ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

SELF-STUDY GUIDELINE

The Academic Program Review is an improvement-oriented process that provides the department or teaching unit with an evidence-based approach to enhancing academic excellence. The following outline provides guidelines for the content and organization of the self-study document that will serve as the foundation for review. In some cases, not all questions will apply to a unit. Questions regarding the applicability of any portion of this self-study outline should be directed to the Dean of Faculty by the unit chair during the initial planning meetings. The self-study should cover the period since the most recent self-study the unit has completed. If this is the unit's first self-study, the document should cover at least the last seven but no more than ten years. If the program is less than seven years old, the self-study should extend back to the program's start.

The self-study process should seek participation and incorporate input from representatives of all the unit's constituencies, including faculty, staff, students, and advisory groups, as appropriate. The self-study report should be factual and explicit, with the narrative presented in a single document written in one voice. The self-study should objectively examine the unit's strengths and weaknesses and discuss what steps the unit is taking to address the weaknesses. Self-studies are both backward and forward looking. The self-study describes, analyzes, and reflects on the work of the unit to date, but it also provides an opportunity for the unit to use this analysis to inform its plans for the future. The most effective self-study narrative integrates a variety of data and other evidence as part of its analysis. OIRA will assist the unit in providing data and working with units in the analysis of data and other information, as needed.

Key to the review are the mission and goals of the unit itself. These are what will drive the evaluation. The self-study is an opportunity for faculty to reflect on how well they are meeting their own expectations and quality standards. It will engage them in a collective discussion of priorities. It will help units identify areas where they would like more support.

All units on campus have tremendous strengths and areas where they can improve. Rather than approaching the self-study with the goal of proving excellence to satisfy accountability requirements, the best self-studies will model a culture of honest reflection in the service of advancing academic excellence as measured by the program's own mission and goals.

1. **Academic Program Overview**
   a. Describe the unit's mission and vision. Address how these fit within the School and University's mission and strategic plans. The reviewers will use your description of the mission and vision to guide their evaluation, so please provide sufficient information to help guide their work.
   b. Identify 2-4 units/departments that you consider peers or aspirational. Describe why these units were chosen. These departments can be used throughout the self-study for comparison.

c. Provide a brief overview of the current state of the academic field or discipline and how this unit is positioned relative to this. Include in this discussion information on the degrees and programs offered by the unit (including interdisciplinary programs), noting any programs that have been added or discontinued in the last seven years. What features of the unit position it favorably? What challenges does the unit face, as it relates to the current state of the field? If applicable, please include an examination of what makes the unit distinctive among its peers.

d. Describe the unit's efforts towards the University's inclusive excellence goals. Describe the unit's valuing of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and how these values are manifested. Describe any recent initiatives or changes related to diversity, equity, and inclusion undertaken in the last three years and how their success is being measured. Remember to consider efforts that impact any or all of the unit's constituent groups (students, faculty, staff).

e. Describe the quality of the unit's intellectual environment, and the unit's efforts outside of the classroom to promote a vibrant academic culture. Be sure to address availability of workshops, lectures, performances hosted by the unit, and related undergraduate and graduate organizations associated with the unit, if any. What goals does the unit have for enhancing the intellectual environment?

f. Describe the unit's governance processes, including how the unit is organized to advance teaching, learning, research and service. What committees or working groups has it formed? How does it ensure that faculty contribute to major initiatives such as curriculum development, student advising, assessment of student learning, faculty mentoring, and other important initiatives? To what extent does the organizational structure work and how might it be improved?

g. Discuss any centers or institutes associated with the unit (if any) and their alignment with the unit's, school's, and university's mission and goals.

h. Identify up to three recommendations related to the overall unit that do not require new resources from central administration.

