UNIVERSITY OF
SAN FRANCISCO

CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

**Division of Student Life
Program Review Guidelines**

Contents

Student Life Program Reviews

I. University Policy on Administrative Assessment

Administrative assessment focuses on processes and/or support services provided to students throughout the institution with the goal of promoting student success. The administrative assessment processes revolve around clearly articulated goals for which measurable outcomes are identified and are systematically and periodically assessed by the Unit. Each administrative/support Unit will complete a comprehensive review every 5 years.

The basic purpose is to examine, assess and develop support services of the highest quality by identifying strengths and weaknesses so that priorities can be established for improvement and modification. The ultimate goal is to promote and maintain academic excellence, and to also ensure that co-curricular activities, services and administrative processes are being efficiently administered and working in ways consistent with the University's mission and values.

II. Components of the Program Review Process for Student Life

The program review process has three major components:

1. Administrative Self-Study

This is a comprehensive report addressing every aspect of the department. It should contain the department's vision, mission and goals, and make recommendations for improvement and development based upon an overall analysis of data and other evidence. The self-study allows the department *to tell its own story* to the external review team and the university administration. The document is posted on the university assessment website.

2. External Review

The external review team provides an objective outsider's perspective on the quality, effectiveness, and/or productivity of the department. After reading the self-study and making a campus visit, the external review team will compile a report that provides an evaluation. The Student Life core leadership team member responsible for oversight of the department under review (or designee) summarizes the external reviewers' report in

the executive summary. The summary is also posted on the university assessment website.

3. Action Plan

The Student Life core leadership team member meets with department staff to create the action plan. The action plan structures the implementation of the recommendations in the self-study and the external review report according to a reasonable timetable. There is a follow-up meeting 3 years after the development of the plan.

III. Program Review Timelines

The complete program review process (including self-study, external review, and action plan) will take place over the course of approximately one year. Typically program reviews will be scheduled so site visits by external review teams take place during the Spring semester, however changes in schedule can be made based on Department needs. Appendix 1 provides a timeline of activities for program reviews with external reviewer site visits scheduled for the Spring semester. Appendix 2 provides an alternative timeline of activities for program reviews with external reviewer site visits scheduled during the Fall semester.

IV. Selection of External Reviewers

The external review team will normally consist of between two and three members from other recognized and accredited colleges and universities. The department under review will identify and submit a list of potential external review team members for consideration to the respective Student Life core leadership team member responsible for oversight of the department. External reviewers can have *no conflicts of interest* regarding the program under review (e.g., not a former employee, co-author, dissertation advisor, relative or close friend of current department staff, etc.). In general, the external reviewers should:

- Hold the highest degree appropriate to the department under review.
- Have a record of distinguished professional experience appropriate to the department under review.
- Be recognized as an active member of professional associations appropriate to the department under review.
- Be responsive to institutional and departmental mission.

Ideally at least one reviewer should:
- Have current or prior experience at the level of department head or higher at an institution of comparable size and reputation to the University of San Francisco.
- Have prior experience relevant to the accreditation process, assessment, and/or co-curricular review process.
- Hold an appointment in a prestigious and nationally recognized program or a program that the department wishes to emulate.
- If possible, hold (or have held) an appointment at a Jesuit University.
- For any department that is accredited by a professional accreditor (e.g. ABA, AACSB, APA, etc.) that requires, reviews and provides feedback on a program review, the professional accreditor may serve as the external reviewers.

The Student Life core leadership team member responsible for oversight of the department will approve and confirm the final external review team in consultation with the Vice Provost for Student Life. The review team will be assembled and communicated with through the support of the Assistant to the Vice Provost for Student Life or other designee.

V. The Self-Study
The purpose of the self-study is to allow staff, students and administration to consider not only a department's recent accomplishments and challenges, but also to engage in a forward-looking planning process.

The self-study is a comprehensive written document prepared by the department undergoing a program review. A good self-study will thoroughly assess a department's past efforts and will outline a realistic course of action for the future. The self-study provides the basis for the external review process so it is important that the report covers all key functions and processes of the department. The most useful self-study is a thorough but succinct, honest assessment of the department.

