Departmental Program Review Guidelines
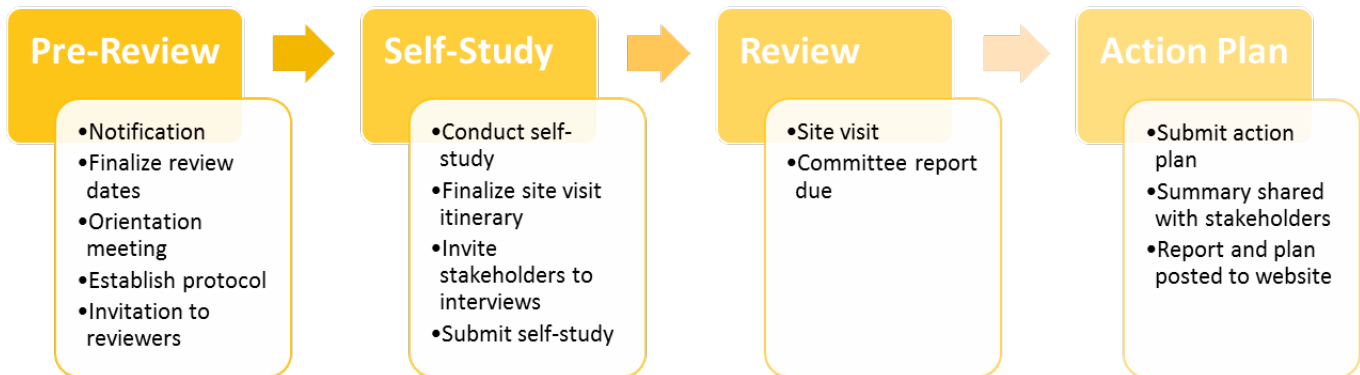
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Introduction

The Division of Student Life fosters student success by creating and promoting inclusive educationally purposeful services and activities within and beyond the classroom. The departmental program review process empowers departments within the Division of Student Life to critically evaluate their work and their effect on the UI student experience through a lens of continuous improvement. The review process is an opportunity for departments to take a comprehensive and critical look at the unit, to clearly state and evaluate strengths and weaknesses, and to outline a plan for future action.

Departmental Program Review Steps

1. Pre-Review
2. Self-Study
3. Review by Program Review Committee
4. Departmental Response and Action Plan

Reviews will be conducted every four to five years; the current review schedule can be found in the appendix.

Pre-Review → **Self-Study** → **Review** → **Action Plan**

Pre-Review
- Notification
- Finalize review dates
- Orientation meeting
- Establish protocol
- Invitation to reviewers

Self-Study
- Conduct self-study
- Finalize site visit itinerary
- Invite stakeholders to interviews
- Submit self-study

Review
- Site visit
- Committee report due

Action Plan
- Submit action plan
- Summary shared with stakeholders
- Report and plan posted to website

Pre-Review

12 months before review: A staff member from Assessment, Improvement, and Research (AIR) will meet with the departmental director to determine dates for the review, confirm the program review coordinator, and set a date for the orientation meeting. The departmental assessment coordinator will serve as the program review coordinator at the discretion of the departmental director (other suggestions for the program review coordinator can be discussed with the AIR staff member). This individual will:

1. Serve as the main contact for the program review committee.
2. Coordinate the self-study process
3. Coordinate the site visit including a detailed itinerary.

4. Work with the Office of the Vice President for Student Life administrative services professional or departmental administrative services professional to coordinate travel logistics, room reservations, and material preparation for the program review committee.

6 months before review: During the orientation meeting the department director, the program review coordinator, and the AIR staff member will review the guidelines, roles and responsibilities, and the self-study protocol. The departmental director will select the appropriate self-study protocol. Options include:

1. *Mandatory or pre-existing professional accreditation proces*s: If a department is required to participate in an accreditation process, they may use some or all of the professional accreditation process to fulfill the program review expectations. If the department selects this protocol, an internal reviewer will not be used during the review process.
2. *DSL Self-Study* Guide: This guide incorporates Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) general standards and focuses on twelve key areas crucial to the success of every department. Departments can replace the CAS standards with professional or national standards as requested.

