ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

Purpose

The purpose of academic program review (APR) is to improve degree programs through a systematic, cyclical review process that is meaningful and contributes to the overall quality of departments and the university.

The information gathered throughout the process provides critical internal data about the size and stability of a program, current and future resource needs, market demand, equipment and space needs, strengths and weaknesses, and how the program contributes to the mission of the institution. From an external perspective, the assessment results provide a mechanism for demonstrating accountability and assist in efforts to garner financial, philosophical, and political support.

APR is also an essential component in demonstrating the university’s compliance with SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges) accreditation standards including the following:

Core Requirement 7.1. The institution engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that (a) focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and (b) incorporate a systemic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. (Institutional Planning)

8.2.a The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results...[for its] student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.

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

Process

The program review process is based on a seven-year cycle or, whenever possible, conducted in conjunction with other timely reviews by discipline-specific accrediting agencies or the Louisiana Board of Regents. Units are responsible for notifying the Office of Institutional Effectiveness of such reviews and providing information to the University Review and Assessment Council (URAC) for determination as to whether the process can be coordinated.

Among the individuals and groups involved in the process are the following:

- Executive Vice President and Provost or the provost’s representative;
- Associate Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness;
• the appropriate dean;
• the department/unit chair and faculty;
• departmental staff, as appropriate;
• undergraduate and/or graduate students in the program;
• an external reviewer(s);
• an internal review panel;
• and other key constituents, as appropriate.

The results are reported to the executive vice president and provost, deans, directors/chairs and unit’s faculty. The reports also may be made available to university committees involved in the planning, assessment, and budgeting processes.

Self-Study Report. Units must prepare a self-study report that addresses the following components: accomplishments since the last program review; listing of awards; faculty or staff information; student information; assessment and curriculum or program changes; teaching enhancements, if applicable; research productivity, if applicable; engagement and partnerships; challenges/barriers; and a strategic plan. Accompanying appendices include: most recent strategic plan; strategic planning annual reports (SPAR) since last program review; annual assessments of learning outcomes report (for academic units); and action plan (formerly memorandum of agreement) from the last program review. Department chairs should ensure faculty input in the development of the report.

External Reviewers. Input from external reviewers is a critical aspect of program review, because it provides an evaluative opinion from recognized experts in the field, ensures objectivity, helps provide perspectives concerning the program’s relationship to the discipline, and lends credibility to the process. Units must provide the names of at least five proposed external reviewers in rank order (with “1” as the unit’s top choice), approved by the dean, from peer or similar institutions. The units should also provide contact information and a brief rationale stating the significance of each reviewer’s potential contribution to the review process. The list of external reviewers is reviewed and approved by URAC. The external reviewer provides a report based on the unit’s self-study report.

Internal Panels. Program review internal panels are selected for each academic program reviewed. The panel serves as a subcommittee of the URAC. Members of the panel are recommended by the deans and approved by the Council with the concurrence of the executive vice president and provost or the provost’s representative.

The panels are responsible for carrying out the program review and for making recommendations to the executive vice president and provost in a formal report. This review consists of the following:
• an examination of the unit’s self-study report and accompanying materials and the external reviewer’s report;
• a tour of facilities, when appropriate;
• meetings with the unit’s administration, faculty, staff, and students;
• an exit meeting with the unit’s department chair, dean, the associate vice provost for institutional effectiveness, and the executive vice president and provost or the provost’s representative; and
• a final, 10-page report outlining the panel’s findings and recommendations.

Each panel evaluating academic programs is chaired by an experienced senior faculty member who is not in the same unit as the program to be reviewed. An additional two faculty members are asked to serve, and where possible one of the two is from the college of the unit and one of the two is from outside the college of the unit. At least one of the panel members must have graduate faculty status for review of academic units with graduate programs.

**Action Plans.** The program review process concludes with an action plan, comprised of recommendations based on the internal panel and external reviewer’s reports, proposed actions by the responding unit with input from the faculty, and a timeline for completing those actions. Progress toward accomplishing the action plan is documented in the units’ Strategic Planning Annual Report (SPAR) and considered in the units’ next program review.

