

Program Review (revised)

Missouri State University

11/15/07

The purpose of program/unit review at Missouri State University is to allow the members of a department to continuously gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of its academic programs. By systematically reviewing mission, goals, priorities, activities, and outcomes, the desired result is continuous improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, research, and public service.

The program review process is comprised of 3 integrated components: 1) strategic planning, 2) annual reviews, and 3) periodic (external) reviews. The **strategic plan** allows the program/unit to develop a long range view (3-5 years) of its mission, priorities, and objectives. It should represent a realistic view of the program/unit's aspirations as well as a specific plan for how it intends to achieve those aspirations. The **annual reviews** allow the program/unit to note its accomplishments and in the process, assess its progress in accomplishing its goals and objectives. The **periodic (external) review** asks the program/unit to engage in an in-depth self-analysis which is reviewed by an external team. As a result of this periodic review, the program/unit will determine how its strategic plan should be revised to ensure that it responds to the resulting recommendations and thus, ensures that quality improvements continue.

The following materials are **guidelines** that should prove helpful during the each phase of the program review process. Because each program/unit is unique, it is expected that variations may be necessary.

Strategic Plans

Each education unit should develop a strategic plan which includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

1. A Mission Statement

- a. What elements comprise the primary mission of the unit?
- b. How does the work of the unit mesh with, and contribute to the University's long range plan and mission?
- c. How does the work of the unit support the University's efforts to improve 1) student success/ retention; and 2) increase diversity?

2. A SWOT Analysis

- a. What are the unit's strengths and weaknesses in instruction, research and service?
- b. What are the unit's major opportunities and threats (both currently and in the immediate future)? In addition to the campus environment, the unit should identify external conditions and trends that may impact its ability to achieve its aspirations.

3. Educational Outcomes for all the Unit's Degree Programs (i.e., an Assessment Plan)

- a. What are the expected educational outcomes for students who complete each of the unit's degree programs (graduate and undergraduate)?
- b. What are the expected educational outcomes for students who complete each of the unit's classes in general education?
- c. How will the unit assess the progress toward achieving these outcomes? (What techniques will be used?)
- d. How will the assessment results be used to improve the effectiveness of the unit's instructional programs?

4. Current Priorities and Objectives

- a. What are the unit's other goals and priorities in instruction, research and service?
- b. For each of these goals and priorities, what are the desired outcomes? How will the unit measure its progress? Who will be responsible for overseeing the efforts?

5. Action (Implementation) Plan

- a. How will the strategic plan be implemented?
- b. What will be the timeline?
- c. What resources will be needed? How will these resources be allocated?

The preparation of the strategic plan should involve the entire unit. Once the plan is completed and approved by the unit, it must be reviewed by the administrator to whom the unit reports. A copy should be posted on the departmental website.

Annual Reviews

The primary purpose of the annual reviews is to recognize the accomplishments of the unit. Special attention should be focused on assessing the progress made in accomplishing the goals

and objectives of the strategic plan. As a result of this assessment, it may be necessary to revise the plan in light of changing internal and external conditions.

The annual reviews should include information and analysis pertaining to all facets of the unit's efforts. **In those instances when the situation remains unchanged from one year to the next, it is unnecessary to repeat the information.**

1. **Academic Programs** - Baccalaureate and Graduate. (If the unit has classes in the General Education Program, it should also supply this information for each of those classes.)
 - a. List all of the unit's academic programs (majors, minors, certificates, etc.).
 - i. Include the number of students in each program for each of the past 5 years.
 - ii. Include the number of undergraduate and graduate students who completed the program for each of the past 5 years.
 - b. Include the enrollments and student credit hours generated by each program for each semester (including summer school)
 - c. Include assessment results (scores on major field achievement tests, results of licensure/certification tests, department assessment measures, etc.)
 - i. Discuss how this information has been used to improve the quality of academic programs.
 - d. List any modifications made to the curriculum (additions, deletions, revisions, etc.) and why those modifications were initiated.
 - e. Has the unit taken any steps designed to improve student success (persistence, engagement)? If so, what? How will the unit measure the level of success of these efforts?
 - f. Has the unit taken any steps to improve student access?
 - i. Via technology (including distance learning)
 - ii. Via off-campus programs
 - iii. Via dual credit, increased evening college offerings, Saturday classes, etc.
 - g. How does the unit ensure that the public affairs mission is a part of each student's experience (e.g., incorporated into course content, service learning experiences, community outreach activities, etc.)?

