

University of Houston
Division of Student Affairs

Guidelines for
Department/Program Review

June 2023 (Revised)
Initiated July 2012

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PURPOSE FOR DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM REVIEW

Department/Program Review is a collaborative process designed to bring the judgment of respected colleagues in assessing and improving the quality of departments/programs in the Division of Student Affairs. This process involves staff, students, faculty, alumni, community, the respective department/program staff, the division's executive and senior leadership teams, campus administrators, and external specialists in the profession. Each department will contribute and or participate in (1) gathering information about a department/program, (2) reviewing and analyzing this information during a site visit, (3) synthesizing all available information and making judgments about overall quality and recommendations for improvement, and (4) following up to ensure that the department/program is fully supported in its efforts to address the outcomes of the review.

While self-study and peer review are also fundamental components of the external process of accreditation, the department/program review for the Division of Student Affairs serves an important internal purpose. The division is committed to continuous improvement of its programs and services, to setting new standards for collaboration and interdisciplinary work, and to strengthen each department/program's connections that promote academic and cultural activities as well as economic and human development. The department/program review places emphasis on (1) involvement of campus administrators, staff and faculty from department/programs other than the one undergoing review; (2) linkages between the program and the community it serves; and (3) connections between the review and planning, decision-making and resource allocation at department and campus levels. These emphases ensure that the reviews contribute in a fundamentally important way to the attainment of the division's mission and that warranted recommendations for improvement stemming from them are carried out. Department/programs that are strengthened through peer review will enhance the overall quality and reputation of the Division of Student Affairs and the University of Houston.

The department/program review will increase the sense of shared purpose among its many diverse departments and programs within the Division of Student Affairs and reinforces the need for coordinated planning for the future throughout the division. The involvement of campus administrators in the reviews ensures that meaningful and effective follow-up for each review will occur. The involvement of staff and faculty from departments and programs outside the one being reviewed and the division promote campus-wide understanding of the contributions of the respective department/program to the mission of the institution. The involvement of community members who have an interest in the department/program emphasizes the importance of University of Houston's connections with the community it serves and, at the same time, furthers community understanding of the respective department/program, the division and University of Houston.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM REVIEW

All department/programs will be scheduled for review over a seven-year period. If a department/program also experiences periodic peer review for purposes of accreditation, the internal and external review processes will be carefully coordinated to minimize duplication of time and effort.

The Associate Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice President for Student Affairs (AVC/AVPSA) is responsible for the overall assessment program in the division and designates the Director of Assessment and Planning to manage the department/program review process. The Director of Assessment and Planning will work with the respective Associate/Assistant Vice President and the department/program director to plan the self-study and review. The department/program director and representative staff will prepare a self-study based on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Book of Professional Standards and Guidelines and Self-Assessment Guides. The self-study or internal report will be completed in the semester prior to the on-site visit using CAS Standards and their specific program or service CAS Standards where applicable. The self-study may be reviewed by an ad hoc division committee appointed by the AVP/AVPSA in advance of the visit by the review team per the request of the Director of Assessment and Planning. When this is the case, the department/program responsible for the self-study would be expected to make changes if a majority of the members of the ad hoc division committee recommend such modifications.

A minimum of three external reviewers from the respective profession or discipline will be chosen to take part in a site visit. The Vice Chancellor/Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services (VC/VPSA), members of the division's executive and senior leadership teams, interested staff and faculty from related departments, students, and advisory groups will take part in the review according to a pre-arranged schedule developed by the Director of Assessment and Planning in cooperation with the department/program director. Participation by those who support the department/program as well as those who participate in it and benefit from its offerings serves to emphasize the openness of the review process.

CRITERIA FOR SELF-STUDY

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) will provide the standards by which the self-study or internal review will be completed by the respective department director and staff. The internal review document should follow the CAS General Standards outline. Departments within the division which have a CAS outline for their specific department/ program are strongly encouraged to use the specific outline and the self-assessment guide. Departments will work with the Director of Assessment and Planning if no CAS outline is available for their respective area to develop criteria.

The following is an abbreviated version of the CAS General Standard outline for the purposes of preparing the internal report:

- Part 1. Mission
- Part 2. Program
- Part 3. Organization and Leadership
- Part 4. Human Resources
- Part 5. Ethics
- Part 6. Law, Policy and Governance
- Part 7. Institutional and External Relations
- Part 8. Financial Resources
- Part 9. Technology
- Part 10. Facilities and Equipment
- Part 11. Assessment

In addition, the internal report should include the following materials in appendix format:

- A. Resumes of all full time, part time and graduate student staff
- B. Organization Chart and position descriptions
- C. Annual Reports from the previous two years
- D. SFAC Reports (where applicable) from the previous two years (including budget documentation).