The self-study must be a product of the staff members of the department under review. They are in the best position to raise and respond to any significant strategic and operational issues being faced by the department and also to use the results of the review to improve performance. Department directors should ensure that there is full participation of their teams in the preparation of the self-study. It is highly recommended that departments use the Self-Assessment Guides (SAG) provided by The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education as a tool for guiding

their self-study. The Office of the Vice Provost for Student Life maintains current versions of the SAG's for student affairs areas.

Appendix 3 contains specific questions to help guide departments on what can be included in sections of the self-study and areas to be covered. There is some redundancy because items may be covered in several places. The department may decide the best place to discuss particular items or issues. At minimum, the self-study should address the following areas:

    I.   Mission
    II.   History
    III.   Department Goals
        a. General Overview
        b. List of Goals, Measurable Objectives and/or Student Learning Outcomes
        c. Curriculum Map
    IV.   Quality Assurance
    V.   Budget and Expenditures
    VI.   Assessment: Impact on Student Learning, Development, and Success
    VII.   Guide for the Future
    VIII.   Plans for the Future

Additional information may be required in the future in response to changes in University or accrediting policies.

VI. External Reviewers Campus Visit

The Assistant to the Vice Provost for Student Life (or other designee) will serve as the liaison between the department and the external review team, providing needed information and managing all logistical arrangements for the visit (including scheduling, accommodations, and transportation).

Prior to the visit the review team will be provided with essential information needed for them to conduct the review (see Appendix 4). Additionally, they will be provided with the following charge for program reviews at the University of San Francisco.

Charge to the External Reviewers:
1. Assess whether the department is doing what it says it is doing.
2. Assess whether it is meeting accreditation standards, professional or otherwise.
3. Provide feedback about the goals, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and make recommendations for improvements.

Prior to the campus visit, it is expected that the reviewers will have become familiar with the institution and the department based on materials sent to them. They will have carefully read the self-study and they will have developed some preliminary questions about the department based upon these materials.

The campus visit normally lasts 2 days. During their time on campus, the external reviewers will meet with department staff, students representatives, collaborative partners within the institution, and appropriate administrators. They will also inspect facilities and examine procedures, read on-campus documents and websites, and potentially observe activities (if desired by reviewers).

At the conclusion of the campus visit, the external review team will share their preliminary findings with the Student Life core leadership team member responsible for oversight of the department (or designee) during an exit interview. Within two months, the external reviewers submit a report based upon the department's self-study and the findings and observations made by the external review team during their campus visit. The report will assess the department's strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for improvements. An executive summary of the report will be written and presented to the Provost Council, a relevant Committee of the Board of Trustees and any other campus constituencies deemed appropriate by the department and the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs.

VII. Action Plan

Once the external reviewers submit their report, it will be distributed to the Student Life core leadership team member responsible for the department who will ensure it is also shared with the department director and staff members. The department will have the opportunity to respond to the report's findings in writing if desired. The department will then begin formulating a plan of action for the future.

The action plan is designed to respond to the findings of *both* the self-study and the external review report. The action plan indicates how the department plans to address the issues raised during the review process. The most important elements in the formulation of the action plan are:
- Compiling recommendations resulting from the self-study and external reviewers report.
- Identifying and outlining suggested strategies and ideas for responding to department goals and reviewer recommendation.
- Prioritizing goals and recommendations.

- Identifying and listing needed resources to support the action plan, clearly differentiating between what can be accomplished by redistributing existing resources and what requires new resources.
- Outlining a timeline for completion and implementation of each item.
- Documenting all actions and providing written reports of progress as scheduled.

The final goal of the program review is an action plan that not only records accomplishments but also serves as a guide for any opportunities or needs for department improvement.

Suggested Timeline for External Reviewer Site Visit During the Spring Semester
(See Appendix 2 for Fall Semester Site Visits)

March-May (of academic year prior to reviewer site visit)
- The Student Life core leadership team member and director responsible for the department meet to discuss the program review procedures, timelines, and expectations.