2. **Faculty**
a. Provide a list of the current tenured, tenure-track, term, and adjunct faculty in the unit; their rank; time in rank; and hire date. Provide statistics on the department's faculty by gender and by race/ethnicity. How does faculty composition compare to peer or aspirational institutions?

b. Faculty Recruiting/Retention: Using specific examples from recent recruitment and retention efforts, articulate how diversity, equity, and inclusion practices are embedded in the recruitment and appointment of faculty, the provision of faculty support and development, and faculty retention efforts. To what extent does the unit attract a diverse pool of candidates? To what extent does the unit hire first choice candidates? How well does it retain faculty? What are the biggest opportunities and challenges you face in the area of recruitment and retention?

c. Evaluate the overall faculty member experience, including any insights you have gained from faculty surveys, committee work, or other information collected on the faculty experience. How has the unit used this information to address faculty needs?

d. Identify up to three recommendations related to faculty that do not require new resources from central administration.

3. **Scholarship and Creative Activity**
   a. Provide a summary of faculty scholarly and creative activity over the past seven years.
   b. Evaluate the stature and reputation of the faculty as a whole, with an emphasis on achievement in the past seven years. Using the aspirational and peer schools that you've identified, include comparative information, where available. For scholarship, this includes per faculty publications, citations, grants, awards, and other international, national, or regional recognition. For units where scholarship is measured in ways other than publications, articulate the standards for success used in the field and provide seven years of evidence for those standards.
   c. Describe faculty contributions to interdisciplinary scholarship, teaching, and other projects in partnership with other AU units, including the Library, and/or outside entities.
   d. Identify specific goals or metrics with regards to scholarship and creative activity that the unit would like to achieve in the next 3-7 years, and the extent to which the unit is currently meeting the goals.

4. **Service and Professional Activities**
   a. Describe the unit's contributions to school/college and university committees, and any other service provided to the university community over the last seven years. In what ways does the unit support faculty who volunteer or serve?
   b. In what other ways do faculty contribute to service or professional activities not already mentioned in other answers?
   c. Identify up to 3 recommendations related to service and professional activities that do not require new resources.

5. **Educational Programs – Undergraduate Education** (if applicable)
   a. Review and reaffirm or revise (as appropriate) each undergraduate program's learning outcomes. (This can be completed within two years of the program review.) Describe how the external trends in the field, career opportunities, unit and university mission, and the goals of the unit are reflected in the learning outcomes. Submit an updated assessment plan for each undergraduate degree program.
   b. Evaluate foci and quality of the undergraduate curriculum. Include information on significant changes to curriculum over the last seven years and how the curriculum advances the learning outcomes of the unit's academic programs (majors, minors, and certificates), Core Program, and other university needs.

c. Describe the impetus for curriculum changes, including how assessments and changes in the field have driven change. Identify areas of the curriculum where there are opportunities for improvement and offer recommendations for how this might be achieved. Attach a copy of the latest assessment report submitted to the Senate Committee on Learning Assessment. (COLA).

d. Provide information on the unit's distinctive undergraduate learning opportunities (such as Honors in the major, community-based learning experiences, education abroad, internships), including the strengths of these offerings, and the opportunities for improvement.

e. Provide information on the unit's contributions to Core, University College, University Honors, and interdisciplinary programs. How does the unit's contributions outside the major strengthen the undergraduate academic experience?

f. Evaluate the overall undergraduate experience, including any insights you have gained from university and unit student surveys (such as NSSE, Campus Climate, and the Graduation Census provided adequate survey response rates are achieved - please see OIRA for guidance), student focus groups, or unit resources. How has the department used this information to make improvements?

g. Provide an analysis of the degree to which program and learning outcomes are being met. This can include evidence gathered as part of the learning outcomes and assessment process as well as employer feedback, alumni surveys, We Know Success career/graduate school data, and graduation rates. Include any measures of success you deem appropriate. In areas where the unit would like to see improvement, provide recommendations for how this might be achieved.

h. Describe how faculty are involved in academic advising and mentoring of undergraduate students. Consider both formal and informal advising and mentoring, as well as the collaboration or interplay between the advising team and faculty as it relates to advising and mentoring.

i. Provide a seven-year summary of enrollment by undergraduate program. Address enrollment trends, including increases or decreases in majors and minors over the last seven years and the strategies the unit has for developing demand for the major(s).

j. Address innovations in learning modalities, generally.

k. For 2021-2025 program reviews: Discuss how the unit pivoted in response to the global pandemic beginning in spring 2020. What were the unit's guiding principles for any pedagogical, technological, or other changes? Describe any significant lessons learned from this experience.

l. Optional: Report undergraduate student distinctions – awards, external fellowships, prizes, publications, creative works, etc.

m. Identify up to three recommendations related to undergraduate educational programs that do not require new resources from central administration.

