**APR External review Report GUIDE & Template**

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## Overview of Academic program review at USF

Academic Program Review (APR) provides programs the opportunity to identify program strengths and weaknesses, document continued improvement, and develop plans for future program improvement to enhance the quality of academic degree programs and student learning. The APR process is an integral part of USF’s efforts to ensure academic excellence and program effectiveness consistent with the University’s mission and values.

## Purpose and Overview of External review at USF

The purpose of the external review is to gain an external and objective perspective about the overall quality of the program. External reviewers are experts in the field who are knowledgeable about issues specific to the discipline and are capable of providing neutral insight and feedback, with a focus on identifying program strengths to build upon and recommendations for improvement.

External reviewers are provided the self-study for review and also visit the campus. During the two-day campus visit, the External Review Team should gain an understanding of the program’s current state and future direction. The team will meet with a number of program constituents such as students and faculty, program chair/ director, dean, provost, with faculty from related fields, and, where appropriate, with alumni, employers and other external constituencies. After reviewing the self-study and visiting the campus, the external reviewers will submit an external review report.

## Overview of the external review report

The External Review Report is not intended to be a summary of the self-study. Rather, it should take into consideration all areas discussed in the self-study and site visit. It should be focused on synthesizing this information into recommendations that are focused on the student experience and student learning.

The External Review Report should include the following: Title Page, Table of Contents, Executive Summary/Context, Findings, Evaluation, Recommendations, Commendations and any appendices. Following this page is the External Review Report Template, which is provided to assist the Review Team in writing the report. Review Teams are not required to use the template and are not expected to respond to each question.

The format and questions within the External Review template are provided to assist the External Review Team in their evaluation of the program. USF recognizes that time constraints and the nature of the review may preclude a detailed response to every question.

Prior to writing the external report, the External Review Team should agree upon the structure of the report, the responsibilities of each team member in preparing the report, and the date by which the report will be submitted to the Dean’s office.

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| *All yellow boxes with prompts should be deleted from final report.* |

**APR External review REPORT Template**

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

[NAME OF SCHOOL/COLLEGE]

EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT OF [NAME OF PROGRAM]

Academic Year [example: 2022 – 2023]

Date of Visit:

Review Team: [include the names and institutions of the review team]

Date of Report Submission:

## Executive Summary/Context

Provide background information on the mission, nature of program, history of program, location, size, level(s), and degree(s) awarded. Indicate the campus where the review took place and what modality was reviewed, if the program has multiple modalities. Indicate any facts, evidence, observations and data from the self-study and visit that are the basis for the evaluation and recommendations.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *How would you characterize the overall quality and performance of the program?* * *Overall, how does the program compare to the benchmark top-tier programs nationally?* * *To what extent has the program achieved its standards of success?* * *To what degree are the programs strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities aligned with its self-assessment provided in the self-study and during the site visit?* * *What are the program’s greatest opportunities, and how can it best capitalize on them?* |

## Findings

Include facts, evidence and observations that the team finds significant with respect to the evaluation and recommendations.

## Evaluation

Based on the findings, the team should make an evaluation of the program. The evaluation should be measured against the generally accepted standards in the discipline, programs at the reviewers’ own institutions, and benchmark top-tier programs around the U.S. The evaluation should recognize program strengths and challenges.

Take into consideration the following categories for evaluation: mission alignment, curriculum and pedagogy, assessment of student learning, student success, student support, faculty, diversity, resources, program demand and sustainability, professional relevance, where appropriate, and the future direction of the program.

