program development and improvement should result from a thorough assessment of a program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC). Program review is intended to assist the unit in the data-driven, decision-making processes. Also, it should present answers to the following questions.

- Are there areas of the program that exemplify the University mission and goals and serve as models for others?
- Does the program have a curriculum that is intellectually and creatively challenging?
- Does the program offer an opportunity for students to realize a high-quality education?
- Do faculty teaching, research, and service activities adequately sustain a vital, effective program?
- Are University resources sufficient to support continued delivery of the program?
- Are any existing programs and services no longer required at current levels?
- Which current programs and services need to be improved, and how can improvement be accomplished?
- Are any additional programs needed?

The value of the program review rests on its process, its outcomes, and its usefulness. Because the process and outcomes are developed to improve educational opportunities, curriculum quality, and program relevance, it is essential that the University make appropriate use of the results.

Participation

The Provost, Council of Academic Deans, Unit Heads, Graduate Dean (if appropriate), faculty, students in the program, and other key constituents (business, industry, or other representatives) have varying degrees of involvement in the process.

The results are reported to the President, Provost, Council of Academic Deans, and the unit, and are made available to all University offices involved in planning, assessment, and budgeting.

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Procedure

Department-level program review occurs according to a rotating schedule prepared by the Provost and Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources (“Executive Director”). The review consists of a self-study prepared by the unit and a site visit conducted by an external reviewer. The Director of Institutional Research serves as a resource for providing data.

1. A year before the scheduled site visit, the Executive Director and Institutional Research Director meet with members of the unit to discuss the process and expectations. The collection and use of data will be discussed during this time.
2. The unit completes the self-study by providing **General Information** and responding to a common set of **Core Items**, both found in this document. Both undergraduate and graduate programs (if applicable) are assessed during the same review period.
3. The Provost, Executive Director, and the Dean (Graduate Dean is included when appropriate) review the report. The Provost provides feedback to the unit and approval for the process to continue.
4. Using **Criteria for Selecting a Consultant**, the unit provides a list of potential consultants to conduct the external review. The Executive Director contacts these individuals to request curriculum vitas. The Provost reviews the names and CVs and selects the reviewer. This is a desirable aspect of program review, in that it provides an evaluation from recognized experts in the field, ensures objectivity, provides perspectives concerning the program’s relationship to the discipline, and lends credibility to the process.
5. Once the external reviewer is selected, the Executive Director assists the unit in coordinating the campus visit. The external reviewer conducts the review and then summarizes findings and provides recommendations in a written report. The Executive Director will share the report with the Provost, Dean, and unit head to review for accuracy.
6. The unit responds in writing to the external reviewer’s report. Individual faculty comments are invited and included in the unit response.
7. The President, Provost, Executive Director, appropriate dean(s), and unit head meet to review the unit’s response to the external reviewer’s report and determine an action plan in response to the findings.
8. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Human Resources and University Archives, located in Watson Library, keep a permanent record of the program review report and associated documents.
9. Final results are reported to the President. Also, these results are made available to University bodies involved in planning, assessment, and budgeting processes.

Academic Program Review Self-Study Guidelines

General Information

Unit

- College and/or Department
- Program Name(s), Degree(s), Major Code(s), Minor Code (if available)
- List of Concentrations
- Name of Program Coordinator, Department Head, and Dean
- History of Program – Provide any information you feel is valuable to this report.
 - Date when degree was first offered
 - Date when first degree was awarded
 - Last Academic Program Review: Date, findings, and recommendations

Faculty (include Current Year Roster)

- Degree/Credentials/Tenured Status
- Graduate Faculty Status
- Research
- Activities (Publication and Grants)
- Teaching
- Service
- Professional Development
- Tenure Policy, Practices, & Procedures (as described in the Faculty Handbook/unit requirements, if used)
- Faculty Counts, 5-year historical trend, disaggregated by:
 - Rank and Tenure; Terminal degree

Staff

- Staff count and position descriptions

Enrollment Management

- Recruiting Practices – 5-year study of Apply/Admit/Enroll, disaggregated by (1) Gender, (2) Race/Ethnicity, (4) Geographic location, (5) GPA, (6) ACT/SAT
- Retention/Persistence Strategies – disaggregated by student classification
- Enrollment and Graduation Trends and Projections

Program Curriculum

- Relationship to existing University mission and vision
- Degree plan as presented in University Catalog
- Provide rationale for required courses
- Provide rationale for sequence of courses
- Indicate areas where the program may be unique, exceptionally strong or weak compared to other programs of its kind
- Discuss how you assess the quality of your program

Academic Program Review Self-Study Guidelines

Degree Program Expected Learning Outcomes

- If both graduate and undergraduate programs are being reviewed, please differentiate between degrees.

Courses and Descriptions

- Provide a table including course number, course name, course description, mode of delivery, semesters offered, and last semester offered. Example:

| Course Number | Course Name | Course Description | Modes and Locations of Delivery | Semesters Offered | Last Semester Offered |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| HIST 1010 | Early World Civilization | See Catalog | Internet Natchitoches Leesville | FA, SP, SU | Fall 2022 |

SCH Production by Unit

- By faculty rank
- By student-faculty ratio
- By location and delivery method

Academic Program Review

Self-Study Guidelines

Core Items

The SWOC is an effective way to identify the *internal* Strengths and Weaknesses of a unit, as well as examining *external* Opportunities and Challenges faced by the unit from outside factors. Analyze each of the following bullet points using SWOC:

1. Students

- Demographics and Comparisons
- Advising Practices
- Assessment System - In what ways do you assess student performance?
- Academic Support for students needing remediation
- Financial Support/Scholarships
- Student Contributions/Awards/Achievements
- Satisfaction with Program - may use data from Student Evaluation of Course & Instructor, Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (request from the Director of Institutional Research)

2. Student Occupations/Opportunities

- Alumni Information/Survey
- Job Placement/Counseling
- Internships/Special Projects
- Further study and subsequent degrees
- Employer Survey
- Workforce Information (demands, competition)

3. Resources

- Equipment
- Facilities
- Library Holdings
- Student Support Services (Writing Lab, Math Lab, Tutoring, etc.)
- Student Organizations

4. Collaborations/Relationships

- Internal Academic Units
- Internal Non-Academic Units
- External to the University – include community service
- Administrative Support

5. Financial Information

- University funded support
- Salary Costs
- Operating Expenses

Academic Program Review Self-Study Guidelines

- Capital Expenses
- Endowed Chairs
- Endowed professorships
- External Grants
- Other External Funds
- Professional Development Expense

Criteria for Selecting a Consultant

An external consultant should have the following qualifications:

- Recognition and distinction in the discipline under review.
- Be from a distinguished program at another university outside of Louisiana.
- Recent administrative experience at a minimum of department chair.
- Rank of Associate Professor or higher.
- Experience at an institution with the same/similar programs as those being evaluated.
- Distinguished record in related research, teaching, and service.
- Published research and participation in national organizations in such roles as an officer or editorial board of major journals.
- Ability to undertake a site visit within the necessary time frame.
- Experience with program review, institutional effectiveness, or accreditation desirable, if not essential.