- h. List any special recognition or awards received by the students in the unit (e.g., acceptances into graduate or professional school, scholarships, grants, assistantships, undergraduate research, student/faculty co-authorships, etc.)
- i. Include the results of any accreditation efforts.
- j. Has the unit supported any international education initiatives?

2. Faculty Teaching and Advising

- a. What percent of the general education classes, classes in the major and graduate classes are taught by ranked faculty? By per course faculty? By graduate teaching assistants?
- b. What steps does the unit take to support the teaching efforts of non-ranked faculty?
- c. How does the department evaluate teaching effectiveness?
- d. What is the typical advising load of faculty?
- e. List any special recognition or awards received by the faculty for their teaching and/or advising efforts.

3. Faculty Research and Scholarship

- a. List any faculty publications – books, monographs, articles in referred journals (indicate if the journal is international, national, etc.).
- b. List any products of creative activity – fine arts,
- c. List any faculty presentations. Indicate if the presentation was local, regional, national, international, invited, etc.)
- d. Funded Research
 - i. List all the proposals submitted for funding.
 - ii. List the amount and source of grants and contracts received
- e. Describe how the unit supports and promotes faculty research.

4. Service and Community Outreach

- a. Describe the unit's major service accomplishments.
 - i. Institutional (on campus)
 - ii. Off-campus (locally, regionally, statewide, etc)

- b. Does the unit participate in any community programs and/or partnerships? If yes, briefly describe the nature of these outreach efforts.
- c. If the unit has an advisory board, what role does it play? How are members selected? Who are the current members?

5. Faculty Resources

- a. List the number of faculty in the unit by rank and tenure status (include per course faculty and graduate teaching assistants)
- b. If the unit engaged in any recruitment/hiring activities:
 - i. How many searches were successful?
 - ii. How many searches were unsuccessful? Why?
 - iii. Describe any efforts made to increase diversity.
- c. Does the unit have a mentoring process for new faculty, including per course and teaching assistants? If so, describe this process.
- d. How does the unit support faculty development?
- e. How does the unit assist tenure track faculty prepare for promotion and tenure?

6. Fiscal (and other) Resources

- a. Comment on the unit's cost benchmarks as revealed in the Delaware data.
- b. Comment on the unit's budget allocations and management.
- c. Comment on the unit's space situation.
- d. Comment on the unit's equipment and/or technology needs and any plans it has to address those needs.
- e. Comment on the adequacy of the unit's staff resources.
- f. Does the unit engage in fundraising? If so, describe the efforts and the level of success.

7. Unit Management

- a. Describe how the unit fosters collegiality.
- b. How is the administrative workload of the unit shared by its members?

8. Individual Professional Accomplishments

- a. Use this section to note any accomplishments not included in other areas of this review.

Periodic (External) Reviews

The purpose of the periodic review is to provide each unit the opportunity to 1) complete an in-depth self-analysis of the degree to which it has achieved its aspirations as expressed in its strategic plan; 2) receive input from an external evaluation team lead by an off campus consultant; and 3) plan its response to the recommendations of the external reviewers so quality improvements can continue.

To minimize duplication of effort, professional accreditation reviews should, to the extent possible, be synchronized with the periodic review. Conducted every 5-7 years, the schedule of these reviews is posted on the Office of the Provost website.

1. The Self-Study Preparation

- a. Preparation of the self study should NOT be the sole responsibility of the unit administrator. Instead, the self study should be a product of the entire department. Although an initial draft may be written by a subcommittee of the faculty, all department members should have the opportunity to participate in producing/approving the final draft.
- b. Most of the data included in the self-study should be a composite of the data included in all of the annual reviews completed since the previous periodic review.
- c. The unit should summarize/analyze this information with the intent of evaluating the extent to which it believes it has been able to realize the mission, priorities and objectives established in the strategic plan.
 - i. When unsuccessful, the unit should identify those factors which caused it to fall short.
- d. The unit should engage in a new SWOT analysis designed to help it envision how it can build on its successes and continue the quality improvement process.
- e. A copy of the self study should be submitted to the Office of the Provost no later than June 1 and prior to the selection of the external consultant(s).