**External Specialized Accreditation.** A review by an external accrediting agency may be substituted for the internal review process if the external review includes an on-site visit and sufficiently addresses the primary required elements of the university’s self-study report. Colleges/departments must provide the on-site visit report and all relevant correspondence to and from the external accreditor with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Upon review of the materials attained from the external review, the college/department will be notified if supplemental documentation is needed to fulfill the university’s requirements. An action plan will be developed based on the findings of the external accrediting agency and any supplemental information, as needed. Departments will provide action plan updates in the Strategic Plan Annual Report (SPAR). The status updates should clearly document the steps taken to implement the action plan, including use of relevant data for seeking improvement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>September 21, 2018</td>
<td>Departments submit to Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) five names of potential external reviewers (in rank order, with 1 being their top choice).</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 9, 2018</td>
<td>Departments submit Self-Study Report; OIE to finalize external reviewers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 25, 2019</td>
<td>External reviewers' reports due. Provide reports to internal panels, department chairs, and deans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1 – March 15, 2019</td>
<td>Internal panel review to include: interviews with the dean, department chair, faculty, and students. Exit interview with dean, chair, and OIE to provide preliminary findings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1, 2019</td>
<td>Panel Reports due to OIE. OIE to send panel reports and draft of action plan to departments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 26, 2019</td>
<td>Departments submit responses to Action Plan to OIE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 26 – May 17, 2019</td>
<td>Draft and then sign final Action Plan.</td>
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UNIVERSITY REVIEW & ASSESSMENT COUNCIL (URAC)
MEMBERSHIP LIST

Three-year terms of appointment, with approximately 1/3 rotating off each year. Terms end at the start of fall semester each year. (*Indicates when membership term expires.*)

Representatives from Colleges/Academic Units
(1 from each College; must hold faculty rank; at least 1 representative is also a faculty member in the Honors College.)

- Agriculture – TBD (2021)
- Art & Design – TBD (2021)
- Coast & Environment – John White (Oceanography) (2020)
- Engineering – Greg Griffin (Chemical Engineering) (2019)
- Honors College – TBD (2020)
- Humanities & Social Sciences – TBD (2021)
- Law Center – Melissa “Missy” Lonegrass (2019)
- LSU Libraries – Lois Kuyper-Rushing (2021)
- Science – Milen Yakimov (Mathematics) (2019)
- Veterinary Medicine – Rhonda Cardin (2019)

Representatives for Support Divisions/Units
(1 from each of the following divisions)

- Academic Affairs – Clay Benton (University Registrar) (2020)
- Athletics – TBD (Faculty Athletic Representative) (2021)
- Communications & University Relations – TBD (2021)
- Finance & Administrative Services – Bernie Braun (2020)
- Information Technology Services – TBD (Executive Director) (2021)
- Research & Economic Development – Stephen Beck (Associate Vice President) (2019)
- Strategic Initiatives – TBD (2021)
- Student Life – Laurie Braden (Executive Director, University Recreation) (2019)

Ex-officio (Non-voting)

- Sandi Gillilan, Associate Vice Provost, Institutional Effectiveness & Chair
- Stephenie Franks, Assistant Director, Institutional Effectiveness
- TBD, Director of Assessment, Institutional Effectiveness
SELF-STUDY TEMPLATE

Department Name
College/School
Program Review
201X – 201X
Date of Report Submission

Department Chair:
Contact Information:
  o Email:
  o Phone:

Executive Summary
A one-page presentation of major accomplishments and challenges since last program review.

Program Review Report
- **Accomplishments** since last program review, organized about strategic plan goals. Also indicate how the recommendations from the last Memorandum of Agreement have been addressed.
- **Listing of faculty/staff/student awards and recognitions** indicating award, organization presenting award, and date.
- **Faculty Information**. Indicate number, diversity, and teaching loads of faculty (rank, tenured/tenure-track, instructors) over the last five years. List departed, replacement, and new faculty, indicating rank, when departed or started, and area of specialization.
- **Student Information**. For the last five years, indicate enrollment including number and diversity of students per year for each program; retention and graduation rates for native and transfer students; degrees granted; and departmental SCHs for lower division, upper division, and graduate courses.
- **Assessment and Curriculum Changes**. Summarize the last five years of assessments of student learning reports. Indicate addition/deletion/revisions to courses and/or curriculum; when changes were implemented; and whether any changes are planned or in review. (How do curriculum changes address concerns identified from assessing student learning outcomes?) If department offers online degree programs, compare student learning outcome performances from the online program to that of its counterpart on-campus, face-to-face program.
- **Teaching Enhancements**. For the last five years, list innovative methods; service-learning and/or CxC courses including sections/students; and/or distance education courses (i.e., 50% or more of course delivered via distance).
- In accordance with **Policy Statement 42: Student Fees** (Part III(D)), provide the following information regarding any course/program fee(s) assessed for any courses in the degree program:
  - the purpose of the course/program fee and what supplies/services it provides for students;
  - course fee amount(s) and how much has been collected and expended in the last three fiscal years;
- any significant carryforward revenue balances and, if any, the rationale of why the fee should not be reduced (see Part III(B)(2), p. 4); and
  - how the fee is advertised to students (see Part III(B)(2), p. 4).

- **Research Productivity.** For the last five years, list total number of refereed journal articles, technical/research reports, books, research presentations, number of faculty grants and contracts awarded*, and total restricted expenditures* from sponsored programs (organized by source of funding) per year. [Note: Count co-authored publications and presentations by faculty within department only once.]

