

External Program Review University of Idaho

Overview

Program review, as it is widely used across the nation, is evaluation aimed at building quality, delivering cost-effective programs, and responding to needs and constraints, and thereby enhancing an institution's fulfillment of its mission. The primary purpose of program review is self-assessment, not financial enhancement. Using a set of criteria or performance indicators, judgments are made about a program's centrality, quality, need/demand, and cost-effectiveness. These judgments are the major guide for strategic planning for the programs.

The UI plans to conduct external program reviews of its academic and service/support programs for the purposes of improving the quality of those programs, providing accountability data for strategic planning, and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the institution as it fulfills its mission. Annually, unit data profiles (on selected quantitative indicators) are monitored internally and then reported to the Office of the State Board of Education/Regents.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) letter (12/15/94) reaffirming the accreditation of the UI restated two recommendations from the Evaluation Committee Report, one of which was related to Standard V: *Educational Program and Its Effectiveness*. The Evaluation Committee perceived that the UI "did not take full advantage of the self-study for critical evaluation of units, programs, majors, concentrations, and degrees and their role in the development and mission of the entire institution." They were concerned about maintenance of quality "given the number of programs, especially at the graduate level, and the available resources." To this end they recommended that the academic administration "exercise the leadership and coordination necessary for periodic program review that will inform future planning and further the relationship between the University's mission and goals and education programs." Even so, it should be noted that among the general commendations in the report was one for UI's student/program outcomes assessment program.

Thorough External Program Reviews (EPR) of both academic and service/support programs will be conducted on a seven-year cycle (with variations planned to correlate with specialized accreditation practices). We anticipate that external program review, along with ongoing annual planning, academic outcomes assessment, and specialized accreditation (all of which will be incorporated in the reviews where possible), will become part of our routine institutional processes.

In the external program review process, the unit faculty and staff will conduct a self-study of the program(s) relative to defined criteria, gathering both qualitative and quantitative information for this purpose. (Those departments with specialized accreditation will be able to use content from their self-studies and evaluating team report for this EPR self-study and vice versa.)

A review team will assess the program quality with respect to the questions and criteria provided, as well as the role of the program in the UI environment relative to UI role and mission, and goals. The composition of each team will be tailored to each unit, integrating external peers, UI faculty and administrators, and others. A seven-year cycle (with some variations to accommodate specialized accreditation cycles) will be followed for the thorough EPRs. Vice presidents, vice provosts, and academic deans (hereafter referred to as university level administrators) will be invited to review and suggest modifications to the schedule before it is finalized.

The review team will submit a written review and evaluation of the program. The unit administrator and university level administrator will reflect on the perceptions and recommendations of the review team, and provide a response to the recommendations as well as proposed actions, which will be forwarded with the review team's report to the Office of the President and Provost. Copies should be provided to the Office of Institutional Planning and Budget and the External Program Review Committee.

When external program reviews are joined with an active planning process, we believe we will be able to better map the future of the UI in ways that will enable us to respond to the economic and educational needs of the state and region, and fulfill our mission with greater effectiveness.

Purposes of External Program Review

The overarching goal of conducting external program reviews is to enhance UI's fulfillment of its role, mission, and goals by providing decision-makers the information needed to build quality programs and deliver these programs cost-effectively. More specific objectives for the institution are to:

- (1) enable UI to meet goals implied by our role and mission effectively;
- (2) improve UI's ability to respond to student demand and to regional and state educational and economic needs;
- (3) improve the interface of key performance indicators, quality improvement, and ongoing assessment efforts with strategic planning;
- (4) provide a sound foundation for the unit's internal planning and budgeting decisions;
- (5) broaden the knowledge base for establishing priorities, strategies, and budgets;
- (6) make cost-effective use of state resources as we fulfill our mission; and
- (7) assist the institution in making sound decisions regarding allocation and reallocation of funds in an era of constrained resources.

External Program Review Participants and Their Responsibilities

Major participants are as follows:

1. First and foremost, program personnel/faculty, who have four central responsibilities described below, and include the department chair or director (hereafter referred to as the unit administrator), and the Dean, Vice President or Vice Provost responsible for the unit (hereafter referred to as the university-level administrator.)
2. The External Review Team, which will review the program or unit using the UI criteria. Information sources for the team will be the self-study, with on-site interviews, observations, and document/facility review. The team may comprise one internal reviewer from outside of the college or service/support area who serves as the team's chair and campus liaison, as well as the external reviewers.
3. The university-level administrator's office handles all routine matters related to each external program review including designation of the review team (with the participation of the unit administrators and review from the Provost's Office), and planning and participating in the campus visit.
4. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IRA) provides units with an overview of the EPR process and an orientation to the guidelines for the unit self-study. In addition, IRA is available to assist the unit administrator or university-level administrator as needed.

Unit Responsibilities:

1. Development of the self-study, responding to UI criteria and incorporating annual unit action plans for all targeted programs.
2. Participation in drawing up source lists or nominating persons for the external and internal review team.
3. Active participation in the review team's campus visit, to include such activities as interviews with the review team or team members; providing information such as course syllabi, research reports, benchmarking/target reports, budget, and other documents, unit and committee minutes, productivity and quality measures, and facilitating classroom observations/interviews, student interviews, and lab and field site review.
4. Collegial discussion of and response to evaluation and reviewer comments, and communication with the university-level administrator about the resulting priorities and proposed actions.