The department will complete a charge that outlines any focus areas for the review, the standards selected, the proposed site visit dates, and the recommended review team.

Departmental Program Review Committee

The charge of the program review committee is to evaluate and provide recommendations to improve the quality of a department's programs and services. Recommendations will be used to inform short and long-term departmental decision-making. The program review committee will include national or regional experts in the field of the department under review and University of Iowa staff/faculty members who are stakeholders of the department. The program review committee will:

1. Respond to the departmental program review charge, the departmental self-study, and on-campus (or online) interviews and observations. If members of the campus community are unable to participate in the on campus review during the scheduled time, the review team will set aside additional time to visit via phone, skype, or face to face.
2. Write a report of their findings within 30 days of the site visit.

The department will suggest up to three external reviewers and one internal reviewer to serve on the program review committee. External reviewers should be experts in the field of the department under review and should be from aspirational institutions i.e. from departments at other institutions the department aspires to emulate. The internal reviewer should be a key stakeholder of the department, but should not be current or past departmental employees. The internal reviewer will provide context on the University of Iowa and the department under review for the external reviewers.

The departmental director and program review coordinator will submit a list of potential reviewers to the AIR staff member for review, including reviewer names, current position/employer, and rationale for their inclusion. Upon final confirmation of reviewers, the departmental director will formally invite the reviewers to participate in the review process.

Self-Study

I. Development of the Self-Study

Each program review should begin with a self-study. Data and artifacts help tell the story of the department's work. Data may include learning outcomes data, satisfaction data, usage numbers, fiscal data, historical trends, or other sources. Artifacts may include relevant printed publications, reports, departmental strategic or annual plans, awards, etc. Any particular professional standards associated with the department in review should be incorporated. These should be integrated into the self-study, to be shared with the program review committee prior to the site visit.

The self-study will contain the following:

1. Table of Contents
2. Executive Summary
3. An introduction to the department including recent history, organizational framework, departmental strategic plan, and current diversity, equity , and inclusion intitiatives
4. Summary of relevant data (to the extent possible, disaggregate student data across identity categories (race/ethnicity, gender, first-generation, etc.)
5. Overview of the following standards (replace the CAS standards with professional/national standards selected by the department if necessary)
    a. Departmental Mission
    b. Departmental Programs
    c. Organization & Leadership
    d. Human Resources
    e. Ethics
    f. Law, Policy, & Governance
    g. Diversity, Equity, & Access
    h. Institutional & External Relations
    i. Financial Resources
    j. Technology
    k. Facilities & Equipment
    l. Assessment & Evaluation
6. An overview of any programmatic or service efficiencies found during the proces of the self-study
7. Key issues to be addressed by the review team (challenges, concerns, etc.). This information may also be addressed in the department program review charge.

A more detailed description of the components of the self-study can be found in the appendix.

II. Self-Study Submission

The departmental director will submit the self-study to the AIR staff member no later than one month prior to the site visit. The program review coordinator will share the self-study with members of the program review committee prior to the site visit.

Review by Program Review Committee

The reviewers will conduct a minimum two-day on-site (or online) review. A reviewer's role is to provide expert, unbiased, professional opinion regarding the performance of a particular department. The department will be

responsible for funding the costs associated with the program review committee's travel (i.e. meals, flights, etc.) and the Office of the Vice President for Student Life will provide up to $1500 honorarium per reviewer.

Site Visit

The site visit should provide opportunities for the program review committee to speak to key stakeholders including:

1. Department staff members
2. Campus partners
3. Departmental and Division leadership
4. Community partners
5. Students, including affinity groups
6. Customers
7. Alumni

The site visit should also include time for the committee to: meet individually with the director, appropriate associate or assistant vice president, and Vice President for Student Life, begin summary conversations to support report writing, and participate in wrap up meeting with the director, the AIR staff member, appropriate associate or assistant vice president, and the Vice President for Student Life.