- **Engagement and Partnerships.** List engagement/outreach activities, ongoing and new partnerships, and/or funding commitments (expenditures or income). [Note: Do not include service learning linked to courses.]

- **Challenges/barriers** experienced in the last five years and actions taken/planned to address each.

- **Strategic Action Plan.** Indicate priorities related to strategic plan to be implemented over the next two years.

- **Self-study Development.** It is strongly encouraged to engage a wide representation of faculty members to contribute to the development and review of the self-study. Indicate the process undertaken to develop the report.

* These required data sets are available in the Departmental Metrics sheet prepared and distributed by Budget and Planning each fall semester. Include this sheet in the self-study report as a separate table. Discuss the data but it is not necessary to reproduce the tables from the Departmental Metrics sheet.

**Appendix**

- **TaskStream Resources.** The following documents are included in TaskStream and will be used by the External Reviewer and Internal Review Panel. [*Institutional Effectiveness will grant access to the external reviewer and internal panel.*]
  - Strategic Plan (Current plan)
  - Strategic Planning Annual Reports (SPAR)
  - Annual Assessment of Learning Outcomes Reports
  - Memorandum of Agreement/Action Plan from last Program Review
EXTERNAL REVIEWER’S GUIDELINES

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an external evaluator for an academic department at Louisiana State University (LSU). The information provided by the external reviewer will be used by the University Review and Assessment Council, an internal faculty panel, the provost, dean, and department chair to help improve the quality of programs in teaching, research, and service. The reviewer will receive the department’s self-study. Additionally, the reviewer will be granted access to the department’s documents in TaskStream, which include the following:

- Department’s Strategic Plan
- Strategic Planning Annual Reports (SPAR)
- Annual Assessment of Learning Outcomes Reports
- Action Plan from last program review

In reviewing and evaluating the degree programs, the reviewer is also encouraged to review material presented on the departmental and college webpages at www.lsu.edu. If additional information is needed to provide an effective and meaningful review, please contact Stephenie Franks (sfrank4@lsu.edu), Assistant Director for Institutional Effectiveness.

Attached to this document is an outline for the external reviewer to use in preparing the evaluation. Please include the major categories in your report and address the specific questions, as appropriate, within each category. If other issues or concerns are identified during the review, please note those in the corresponding categories or as a separate entry.

Finally, a conference call(s) will be scheduled with the internal review panel to discuss your report and/or any other related questions. The purpose of this call is to provide an opportunity for the internal review panel to gain insight into discipline-specific issues about which you would be most knowledgeable.
EXTERNAL REVIEW FOR EVALUATION OF AN ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT

Department Name
College/School
Program Review
201X – 201X
Date of Report Submission

Prepared by: (Name, Institution)

Date of Submission:

External Reviewer’s Summary – Please provide a short (one-page) statement that identifies the major strengths and challenges for the department’s teaching, research, and service programs. Indicate two or three major recommendations that are included in the full report.

Major Categories for the Evaluation:

- **Accomplishments.**
  - Did the department indicate how the recommendations from the last Memorandum of Agreement were addressed?
  - Did the department provide evidence that it was successful in using the recommendations to make improvements?

- **Listing of faculty/staff/student awards and recognitions.**
  - Are the faculty recognized by associations or societies for their contributions to their disciplines?
  - Does the department’s faculty receive recognition on campus (department, college, university awards)?
  - Do the department’s students receive recognition from associations or societies?
  - Do staff members also appear to receive appropriate recognition?

- **Faculty Information.**
  - Does the department have appropriate faculty to support its areas of specialization in the degree programs and research areas?
  - Compared to other similar academic departments, is the number and diversity of faculty consistent with, below expected or better than expected?
  - Has the department been successful in replacing departed faculty or filling vacant faculty lines?

- **Student Information.**
  - Has the department made progress in increasing student diversity in the undergraduate and graduate programs?
  - Has the department improved retention and graduation rates for native and transfer students?
  - Is enrollment sufficient to justify continued offering of the program?
  - If there are any anticipated changes in program size, are they justified?
Based on undergraduate and graduate enrollment, which programs have capacity to increase enrollment and graduation rates?
Is there an appropriate placement record for the program? Is there a mechanism for tracking placement of graduates?

**Assessment and Curriculum Changes.**
- Do the assessment reports provide meaningful and useful analyses of student learning?
- If the department offers online degree programs, does the department provide evidence of assessing the student learning outcomes for the program? Are comparative analyses provided to examine the learning outcomes from the online program to its counterpart in the traditional face-to-face program?
- Has the department used the annual assessment reports improve their undergraduate and graduate programs?
- What suggestions can be offered to improve the assessment of student learning or the use of the assessment data used by the department?
- Does the department provide service/general education courses? If so, how well do the courses achieve the learning competencies for the general education curriculum?
- Are there other curricula offerings that the department should consider to pursue?

