

## **PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL PROGRAM REVIEW**

### **Academic Units**

Once your unit has been scheduled for External Program Review (EPR) and you have been through the orientation, the following list of procedures can be used to guide your department through the process. (See *Timeline* to assist you in scheduling your EPR.) If your unit is coordinating your EPR with a specialized accreditation, please contact Institutional Research for possible modifications to the process.

#### **1. Proposed timeline:**

Complete a proposed *Timeline* for submission to the EPR Committee. (Submissions to the EPR committee can be sent to Institutional Research and Assessment for distribution to committee members.)

#### **2. Selection of the review team:**

The department chair should develop a list of three external names for nomination to the review team. The list will be submitted to the Dean for review, and the Provost or Provost's designee for approval (please include biographical information, either via a web location or vita). When developing the list, consider such things as degree areas, necessary qualifications for review of specific areas, diversity of the team, and any possible conflict of interest. Some suggestions for developing a list include:

- contact your national accrediting agency or professional society for recommendations,
- solicit recommendations of well-known scholars in the discipline, from your faculty and colleagues,
- explore your counterparts at peer institutions.

#### **3. Contact selected reviewers:**

Contact with your selected reviewers should occur early, once the Provost has reviewed your list, to insure that schedules for the department and all the reviewers can be accommodated. Before you contact your reviewers, be sure to find out the dates that the Provost and your dean are available.

#### **4. Collect data and prepare your self-study:**

**Don't underestimate the time it will take to prepare your self-study!!** Remember that the primary purpose of program review is self-assessment, *not* financial enhancement. It should be a critical look at your program and involve any faculty, staff and students who are stakeholders in your program. Institutional Research and Assessment is available to help with data collection. The EPR Committee will assign a liaison to review your self-study and provide feedback as early in the process as possible. Be sure to provide plenty of time for your dean to review it before you submit final copies to the Provost and the EPR Committee. In addition, if you have a graduate program, the College of Graduate Studies will want to review your self-study. Your self-study should be submitted to the reviewers 30 days prior to their visit. Faculty members and others who will be participating in the site visit should also receive a copy of the self-study.

**TIPS:** 1) Consider assigning various faculty to different sections, but be sure to coordinate to reduce duplicated effort/data searches, and be sure to set standardized font/style/margins to reduce editing time. 2) Find an editor from outside your unit to help pull it together and identify issues.

#### **5. Schedule the site visit (see Sample Schedule on the website)**

Work with your review team and your dean to schedule a site visit. Coordinate with your Dean, the Provost/Vice Provost, and Dean of Graduate Studies (if applicable) for available dates before

contacting team members. During a typical visit reviewers will arrive on Sunday in time for an evening orientation, spend two and one-half days on campus and depart on Wednesday afternoon. Many will ask you to make their hotel and travel arrangements.

**TIP:** Be sure to reserve early for any functions to be held in the Commons and determine if the reviewers need computers supplied, preloaded with your self-study and template for their report.

## **6. Distribute your self-study (see Sample letter to review team in the Visiting Review Team section of the main EPR webpage)**

Once the dean and other readers have reviewed your self-study, distribute it along with a copy of the Questions for Academic Program Self-Study to the review team, your faculty, the EPR Committee, any participating departments, and others who might be involved in your site visit. Work with the team to get the following details clarified.

- Clearly outline to the review team members your program objectives and expectations of their responsibilities during the review and the visit. Remind the team members that the primary purpose of program review is self-assessment, *not* financial enhancement.
- Include an itinerary for the review team visit, outlining with whom they will meet and the activities that will occur while they are on campus. Offer them an opportunity to provide input on additional contacts that can be included on the itinerary at the time they receive your self-study.
- Determine what their needs might be while they are on campus. Often they will need
  - A private meeting room or conference room
  - Clerical support
  - Computer for use on campus
  - Additional data not available in your self-study
  - Time to talk among themselves
  - A rental car or host to get them around
  - Visits to off-campus sites

**TIP:** Consider including UI boilerplate information, university and college strategic plans, faculty vitas, fact book, student brochures.

## **7. The Site Visit**

Consider choosing a host from another department, your self-study reviewer, or a student to help your review team find their way around campus. Selecting a colleague from another department on campus that will soon be undergoing a review can help other departments to prepare for their visits as well as provide your team with an internal perspective.

Provide an opportunity for a gathering early in the process so reviewers can meet each other and your faculty. Insure that your team has time to meet with the following:

- Provost
- Dean (who may provide a specific charge to the review team)
- Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Research
- Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (if applicable)
- Faculty
- Graduate Students and Undergraduate Students
- Faculty and students from departments for which you provide service courses or which provide service courses for your students

- Other constituents (i.e. advisory board members or community members)
- Exit interviews
- Tour of your facilities
- If time allows, tour of campus

Often meetings can be combined. For example, you might schedule lunch with the Provost, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Research, and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The exit interview might include a group meeting with all faculty, followed by a combined meeting with the Dean and the Provost (or Vice Provost).

## **8. Exit Interview**

Schedule an exit interview with the persons who attended the entrance meeting (and including a representative from the UI EPR Committee). Often reviewers will like to have an exit interview with faculty as well. Consider taping the exit interview so you can begin to address important issues immediately without waiting for the reviewer's report.

## **9. Response**

Within 30 days of receipt of the reviewers' report, you should schedule a meeting with your Dean or Vice President to discuss proposed actions to address the team's recommendations. Within three weeks of this discussion the university-level administrator will submit the reviewers' report along with his or her own comments and proposed actions to the Provost, and schedule a meeting with the department chair or unit administrator, Dean and Provost to discuss the results. Following that meeting the department chair or unit administrator should complete the EPR online template.

## **10. Follow-up Report**

Each year after your site visit, you will need to complete the results section for that year and update the actions and timelines for the coming year.