**Program Quality**

Please address the overall quality of the program

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Overall, how does the program compare to the benchmark top-tier programs nationally?* * *To what extent has the program achieved its standards of success?* * *To what degree are the programs strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities aligned with its self-assessment provided in the self-study and during the site visit?* * *What are the program’s greatest opportunities, and how can it best capitalize on them?* |

**Mission Alignment**

Provide a critical evaluation of how the program address its stated mission and the mission of the University.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Are the program’s mission, purpose, and goals clearly articulated and communicated to faculty, students, and staff as well as other campus constituents?* * *Are the program’s mission, purpose, and goals clearly aligned with the USF mission, guiding values and strategic goals and priorities? How?* * *Is the program achieving its stated goals?* * *Is the program addressing specific goals or actions within the strategic goals and priorities?* * *Is the program demonstrating a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?* * *Does the program provide an education such that students critically, thoughtfully, and innovatively addressing inequities to create a more humane and just world?* * *To what degree are the goals of the program appropriate? If they are not appropriate* |

**Student Profile**

Provide an evaluation of the program’s recruitment efforts.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *How successful has the program been in recruiting quality applicants?* * *Are their barriers to recruitment?* |

**Community Interaction**

Provide an evaluation of the program’s community interaction.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * Does the program interact with communities beyond USF? Is this sufficient? |

**Curriculum & Pedagogy**

Provide a critical evaluation of the curriculum and pedagogy to include coursework, sequencing, available learning experiences.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * + *Is the curriculum comprehensive, relevant and cohesive?* * *Does the program offer sufficient breadth and depth of learning for this particular field of study?* * *Does the curriculum educate students in the values, knowledge, and skills appropriate to the discipline?* * *How does the curriculum compare to similar programs at other universities and to disciplinary/professional standards?* * *Do the PLOs reflect what students should be learning to be prepared for future professions or educational opportunities?* * *Is there a clear progression of student learning and courses?* * *Does the curriculum include any high impact practices such as internships, study abroad, community-engaged learning, and research with faculty? If so, are these appropriately integrated into the curriculum?* * *Are students involved in the curriculum development process?* * *Does the program have sufficient policies/practices in place for establishing, reviewing, and revising program learning outcomes, instructional goals and objectives, and curricular content?* * *Does the program respond effectively to various learning styles and provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment for all students?* * *Are the required levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded?* * *Are the instructional approaches used appropriate relative to the curriculum?* * *Does the program include diversity, equity, and inclusion in the curriculum?* * *Does the program have policies in place to ensure an inclusive pedagogy and curriculum?*   **For Undergraduate Programs Only**   * *Has the program integrated the core graduation competencies into the curriculum? Are students meeting these competencies?* |

**Assessment of Student Learning**

Provide a critical evaluation of the program’s assessment efforts.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Is the assessment plan comprehensive enough?* * *Are there PLOs that have not been assessed that should be?* * *Is the program using effective assessment methodologies?* * *Are there other assessment methods the program should consider using?* * *Is the program effectively using assessment data to make curricular changes and improve student learning outcomes?* |

**Student & Alumni Success**

Provide a critical evaluation of student and alumni success to include comment on enrollment, retention, graduation rates, employment rates, and program trends.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *To what extent have students achieved success?* * *Are students and alumni satisfied with the program?* * *Is the program appropriately supporting the success of all students?* * *Are students satisfactorily prepared for the discipline of the program?* |

**Student Support**

Provide a critical evaluation of the program’s academic and non-academic support for students.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Does the program effectively monitor student academic progress?* * *To what extent are there mechanisms in place to assist students with achieving their academic goals? Are these successful in supporting students?* * *If the program has online courses, are students enrolled in these courses provided the same level of advising and support?* * *How is the overall quality and effectiveness of student advising and academic support?* * *Does advising meet the needs of students?* * *How well does the department serve the needs of its students?* |

**Co-Curricular Experiences**

Provide a critical evaluation of the program’s co-curricular experiences.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Are co-curricular experiences intentionally integrated into the program?* * *What efforts are made to create an intellectual and social climate that fosters student development and learning (e.g. clubs, student chapters of professional organizations, etc.)? Is this effective?* |