2. The External Review

- a. **Selecting the external consultant(s)**
 - i. Although the unit administrator may nominate a consultant, the dean of the college will appoint the consultant with the approval of the provost. A copy

of the external reviewer's CV should be submitted to the provost prior to the final appointment.

- ii. Preference should be given to external consultants from out-of-state who have had prior experience as a peer review/accreditation consultant.
- iii. This consultant should be an administrator, usually a dean or department head from the same discipline. Multidiscipline departments should appoint a different consultant for each discipline.
- iv. The external consultant should be appointed no later than 2 months prior to the scheduled visit.

b. What should be sent to the consultant?

- i. The Office of the Provost will prepare a letter at least one month prior to the scheduled visit which includes a list of the issues the consultant should address in their final report.
 1. ALL consultants will be asked to comment on: a) the appropriateness of the department's strategic plan/initiatives; b) the quality of the department's general education classes; c) the quality of the department's undergraduate and/or graduate programs; d) the quality of the department's research agenda and/or creative activities; e) the quality of the department's outreach efforts; f) the quality and efficiency of the department's resource management efforts and g) recommendations for changes and/or improvements in all appropriate areas.
 2. In addition to the above "standard" issues, the department may also suggest a limited number of questions related to its unique nature.
- ii. Departments are expected to prepare a packet of materials that will accompany the above letter. Do NOT overwhelm the consultant with unanalyzed and unnecessary data/information. The packet should include:
 1. A copy of the unit's strategic plan
 2. A copy of the department's self study
 3. Copies of all the annual reviews completed since the previous external review
 4. A vita for each faculty member
 5. Student success data including the majors' retention rates, graduation rates, performance on credentialing exams, and other student learning outcome measures. The department should also discuss how this information has been used to

modify courses, the curriculum and/or their entire programs of study.

6. Information about the University and College priorities and initiatives so the consultant can make a determination of whether or not the department is well positioned. This should include copies of the long range plan, as well as copies of the president's, provost's and dean's priorities.

c. Site Visits

- i. To the extent possible, the site visit should be planned for early in the fall semester.
- ii. Setting the schedule/itinerary of the external consultant's site visit is the responsibility of the college dean. A copy of the proposed itinerary should be submitted to the associate provost before it is finalized and sent to the consultant.
- iii. Each visit should be sufficiently long to accomplish all information gathering and processing of what has been learned prior to the exit interviews. Generally, one day visits are insufficient.
- iv. Make certain the consultants have some free time to collect their thoughts. Do not feel obligated to keep them busy all the time.
- v. There should be an entrance interview with the provost. Make certain this is on the provost's calendar when preparing the schedule/itinerary.
- vi. There should be early interviews with the appropriate associate provost(s), the dean and the department head.
- vii. The consultant should also meet with students, faculty, the VP for Research, alumni, advisory boards, etc.
- viii. There should be two exit interviews where the consultant should present his/her preliminary recommendations:
 1. the first of these interviews will be with the provost, the appropriate associate provost(s), and the dean
 2. the second exit interview will be with the faculty, dean and department head.

d. The Consultant's Report

- i. The consultant should know that we expect to receive a final report within approximately 30 days of their visit.

- ii. This report should include: 1) an executive summary of the findings and conclusions; and 2) a list of recommendations and suggested actions.
- iii. Following the receipt of the consultant's final report, the unit's faculty and head will have approximately 60 days to respond to the recommendations with:
 1. a revised strategic plan which will become the basis for subsequent annual reviews,
 2. an action plan with specific ideas as to how and when the consultant's recommendations will be addressed.
 3. As part of its response, the department should identify any directions and changes they would like to make that are NOT resource sensitive.
 4. When talking about resources, the department should indicate what they "can bring to the table" (i.e., what they can contribute). Then they can also indicate what other resources they would need to accomplish their goals.
- iv. The dean and provost will review the above materials and either accept the unit's response or suggest appropriate changes.
- v. Once agreement is reached, the department and college should begin implementing the action plan.

Consequences of the Program Review Process

It is hoped that ALL units will strive to improve the quality of their programs throughout the program review process. It is anticipated that a small number of outstanding programs will be selected for enhancement by the university. Most programs will be recognized for their conscientious efforts to improve quality and as such, they will continue to be sustained. Hopefully, only a small number of programs will appear to be in need of serious corrective action. Any support of this nature will come from the college.