

Periodic Review of Units in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Purpose of the Review

The [Iowa Board of Regents](#) requires that all academic programs be reviewed on a seven-year cycle. This is part of the [University Policy Manual](#). In CLAS, this requirement is normally satisfied in the form of a unit review that focuses on the quality and impact of the unit's educational programs and teaching; the quality of the faculty's research, scholarship, or artistic activities; and the unit's service to the University, the state, and the disciplines represented in it. When needed, the review recommends steps that should be taken to improve the unit's quality and increase its impact on the discipline, the college, and the state.

Scope of the Review

At the time the review is initiated, the Dean meets and consults with the DEO, administrator, and the unit self-study committee on the scope of the review. Together they determine the focus of the review and the questions specific to the unit that the review should address. Subsequent to this meeting the unit prepares a self-study that is organized according to the outline provided below. This stage in the review process ensures that the review reflects the current circumstances of the unit, anticipates changes in the relatively near term, creates an opportunity for unit self-examination and initiative, and promotes productive conversation on the review issues.

The review self-study must include responses to the quality and focus of the unit and results of the previous review. The scope normally will also include additional questions which, in the view of the College and the unit, are particularly relevant to the future of the unit. In some reviews, circumstances such as a shift in faculty composition, change in student demand for the major, change in national rank of the unit, or emerging nationwide trends in the discipline may necessitate an especially comprehensive treatment of the review questions being answered.

Self-Study Committee

One of the crucial steps is to establish a self-study committee from among the unit's faculty that will play a pivotal role in assessing the unit's strengths, areas for improvement, and future directions. This is typically 3-5 people, which may or may not include the DEO. However, the size of the committee may depend on the size and complexity of the academic unit. The

selection of this committee is important, as it will comprise individuals who possess the necessary expertise, objectivity, and commitment to ensuring a comprehensive and thorough evaluation. The best-qualified faculty for the committee will have demonstrated a strong dedication to the unit's mission, a broad understanding of its curriculum and goals, and a willingness to engage in constructive dialogue. A diverse composition of the committee, including representatives from different academic ranks and areas of specialization, will foster a well-rounded evaluation. Additionally, considering individuals who have experience with external accreditation processes or department/unit reviews can be beneficial. The committee should reflect the values of inclusivity, collaboration, and academic excellence.

Kickoff Meeting

The Dean's Office will hold a Kickoff Meeting with the DEO, administrator, and the members of the self-study committee. Important agenda items at that meeting will be discussion of what the review is, why it is occurring, the focus of the review and the questions to be addressed in the self-study. Discussion may also determine unit specific questions to address that will support a foundation for evaluating the unit.

Unit Self-Study Format Instructions

The self-study narrative should be limited to 15 pages, not including appendices, with one-inch margins and a 12-point serif font. Appendices should be added in the order listed in the next section.

Appendices to the Self-Study

1. The report from the last review of the unit
2. Data reflecting the national standing of the unit and its programs
3. Unit's hiring plan
4. Student data to be provided. Student enrollments, number of graduates, and employment or other placement outcomes, such as continuing education, by major and level (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, professional) since the previous review.
5. Unit plan for assessing outcomes of the undergraduate major program(s) and graduate major programs, with information/evidence from each year since the last review
6. A summary record of external research support since the previous review
7. A link to the University's General Catalog describing the unit's programs

Work of the Review Committee

Appointment of Committee Members

The Dean appoints the internal and external members of the review committee in consultation with the Associate Deans. Nominations for external reviewers are solicited from the unit. (For guidelines, see <https://clas.uiowa.edu/deos/guidelines-nominating-external-reviewers>.)

Review Visit

The review committee spends one to two days interviewing faculty, staff, and students in the unit. The committee may also interview other faculty and administrators suggested by the unit, the College, or the reviewers themselves. The unit and the Office of the Dean cooperate in preparing the schedule of the reviewers' interviews. The Dean's Office transmits the schedule to the reviewers two weeks before the review visit. The reviewers ordinarily meet with unit faculty in groups. The unit includes in the review schedule meetings with graduate students, and if possible, with undergraduate students, and encourages as many students as possible to attend. The review begins and concludes with meetings with leadership from CLAS and the Graduate College and with the unit leader.

Review Report

The review committee submits its report to the Dean. The Dean then transmits the report to the DEO, who shares the report with faculty, staff, and students. Any evaluative comments about identified or identifiable persons (including the DEO) must be separately reported to the Dean, who will notify the persons commented on and provide them access to the comments. The Dean shall maintain the confidentiality of these comments as needed.

Unit Response to the Review Report

The Dean, in transmitting the review committee report, will solicit a written response, including the correction of any factual errors, from the unit.

Collegiate Response to the Review Materials

The Deans of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College discuss the self-study, the review report, and the response of the unit with the CLAS Executive Committee before transmitting a joint written response to the review. The DEO shares the Colleges' response with the faculty and staff. The review process officially concludes with the transmission of the Deans' response to the unit.

Access to the Review Documents

After the Deans' response to the review has been transmitted to the unit and to the Provost's office, the review materials are treated as public documents, except those (such as the assessment of the DEO or other individuals) that are prepared with an explicit expectation of confidentiality.

The DEO has the responsibility of making the review materials available to faculty, staff, and students of the unit. The College will make the review documents available to others upon request.

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