**Faculty Activity & Expertise**

Comment on the faculty composition, scholarship, teaching effectiveness, and professional development.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *How do the faculty support the program mission and goals?* * *How do the faculty’s background, expertise, research and other professional work contribute to the quality of the program?* * *Is the faculty distinguished in terms of their contributions to scholarship and creative work; teaching; and service to students, the profession, and community?* * *How does the quality of faculty scholarship/creative work compare to national standards of the discipline?* * *How do faculty teaching and research specialties compare to trends within the discipline? Are their gaps in the faculty members’ areas of expertise?* * *Is the program well positioned to take advantage of the current and emerging areas of scholarship?* * *Are faculty sufficient in number and have appropriate qualifications to maintain program quality?* * *How appropriate is the balance of faculty with respect to senior and junior appointments, diversity, and full-time vs. part-time appointments?* * *Is the faculty/student ratio appropriate?* * *To what extent is the scholarly and/or creative work of the faculty integrated into the program’s graduate and undergraduate programs?* * *Do the latest faculty appointments represent careful planning with respect to depth and breadth of curriculum?* * *How appropriate is the balance among subspecialties in the program? Are all areas represented sufficiently for students to receive a well-rounded education?* * *Are the methodologies used to assess teaching effectiveness appropriate?* * *Are professional development opportunities sufficient to contribute to the quality of the program?* * *Are faculty workloads balanced between teaching, research, and service responsibilities?* * *How is the program organized and governed? Is decision making participatory and inclusive? Is leadership encouraged and developed?* |

**Staff**

Comment on the roles of program staff and how they support the program.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Are support/administrative staff sufficient in number and trained appropriately to support the program?* * *Are professional development opportunities sufficient to contribute to the quality of the program?* |

**Technology, Information Resources & Facilities**

Comment on library holdings, technologies and facilities related to the program.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Are the facilities sufficient and appropriate to ensure student learning?* * *Are library holdings and services sufficient to meet program and student needs?* * *Does the program utilize appropriate technologies?* |

**Diversity**

Provide a critical evaluation of the program’s contribution to the university’s antiracism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) efforts.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Are there processes in place to support the success of all students?* * *Is DEI sufficiently included in the program’s curriculum?* * *Has the program devoted resources to increase access and success for all students?* * *Does the program recruit and retain diverse students and create an inclusive atmosphere?* * *Does the program demonstrate its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?* * *Does the program integrate the perspectives of members from its multiple constituencies, including those who may have been historically underserved into decision making processes?* * *Does the program track and analyze the educational achievement of distinct groups of* * *students and act to close gaps between groups over time?* * *Has the program identified needs or concerns of distinct groups among its constituencies and provided support consistent with the needs expressed by those groups?* * *Does the program incorporate student learning outcomes specifically related to the ability to acknowledge and interact productively and respectfully with people of diverse backgrounds and differing perspectives?* * *Does the program recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff and create an inclusive atmosphere?* |

**Program Demand**

Comment on demand for the program.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Was the data provided by the program sufficient to indicate there is a demand for the program?* * *What is the future outlook for this field of study?* * *What do enrollment rates, attrition, and numbers of majors and minors indicate about the effectiveness of the department’s programs?* |

**Program Sustainability**

Comment on the sustainability of the program.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Does the program have the support/resources to continue to operate and effectively fulfill its mission?* * *Is there effective planning that takes into account human, physical, technological and financial and academic needs, and sets clear priorities?* * *Can the program ensure academic continuity and that student learning outcomes continue to be met when faced with unforeseen circumstances?* * *Is there an effective alignment between program resource allocations and its priorities, mission and goals?* * *Are fiscal priorities and financial decision making appropriate?* |

## Recommendations

The report should make recommendations of potential remedies or improvements to address any challenges identified during the evaluation. The goal is to make recommendations for improvements that support student learning and the student experience.

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| **Consider these prompts:**   * *Are the programs plans for the improvement appropriate?* |

## Commendations

In addition to providing recommendations, the report should also include what the program is doing well.

## Appendices

Any relevant appendices