A staff host will provide support to the review committee during the site visit. The staff host provides meeting transition/transportation assistance, introductions, and addresses any needs of the groups and/or review team. This individual does not attend the site visit sessions/meetings unless stated in the schedule. The program review coordinator and the director of the department will select the staff host.

Program Review Committee Report

Within 30 days of the program review team's campus visit, the reviewers will provide a written assessment of the department including areas of excellence and improvement, recommendations for future practice, and any other relevant observations. Issues related to personnel are not within the purview of the program review process. If there are personnel related concerns, individuals should be encouraged to utilize the services of their direct supervisor, Human Resources, or the Office of the Ombudsperson. A report outline is included in the appendix.

The report will be submitted to the department director, the AIR staff member, the appropriate associate or assistant vice president, and the Vice President for Student Life. This group will meet to discuss the report within a weeks of receipt. The program review committee should be available for up to three weeks after the submission of the report to answer any questions. The director will share the final report with departmental staff members.

Departmental Response and Action Plan

The department director will submit an action plan responding to reviewer recommendations to the AIR staff member within a month of receipt of the final report. The plan should include:

1. Proposed goals/review recommendations
2. Timeline for completion
3. Responsible parties
4. Implementation strategy
5. Metrics to measure progress and an evaluation process

Follow up will include:

1. A summary of the program review and the department's planned next steps should be shared with stakeholders who participated in the review process.
2. Program review documents (including report and work plans) will be posted on the Office of the Vice President for Student Life website.
3. Directors will report updates on the plan at the end of the academic year.
4. Changes made based on recommendations should be highlighted in the Division of Student Life Quarterly Reports.

Compensation and Salary Review

After completion of the departmental program review, departments will be eligible to undergo a market analysis to review staff compensation and salary. The analysis will be overseen by DSL Human Resources, and if you have any questions contact the DSL Senior HR Director. Departments may also be eligible for a compensation and salary market analysis during other timely opportunities (such as significant changes in the market). Departments should contact HR upon receipt of the their final report to inform HR that the salary review process can move forward. It is at the discretion of HR to start the review process.

Appendix

1. Program Review Schedule
2. Program Review Timeline
3. Self-Study Guidelines
4. Program Review Committee Report Outline
5. Departmental Response and Action Plan Outline

Program Review Schedule

Department	Timeline
Office of the Dean of Students	**Spring 2018**
University Counseling Service	**Spring 2018**
Leadership & Engagement	**Fall 2018**
University Housing	**Spring 2019**
University Dining	**Spring 2019**
Student Health	**Fall 2019**
Student Disability Services	**Fall 2019**
PROGRAM REVIEWS ON HOLD DUE TO COVID-19	Spring 2020; Fall 2020
Student Legal Services	**Spring 2021**
Student Wellness	**Spring 2021**
Recreational Services	**Fall 2021**
Women's Resource & Action Center	Fall 2021
Multicultural & International Student Support & Engagement	Spring 2022
Rape Victim Advocacy Program	Spring 2022
Student Health	Fall 2022
Iowa Memorial Union	Fall 2022
Assessment, Improvement, & Research	Spring 2023
Budget and Finance	Spring 2023
Human Resources	Spring 2023
Student Life Communications	Fall 2023

Program Review Timeline

Activity	Timeframe
Notification of program review	3, 6, 12 months
Outline program review timeline	12 months
Department orientation meeting	6 months
Propose reviewers	6 months
Establish self-study protocol	6 months
Finaliize program review dates	6 months
Finalize program review charge	5 months
Formal invitations to reviewers	5 months
Department conducts self-study	5 months
Schedule two meetings with the review team	4 months
Finalize travel logistics and reviewer catering (disregard if review is online)	3 months
Reserve meeting spaces for stakeholder interviews (disregard if review is online)	3 months
Draft itinerary for site visit	2 months
Check in meeting with Assessment, Improvement, & Research	2 months
Invite stakeholders to interview sessions	2 month
Final draft self-study due	1 month
Self-study submitted to review committee	4 weeks
Send final itinerary to review committee	2-3 weeks
Site visit	
Program review committee report due	1 month
Action plan due	2 months