- Department begins updating webpage to reflect current staffing, services, and other information, if necessary. This will aid external reviewers with research efforts.

- Department begins the selection of a list of potential external reviewers to be submitted to Student Life core leadership team member for consideration.

March-May and August-October:
- Department plans and holds meeting(s) and/or retreat(s) to discuss and plan the self-study (Use of the CAS Self-Assessment Guidelines is highly recommended as a guide for self-study).

September 10th (or prior):
- Department submits a final list of considerations for the external review team to their respective Student Life core leadership team member if a review team has not already been finalized.

October 15th (or prior):
- Department submits a draft of their self-study document their respective Student Life core leadership team member for review and feedback.

October-November:
- Department Leader meets with their respective Student Life core leadership team member to discuss the first draft. A final draft should be completed by December 1st.

February 1st (or prior):
- Self-study is submitted to external reviewers.

February-April:
- The external review team visits campus (usually for two days.).

May-August:
- Student Life core leadership team member receives the external reviewers' report and shares it with the Vice Provost for Student Life (if not the core leadership team member for department) and the director of the department.

- Self-study, the external reviewers' report, and an executive summary of the reviewers' report are sent to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs who also forwards the executive summary to the Board of Trustees. The self-study and executive summary of the external reviewers' report are posted on the University Assessment website.

May-December:
- Department meets with their respective Student Life core leadership team member to discuss the report's recommendations and formulation of an action plan and timelines for implementation.

- The Department may submit a separate response to the external reviewers' comments as part of the action plan.

The action plan is sent to the Senior Vice Provost of Academic Affairs. The Vice Provost for Student Life or designee discusses the program review with the Provost and/or Provost Council.

Appendix 2

Suggested Timeline for External Reviewer Site Visit During the Fall Semester
(See Appendix 1 for Spring Semester Site Visits)

October-December (of academic year prior to reviewer site visit)
- The Student Life core leadership team member and director responsible for the department meet to discuss the program review procedures, timelines, and expectations.

- Department begins updating webpage to reflect current staffing, services, and other information, if necessary. This will aid external reviewers with research efforts.

- Department begins the selection of a list of potential external reviewers to be submitted to Student Life core leadership team member for consideration.

October-December and January-March:
- Department plans and holds meeting(s) and/or retreat(s) to discuss and plan the self-study (Use of the CAS Self-Assessment Guidelines is highly recommended as a guide for self-study).

February 10th (or prior):
- Department submits a final list of considerations for the external review team to their respective Student Life core leadership team member if a review team has not already been finalized.

March 15th (or prior):
- Department submits a draft of their self-study document their respective Student Life core leadership team member for review and feedback.

March-April:
- Department Leader meets with their respective Student Life core leadership team member to discuss the first draft. A final draft should be completed by May 1st.

July 1st (or prior):
- Self-study is submitted to external reviewers.

July-September:
- The external review team visits campus (usually for two days.).

October-January:
- Student Life core leadership team member receives the external reviewers' report and shares it with the Vice Provost for Student Life (if not the core leadership team member for department) and the director of the department.

- Self-study, the external reviewers' report, and an executive summary of the reviewers' report are sent to the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs who also forwards the executive summary to the Board of Trustees. The self-study and executive summary of the external reviewers' report are posted on the University Assessment website.

October-May:
- Department meets with their respective Student Life core leadership team member to discuss the report's recommendations and formulation of an action plan and timelines for implementation.

- The Department may submit a separate response to the external reviewers' comments as part of the action plan.

- The action plan is sent to the Senior Vice Provost of Academic Affairs. The Vice Provost for Student Life or designee discusses the program review with the Provost and/or Provost Council.

Appendix 3

Elements of a Program Review

I. MISSION
1. Write an introductory paragraph describing the Department and services provided. What is the Department trying to accomplish?

2. What is the department's mission? Please provide the department's mission statement.

3. Describe how the department's mission is aligned with the University of San Francisco's Mission and strategic priorities.

II. HISTORY
1. What is the recent history of the department and what are the most noteworthy issues faced and changes made over the last five years?

