

# PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

## Attendance at Program Review Workshop (Spring prior to Review Year)

Each spring the Provost's Associate's Office hosts a preparatory workshop for programs undergoing review in the next two academic years. This workshop is mandatory for programs coming up for review in the following fall, and strongly recommended for programs coming up for review in the subsequent fall. Prior to attending the workshop, the program chair or unit director should convene a program review team and notify the Provost's Associate's Office of the team's composition. These individuals as well as administrative staff will be invited to attend the workshop.

## Data Gathering and Analysis (Spring and Summer prior to Review Year)

Programs preparing for review should review their student learning outcomes assessment plan and determine what data needs to be collected to present a good overview of student achievement. Because this may require data from both spring and fall courses, it is best to launch the student outcome data collection phase of the self-study immediately after the program review workshop and continue it into the following fall. IMPROVE reports of program outcomes may be used as appendices to document student learning assessment, but a narrative analysis of what the data means and how it has been used to improve student learning should be provided in the body of the self-study document.

Other data gathering instruments, such as alumni and employer surveys or focus groups, may be carried out over the spring, summer or fall, depending on the nature of the field and the program personnel. It is strongly recommended that different portions of the self-study (peer comparisons, workforce needs, SWOT analysis, program quality, etc) be assigned point persons from the review committee, to ensure that all needed data is gathered in preparation for the fall writing phase.

## Selection of External Evaluators (Fall of Review Year)

The purpose of an external review is to garner additional perspectives on program strengths and weaknesses from individuals in the field or a closely related field who are affiliated with other institutions. Except under special circumstances, external evaluations are done for every review and should come from outside the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. It is standard practice that external evaluators are drawn from a university of similar or greater Carnegie Foundation rank to IUP (i.e., Doctoral Research University). Programs must disclose any affiliations that any members of the program might have with the proposed reviewers, and avoid potential conflicts of interest, such as joint publications, personal friendships, etc.

**The modality of the campus visit (face-to-face or virtual) may be chosen by the program based on needs and on the logistics of flying in an external evaluator. College deans should be consulted to make sure virtual visits are acceptable.**

Additional IUP guidelines state that external reviewers may be 1) from a peer institution, 2) from an aspirational institution, or 3) a person who is outstanding in the field of study and has had administrative level experience. It is strongly recommended that programs choose a reviewer who comes from a different category (1,2 or 3) than the external evaluator who assisted with their previous five-year review. Under no circumstances should the same external evaluator be used in two consecutive reviews.

The names and CVs of three proposed external reviewers that meet the above qualifications should be submitted to the College Dean and Provost's Associate as e-mail attachments by Sept 30 of the review year. The program can choose to submit these names in a ranked list, and may also provide an explanation for these rankings.

The Provost and College Dean will assess the qualifications of the proposed reviewers and determine which of them, if any, are acceptable. If none is deemed acceptable, then the program will be asked to submit additional names. The Provost will make the final decision on which reviewer is selected. The Provost's Associate will notify the College Dean and program chair or director by October 20 of the selection. The program is then responsible for notifying the reviewers of his/her selection, and also for notifying those not selected.

**Please note that a significant delay in submitting names for potential external reviewers on the part of the program may result in delay or postponement of the program review and/or a reduction of divisional travel reimbursement for the campus visit.**

A nominal amount of funding is available from the Provost's Office to support travel arrangements for one external reviewer, pending timely completion of the self-study. Additional support from the college and/or department can be used if additional reviewers are desired by the program or college (for example, two very different programs are up for review) but the names and CVs of these reviewers must also be submitted to the Dean and Provost's Associate's Office for approval. For more information on funding, consult the "External Evaluator Site Visit Process" document at the Academic Affairs website (<https://www.iup.edu/academicaffairs/accreditation/program-review/>).

#### Creation of Draft Self-Study (Fall of Review Year)

To develop the draft of the self-study document, the review team should first select the appropriate template from the two available State System-designed summary forms. Both can be downloaded from the Program Review area of the Academic Affairs website (<https://www.iup.edu/academicaffairs/accreditation/program-review/>). The first template, the "Academic Program Review Summary Form," should be used for academic program reviews while the second template, the "Academic and Student-Support Program Review Summary Form." should be used by non-degree granting units (e.g. Library, Registrar, Office of International Education). Note that the final program review will consist of two parts: 1) the program review itself (which uses the appropriate template as its outline) and 2) any appendices or supporting documents.

For the self-study draft, all areas of the template should be filled out in narrative form except for the “Comments” section (Section VII or IX depending on the template selected). The comments section will house the external reviewer’s report and any response from the program (optional) in the final version of the report. Data for programs will be made available in early Fall through either the Office of the Associate Vice President for Academic Administration or the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment. Programs will be notified by the Office of Academic Programs and planning when the data is ready.

If more than one program is being reviewed together (for example, both the BS and PhD in a single department), each one can follow the program template individually. However, multiple narrative summaries must be combined into a single document before submission to the College Dean and Provost’s Associate. A unified table of contents and single set of appendices is strongly preferred for readability and ease of reference.