6. **Educational Programs – Graduate Education** (if applicable)
    a. Review and reaffirm or revise (as appropriate) each graduate program's learning outcomes. (This can be completed within two years of the program review.) Describe how the external trends in the field, career opportunities, unit and university missions, and the goals of the unit are reflected in the learning outcomes. Submit an updated assessment plan for each graduate degree program.
    b. Evaluate foci and quality of the graduate curriculum and areas of distinction in the academic field. Include information on significant curricular changes over the past seven years and how the curriculum advances the learning outcomes and program goals for the unit's academic programs. Describe the impetus for curriculum changes, including how assessment and changes in the field have driven change. Identify areas of the curriculum where there are opportunities for improvement and offer recommendations for how this might be achieved. Attach a copy of the latest assessment report submitted to the Senate Committee on Learning Assessment (COLA).
    c. Evaluate the unit's recruitment of graduate students, including number of applications and percentage of applicants accepted and enrolled. Describe trends or significant changes in the last seven years. Address increases or decreases in majors and minors over the last seven years and the strategies the unit has for developing demand for the major.
    d. Evaluate the overall graduate student experience, including any insights you have gained from student surveys (such as the Campus Climate, and the Graduation Census provided adequate survey response rates are achieved - please see OIRA for guidance), student focus groups, student learning assessment data, or unit resources. Describe how you have used results to improve the student experience.
    e. Describe how faculty are involved in academic advising and mentoring of graduate students. Consider both formal and informal advising and mentoring, and (if applicable) the collaboration or interplay between the advising team and faculty as it relates to advising and mentoring. Evaluate data on progression, graduation rates, attrition, and time to degree.
    f. Provide an analysis of the degree to which graduate program goals and learning outcomes are being met. This can include evidence gathered as part of the learning outcomes and assessment process as well as employer feedback, alumni surveys, We Know Success career/graduate school data, and graduation rates. Include any measures of success you deem appropriate. In areas where the unit would like to see improvement, provide recommendations for how this might be achieved.
    g. Report graduate student distinctions – awards, external fellowships, prizes, publications, creative works, etc.
    h. Address innovations in learning modalities, generally.
    i. Discuss how the unit pivoted in response to the global pandemic beginning in spring 2020. What were the unit's guiding principles for any pedagogical,

technological, or other changes? Describe any significant lessons learned from this experience.

    j. Address how the unit assesses student learning outcomes and uses this information in curricular development and revision.

    k. Identify up to three recommendations related to graduate educational programs that do not require new resources from central administration.

7. **Facilities and Staff**

    a. Assess the strengths and adequacy of the unit's physical resources, including labs, studios, offices, and meeting spaces.

    b. Discuss the strengths and adequacy of the professional and support staff.

    c. Identify up to three recommendations related to facilities, staff, and administration that do not require new resources from central administration.

8. **Summary and Future Directions**

    a. Using the analysis developed in the self-study above and drawing on comparisons with aspirational schools and peers, address the following:

    b. In summary, provide the overall self-assessment of the academic and/or teaching unit. Include the existing strengths, challenges, and weaknesses. What are the opportunities to enhance existing strengths and build on academic excellence? What are the unit's aspirations and ambitions?

    c. Summarize how the unit is positioned within the future direction of the academic field or discipline.

    d. Articulate what existing school-based resources might be reallocated to build on existing strengths? Identify improvements that would require additional resources from central administration.

    e. Thinking about what you have learned from this self-study, articulate 1-2 goals that the unit will undertake to improve some feature of the unit's operation. These should be achievable within the next 5-6 years and require little or modest resources. Explain: why did you select these goals? How does the unit propose it will achieve them? How will the unit measure progress towards these goals (e.g. benchmarks along the way)? How will the unit determine if it has or has not met this/these goals? (Note: goals do not need to follow on from the goals set in prior review; the unit can shift focus to unrelated goals for the next 5-6 years.)

    f. (Optional) Are there other important questions that you would like the external review committee to consider?

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