2. Does the department form collaborative partnerships with other units within the University (e.g., academic, co-curricular/non-academic, administrative, etc.)? If so, what are the collaborations and how is the work coordinated within and across the various units?

3. What were the main recommendations of the previous program review? How did the department and institutional administration respond to the earlier findings and recommendations? What changed after the last program review?

4. 5. If this is the first program review, discuss the origins of the department. Why was the department created?

III. Department GOALS
1. What are the current goals of the department?

2. For each goal list measurable performance objectives and/or student learning outcomes (What students should know, value, and be able to do as a result of engaging in department programs or utilizing department services.).

3. How do these goals facilitate the department's overarching mission geared toward supporting student learning, development and/or academic success?

IV. QUALITY ASSURANCE
1. What programs and/or services does the department provide? Whom (specifically) do they serve?

2. How does the department learn about the needs of those served and obtain feedback regarding programs or services delivered?

3. How does the department know it is meeting the stakeholder's needs?

4. What are the department's planning, decision-making, and evaluation processes?

5. How do stakeholders learn about and access the programs and/or services provided by the department?

6. How does the department compare with peer institutions in terms of structure, responsibilities, size and budget? Specify the criteria by which these institutions were selected for comparison.

V. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES
1. Provide a budget allocation and expenditure summary for the past three fiscal years.
2. To what extent does the allocation of resources allow the department to meet its goals and objectives? Is there a close alignment between the costs of running the department and budgeted resources?

3. What changes could be made to produce greater efficiencies or economies of scale (e.g., reduction, modification, elimination of paperwork, reorganization, etc.)? What constraints must the department address to achieve these?

4. What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?

5. What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources?

VI. ASSESSMENT

1. Provide a summary of how critical administrative processes and programs and/or the services are assessed or evaluated in the department, and the results of those evaluations.

2. List the number of students served during the most recent academic year, and the department's role in tracking their success upon completion of programs and/or services.

3. To what degree have you achieved department goals and outcomes?
   a. Describe how data gleaned from meaningful assessments have helped the department improve critical processes, key functions, stakeholder needs, delivery of programs and/or services and identification of best practices (continuous improvement).

   b. Describe how data collected are used to inform and support other units (academic and/or non-academic/co-curricular) in the Institution.

   c. Describe how staff/administrators of the department analyzes trends of department productivity (e.g., students serviced, student needs, student success, etc.)

   d. Describe changes made to the department using evaluation/assessment data.

4. What factors have facilitated or impeded the department's ability to meet its goals and outcomes?

5. How do staff roles support the department's delivery of programs and/or services? How do staff roles bridge gaps in programs and/or services?

6. What are identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the department?

VII. GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE

1. What are the department's strengths? What examples of long-term excellence, recent accomplishment, or improvement characterize the department's recent history? In what ways could the department be considered a leader in its field?

---

2. What are the department's weaknesses? Where could the department improve most? What challenges or obstacles make it difficult to overcome these weaknesses? What further challenges does the department foresee in the coming years?

3. What changes have occurred in administrative processes and/or services provided over the past five years that have influenced the department's view of its role in the University and the field?

VIII. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE
1. Describe where the staff would like the department to go in terms of services, performance standards, collaboration with other department's, synergies, etc.

2. Describe where is the field going based on the literature, professional association meetings, etc. and how the department is ready to address those challenges and improvements.

Appendix 4

Information Provided To External Reviewers

The following information should be provided to external reviewers (either electronically or in a binder).

University and College
- USF Vision, Mission, and Values
- Department Mission, Goals, and Strategic Initiatives
- USF General Catalog (URL for)
- USF Fact Book
- Campus Map

Department
- Self-Study
- Department Website
- Department Budget
- Staff Resumes or Curriculum Vitae
- Relevant Program Data
- Relevant Student Data

Logistics
- Welcome Letter
- Review Team Information
- Questions for External Reviewers (from overseeing Student Life core leadership team member)
- Sample Agenda for Site Visit
- Accommodations, etc.
- Contact Information