THE FOLLOW-UP PROCESS

At the closure of the on-campus visit, the external reviewers will meet with the VC/VPSA, the AVP, the Director of Assessment and Planning, and the director of the department/program reviewed prior to departing the campus for a brief overview of their findings.

Within approximately one month of the date of the site visit, the reviewers will collaborate to provide a written report following the outline from CAS:

1. Executive Summary including the identification of key themes and general recommendations
2. Introduction including a breakdown on the committee members, materials reviewed and overall process by the committee (may be in an appendix)
3. Findings and Recommendations using the CAS standard outline. In each subsection, the report should cover the pertinent items identified in the full outline (<https://www.cas.edu/content.asp?contentid=200>) and include findings from their review along with specific recommendations. The general outline is as follows:

A. Mission

B. Program

C. Organization and Leadership

D. Human Resources

E. Ethics

F. Law, Policy and Governance

G. Institutional and External Relations

H. Financial Resources

I. Technology

I. Facilities and Equipment

J. Assessment

4. Conclusion/Closing Remarks

Following the receipt of the reviewers' report the, the VC/VPSA will meet with the respective department/program director, the respective AVP, and the Director of Assessment and Planning to discuss the report. One month following receipt of the reviewers' report and the subsequent sharing with the department (as determined at the first meeting), the respective Associate/Assistant Vice President and the respective department/program director will draft a written response to the reviewers' report to the VC/VPSA, indicating the actions to be taken to address each recommendation.

The Director of Assessment and Planning will call a follow-up meeting within twelve months of the date of the site visit for the purpose of discussing the staff response to the reviewers' report in coordination with the respective director. All appropriate representatives of the division administration will be invited to this meeting in order to bring to bear all the resources that are needed to assist the department/program in making essential improvements. The department will communicate to the stakeholders from the process on progress from the ERC at one and two year increments. Each targeted improvement area should be addressed in the department/program annual reporting and during planning/budgeting review. During the third year following the review, the Director of Assessment and Planning will schedule a meeting with the department director for discussion of the longer-term outcomes of the review.

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM REVIEW TIMELINE AND SCHEDULE

At a minimum, three departments/programs will participate in a review. The following timeline provides a framework for the department/program to work with its respective Associate/Assistant Vice President and Director of Assessment and Planning:

	Dept./Program #1	Dept./Program #2	Dept./Program #3	Dept./Program #4
Initial Dept./Program Meeting	Early July	Early August	Mid-August	September
Appoint Review Team	Early September	Early October	Mid-October	Early November
Internal Review Due	November	December	December/January	January/February
Review Team on Campus	Late January	Early-Mid February	February/March	March/April
Review Team Report due	Late February	Mid-March	Mid-April	Mid-May
Dept./Program Response due to the VC/VP	April	May	June	July

The Associate Vice Chancellor/Associate Vice President for Student Affairs acknowledges that these “Guidelines for Department Program Review” are adopted from the “Guidelines for Program Review for Service Department/programs at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (2005) and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) Book of Professional Standards and Guidelines and Self-Assessment Guides (2011).

Cycle 2 of External Reviews

Year	Departments
2021-2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Career Services • Center for Student Involvement • Campus Solution Services[^] • International Student & Scholar Support Office
2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Fraternity/Sorority Life • Children’s Learning Center • UH Wellness
2023-2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dean of Students Office • Student Accessibility Center • Center for Student Media
2024-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Centers • Veteran Services • Health Center
2025-2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women & Gender Resource Center • Student Housing & Residential Life • Counseling & Psychological Services
2026-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Recreation • Center for Student Empowerment • Center for Student Advocacy and Community
2027-2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AD Bruce Religion Center • DSA Business Services • DSA IT • Cougars in Recovery

[^] Enrollment Services units became a part of the Division of Academic Affairs in July, 2022

The first department/program schedule was as follows:

Year	Departments
2012-2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University Career Services • Center for Student Involvement • UH Wellness
2013-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Fraternity/Sorority Life • Dean of Students Office • Campus Recreation
2014-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions[^] • Center for Students with disABILITIES • Center for Student Media • LGBTQ Resource Center
2015-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Center • Counseling and Psychological Services • Office of the University Registrar[^] • Urban Experience Program
2016-2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Learning Center • Scholarships & Financial Aid^{+^} • Women and Gender Resource Center • Student Housing and Residential Life^{**}
2017-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Center • Center for Diversity and Inclusion • Veterans Services • Integrated Enrollment Services[^]
2018-2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSA Business Services • DSA IT
2019-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment Services Communications and Marketing[^]
2020-2021 ^{***}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AD Bruce Religion Center • Cougars in Recovery

^{**}internal review from 2015-2016 was used for an onsite visit in 2016-2017

⁺due to travel schedules the on-campus SFA ERC team was moved to Fall 2017

^{***} due to Covid-19 these external reviews were conducted remotely

[^] - Enrollment Services units that became a part of the Division of Academic Affairs in July, 2022