Self-Study Guidelines

Each department will prepare an in depth self-study prior to the site visit by the program review committee. The self-study will contain the following:

1. Table of Contents
2. Executive Summary – one-page document highlighting the contents of the self-study. Key data points/strengths/challenges should be addressed in this portion.
3. An introduction to the department – departmental history and organizational framework (org charts), departmental strategic plan, current diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, constituents served, key data points, learning outcomes, assessment plan and results, etc.
4. Summary of relevant data – data related to learning outcomes, program outcomes, usage, access, certifications, memberships, retention, etc. To the extent possible disaggregate data by identity groups (race/ethnicity, gender, first-generation status, etc.)
5. Overview of the following standards (replace the CAS standards with professional/national standards selected by the department if necessary):
   a. Departmental Mission
   b. Departmental Programs
   c. Organization & Leadership
   d. Human Resources
   e. Ethics
   f. Law, Policy & Governance
   g. Diversity, Equity & Access
   h. Institutional & External Relations
   i. Financial Resources
   j. Technology
   k. Facilities & Equipment
   l. Assessment & Evaluation

Each of these standards is explained in detail within each department's CAS Self-Assessment Guide. Members of the review team will receive the SAG to inform their practice. Please utilize the SAG to provide information regarding each of the standards above in the self-study.

6. Programmatic and service efficiencies – an overview of any resource, funding, or staff efficiencies that were found as a part of the self-study process
7. Key issues – any internal or external challenges/concerns facing the department, staff, etc. that the review team should examine further. These may also be outlined in the program review charge.

Program Review Committee Report Outline

Based on the findings from the self-study and the site visit, the program review committee is asked to assess the department's performance and offer suggestions for future improvement through a written report. The suggested outline for the report is located below; however, the review team members are encouraged to include any issues or topics they deem necessary. Issues related to personnel are not within the purview of the program review process. The example below utilizes CAS Standards. Reviewers are encouraged to update the template with the standards selected by the department.

Step One: Executive Summary

Please provide narrative addressing the following:

1. Overview of Process: Describe the general timeline of events and the methods or processes the review team took to develop this report.
2. Areas of Excellence: Describe what the department does well, how the department supports the division's mission and priorities, and how the department could be seen as pioneers/leaders in the field (if applicable).
3. Areas for Improvement: Describe the areas that the department should improve on and the reasons that these areas need improvement.

Step Two: Assessment of Significant Items

First, provide a broad overview of strengths and areas of improvement. Detailed descriptions of strengths and improvements related to the specific standards should be outlined below. The program review committee can determine whether to use the table format or a narrative or other format.

Standard	Discrepancies	Strengths	Needed Improvements
Mission			
Program			
Organizational and Leadership			
Human Resources			
Ethics			
Law, Policy, and Governance			
Diversity, Equity, and Access			
Institutional and External Relations			

Financial Resources			
Technology			
Facilities and Equipment			
Assessment and Evaluation			

Step Three: Recommended follow up actions.

Reviewers can utilize a separate section for recommended actions or can integrate recommendations within the overview of the standards.

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12.

Step Four: Concluding Comments

Share any additional comments for the good of the department, division, or university. Please note that this written report will be distributed to members of the department.

Departmental Response and Action Plan Outline

The Division of Student Life fosters student success by creating and promoting inclusive educationally purposeful services and activities within and beyond the classroom. The departmental program review process empowers departments within the Division of Student Life to critically evaluate their work and their effect on the UI student experience through a lens of continuous improvement. As a unit of the Division of Student Life, [department] engaged in a program review process in [date]. [Department] completed a comprehensive self-study and hosted [two] external reviewers and [one] internal reviewer for a multi-day site visit. The external reviewers were [list reviewers]. This action plan is intended to be a living document based on the current campus environment. Action items and outcomes may change.

Recommendation	Responsibility	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Needs/ Cost	Partners/ Collaborators	Progress Updates & Success outcomes
#1:							
#2							
#3							
#4							

Adapted from The University of Tennessee Knoxville Division of Student Life Program Review Guidelines. Updated 12.1.2022