**Teaching Enhancements.**
- What are the noteworthy innovations in teaching and learning that have been adopted by the department?
- Should the department consider initiating or expanding distance education courses or programs (distance education programs are those for which 50% or more of course work is delivered via distance).

**Research Productivity.**
- For similar academic disciplines, is the number of publications per faculty member acceptable, below expectations, or outstanding?
- For similar academic disciplines, are the number of faculty grants and contracts awarded, and total restricted expenditures from sponsored programs (organized by source of funding) per year acceptable, below expectations, or outstanding?
- What suggestions can be offered for improving faculty productivity in terms to research and grants?

**Engagement and Partnerships.** [Note: This does not include service learning linked to courses.]
- Is the level of engagement similar to, below, or greater than that for departments with similar academic programs?
- Is the level of partnerships similar to, below, or greater than that for departments with similar academic programs?
- Has the department developed new or expanded existing partnerships?
- Do the partnerships contribute to the mission/vision of the department? Do they provide additional revenue streams to support the department’s teaching and research?

**Challenges/Barriers.**
- Has the department provided an analytical statement of the challenges and barriers experienced in the last five years?
- Has the department identified meaningful and realistic actions to take to address the challenges and barriers?
- Are current facilities and capital equipment sufficient for program needs?
- Are there other actions that the department should consider in addressing the challenges and barriers?

**Strategic Plan & Strategic Planning Annual Reports.**
- Are the Strategic Plan and Strategic Planning Annual Reports, as presented in TaskStream, complete?
- Does the department’s strategic plan contribute to the goals of the University Strategic Plan?
- Has the department indicated priorities to be implemented in the coming years in the most recent strategic planning report?
- Are there other actions that should be adopted as priorities by the department?

**Recommendations for Improvement of Academic Teaching, Research, and Service Programs.**
- Based on your review and evaluation of the teaching, research, and service programs in the department provide specific recommendations that would improve these programs if adopted by the administration and faculty at LSU. Please consider and organize your recommendations into two broad categories: Revenue Demanding Recommendations; and Revenue Neutral Recommendations. These should be concise statements (it’s not necessary to elaborate the recommendation because it should be based on information provided in the report). For example, in this section each recommendation could be a focused, one-sentence statement (e.g., “It is recommended that...”).
INTERNAL PANEL REPORT TEMPLATE

Name of Department

Date of Report

List names and departments of review team members

Narrative:

A. **INTRODUCTION:** Short introductory paragraph – indicate resources reviewed and individuals or groups interviewed and dates of those interviews.

B. **PROGRAM STRENGTHS:** Identify strengths of the department/program (consider faculty, students, staff, administrators, diversity, courses/curricula, student learning outcomes* and programs of teaching, research and service, and facilities).

   o For departments with online degree programs, the self-study should include an assessment of student learning outcomes report for the online program and a comparison with its counterpart program comparable learning in the online program. Please discuss as a strength or weakness whether the online program is achieving the expected learning outcomes.

C. **PROGRAM CHALLENGES:** Identify challenges facing the department/program (consider all of the above as appropriate).

D. **RECOMMENDATIONS:** Provide recommendations to resolve the challenges and/or to strengthen the department/program. Each recommendation should be a focused, concise (i.e., one-sentence) statement (e.g., “It is recommended that…”).

The report should specifically address the external reviewer’s report and/or recommendations. A conference call with the external reviewer will be scheduled prior to your on-site review. A follow-up conference call with the reviewer may also be scheduled, if needed.

*The report should be double-spaced and limited to 10 pages.* In the first page header, include date of report and in subsequent headers include date of report and name of department. Insert the page number at the bottom, center of all pages.
This Action Plan brings closure to the program review process. This plan identifies recommendations for action that were noted by the most recent program review panel for your unit. Please respond to each item below. Your responses should provide additional information to clarify the situation and/or propose specific actions that the unit will take to address the recommendation. When proposing a specific action, please indicate a timeline for implementation and completion of the proposed action. Once finalized, the unit should incorporate the recommendations into its strategic planning and provide summary progress each year in the unit’s annual report.

**Recommendation 1.**

**Action Item:**

**Timeline for Completion:**

**Recommendation 2:**

**Action Item:**

**Timeline for Completion:**

*(Continues until all Action Plan recommendations are included.)*

We, the undersigned, have read and agree with this Plan of Action.

_____________________________________________  _________
Executive Vice President & Provost    Date

_____________________________________________  _________
Dean, College of ***      Date

_____________________________________________  _________
Chair, Department of ***     Date