### Submission of the Draft Self-Study (Fall/Spring of Review Year)

The draft program review can be submitted (in whole or in part) for preliminary review by the Provost’s Associate at any time during the fall writing phase. Preliminary reviews are informal, non-judgmental, and focus mainly on making sure the program has gathered appropriate evidence and is following the state-required template correctly. Preliminary review by the Provost’s Associate is not required part of the self-study process and can be skipped if desired.

A complete first draft of the self-study must be submitted by the program to the College Dean no later than **December 30**. This will allow the Dean the opportunity to provide feedback and suggest edits. After approving the revised self-study, the College Dean will submit a signed hard-copy and an electronic copy to the Office of Academic Programs and Planning by **January 31**. In general, best practice dictates that deans and programs are in contact throughout the fall semester about the progress on the program review in order to avoid unwanted delays in the process.

### Provost’s Office Review of Draft Self-Study (Spring of Review Year)

An internal Provost’s Office review committee will review each self-study document for level of coverage and depth before the program sends it to external reviewers. Normally a response will be sent to the program on or before February 28. The Provost, in consultation with the College Dean and review committee, will recommend one of the following:

- Acceptance without revision to the self-study document,
- Acceptance with minor revisions to the self-study document,
- Resubmission for review with major revisions of the self-study document, *or*
- Postponement of the review (with Dean’s agreement) to the following year

### Scheduling the External Reviewer's Visit (Spring of Review Year)

Upon receiving the self-study approval notification from the Provost, the Provost's Associate will give the program explicit authorization to schedule their external evaluator's visit to campus. At this time, the program may send the final draft of their self-study to their reviewer in preparation for the visit. Programs should also send the reviewer copies of both the "Best Practices for Outside Reviewers" and "Procedure for the Review of Academic Programs" documents located at the Academic Affairs website:

(<https://www.iup.edu/academicaffairs/accreditation/program-review/>).

**In order to avoid cancellations and financial losses, programs are not permitted to make any arrangements for their external evaluators to visit campus until this explicit authorization is given in February or March.**

The program should then contact the reviewer to request 2-3 potential date options for a visit. A copy of the approved program review draft should be sent with this e-mail. After obtaining the potential date options, the program must notify the Provost's Associate's Office. The Provost's Associate's Office will attempt to schedule a meeting that includes the Provost, Provost's Associate, Dean, and the Reviewer on one of the potential date options provided by the department; however, if the Provost and Dean(s) schedules cannot accommodate the dates, additional dates will need to be provided. An e-mail confirming the meeting details will be copied to the department chair and/or program coordinator who is responsible for notifying the external evaluator.

Once the meeting between the Provost, Provost's Associate, College Dean, and external evaluator is scheduled and confirmed by the Provost's Associate's Office, the program may begin scheduling other events for the reviewer's visit. The remainder of the campus visit schedule is determined by the program, but often includes meetings with program faculty, students, program coordinators, and the chair. Please note that ideally, the meeting with the Provost and College Dean should be held toward the end of the evaluator's campus visit, after they have met with program faculty and students and are more familiar with IUP.

### Creating the Final Program Review (Spring of Review Year)

The external evaluator should submit their report via e-mail to the Provost, College Dean, Provost's Associate, and program chair or director by May 15. If more time is needed, the evaluator should contact the Provost's Associate. The program review team should then add the report to the Comments section of their review. If the program wishes, a response to the external evaluator's report can be written and added to the comments section of the self-study narrative. Finally, the program should adjust or augment their five-year action plan in response to the external evaluator's suggestions and advice, or explain in their comments why they have chosen not to do so.

### Submission of the Final Program Review (Summer of Review Year)

Two print copies, signed by the department chair or program director, should be delivered to the dean for review and signature. One of the signed copies should be left with the dean and the other must be delivered to the Provost's Associate's Office by June 10. In addition, an electronic copy of the report and all appendices must be delivered to the Provost's Associate's Office with the final signed hardcopy. If the file is too large to send by email, contact the Office of Academic Programs and Planning to arrange for a temporary folder on the X-drive. The electronic copy does not need to be signed as the Provost's Associate's Office will scan and replace the signature page once the Provost signs the final copy. A scanned copy of the signature page will be e-mailed to the College Dean and department chair or program director by the Provost's Associate's Office.

### Program Review Reflection Meeting (Fall following Review Year)

During the fall semester following the review year, a reflection meeting with the Provost, Associate Vice President for Academic Administration, Provost's Associate, Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research (if there is a graduate component), College Dean, and program representatives will be held to assess the forward progress of the program, as well as strategies for continued implementation of the action plan. This meeting will be scheduled by the Provost's Associate's Office during the summer following the review year.

### Annual Progress Reports (Each year following the Review Year)

Programs must submit an annual progress report to their College Dean and to the Provost's Associate by June 30 of the second, third and fourth year following the review year. This report should detail the progress made in following through on the five-year action plan outlined in the review. In the fifth year, the program will once again be engaged in preparing a new self-study and so no annual progress report will be required.

### Provost's Associate's Office of Academic Programs and Planning Contact Information

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