Units are encouraged to select someone (who may or may not be the unit administrator) to oversee progress on the self-study, act as coordinator for the entire process, and communicate with the External Program Review Committee, IPB, the Dean or Vice President, and other offices such as Institutional Research and Assessment as needed.

External Program Review Team Responsibilities:

The functions of the review team are to assess and report their judgments on:

- ?? the program quality according to the criteria provided;
- ?? the role of the program in the UI environment, relative to UI role and mission, and goals;
- ?? the projected value or feasibility of various planning alternatives and priorities set forth by the department; and
- ?? recommendations to assist the unit toward continual improvement

Prior to leaving campus, the review team holds exit conferences with the unit faculty/personnel and administrator, university-level administrator, and the External Program Review Committee, separately or concurrently. The final conference is with the Provost and President, providing a preliminary review and evaluation of the program.

Review Team Report

After visiting campus, the review team submits a written review and evaluation of the program to the university-level administrator and the reviewed program. The report provides reflections and judgments on

- ?? the unit self-study;
- ?? strengths and weaknesses relative to the criteria and questions provided;
- ?? the centrality of the program(s) to the UI role, mission, and goals;
- ?? the validity of the self-study's identification of demand and need for the program; and
- ?? evaluation of the various program improvement alternatives proposed by the unit in the context of available and projected resource levels.

Responses of Unit Personnel and Administrators to Review Team Report

After receipt of the written report, the unit administrator of the reviewed program will be invited to provide the university-level administrator with a written response to the report to include proposed actions to address recommendations. This response is to be provided within approximately 30 days of receipt of the evaluators' report. The university-level administrator may recommend to the program staff some revision of their responses. After accepting their final response, the university-level administrator will submit the report to the President's and the Provost's Offices with his or her own comments and proposed actions within three weeks.

The university-level administrator's report should normally contain such elements as:

- ?? General comments on the review team's report
- ?? General comments on the unit's response
- ?? Dean's/Vice President's recommendations, which will include:
 - Examination of program focus
 - Possible changes to program focus
 - Potential reallocation of resources
 - Other proposed actions

One year following the site visit the unit administrator and university-level administrator will be asked to follow-up the process with a review of actions and progress toward the recommendations to be submitted to the Provost, the Dean and the External Program Review Committee.

Consideration by the Provost and President

The report is then forwarded to the President's and the Provost's Offices along with

- (1) the unit self-study,
- (2) the Review Team's report,
- (3) the unit's response,
- (4) the university-level administrator's report, as described above.

General Unit Timeline for External Program Review

Specifics will be determined in advance, and adjusted in each case for other major events, but normally the timeline for a given unit will not extend beyond an academic year. The Review Team visit may occur in fall or spring, and other elements of the timeline will be adjusted accordingly.

Orientation of the unit to the EPR process and the guidelines for the Self-Study will occur the semester or year before the unit's scheduled review. For academic programs the process will involve the Provost's Office, the Office of Institutional Planning and Budget, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. For service/support programs the process will involve the Provost's Office, the Office of Institutional Planning and Budget, the Office of Program Review and Assessment, and the Vice President or Vice Provost of the program area under review.

Selection of Review Team	33-45 days
Preparation of Self-Study Report, review by IRA if requested	110-145 days
Self-Study Report Checked for Completeness by IRA	14-21 days
Review Team Evaluation of Self-Study Report	28-30 days
Campus Visit by Review Team	2.5-5 days
Preparation of Review Team Report	28-30 days
Unit Writing of Response to Review Team Report	21-28 days
University-level administrator's Report to Provost and President	14-21 days
Follow-up report	1 Year Later

**Self-Study Criteria for Academic External Program Review
Overview of the Self-Study Report**

- I. Mission and Vision
 - 1. Long-Range Planning and Goals
 - 2. Program Context
 - 3. Program Size

- II. Teaching/Undergraduate Education
 - 1. General Education
 - 2. Curriculum Changes
 - 3. Undergraduate Research
 - 4. Program Quality

- III. Graduate Education and Research
 - 1. Curriculum Changes
 - 2. Integration of Research and Graduate Program
 - 3. Research Initiatives and Partnerships
 - 4. Externally-sponsored Research
 - 5. Program Quality

- IV. Outreach
 - 1. Description and Changes
 - 2. Program Quality

- V. Enrollment
 - 1. Admission Criteria
 - 2. Recruitment and Retention Efforts
 - 3. Program Quality

- VI. Assessment
 - 1. Improvements
 - 2. Evaluate the Assessment

- VII. Personnel
 - 1. Quality and Productivity
 - 2. Operational Procedures
 - 3. Use of Human Resources
 - 4. Plans for Development

- VIII. Facilities
 - 1. Use of Space, Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- IX. Finances
 - 1. Summarize
 - 2. Plans for Development

- X. Innovation and Distinction

Self-Study Criteria for Academic External Program Reviews Issues and Data

I. MISSION AND VISION

Issues to be Addressed:

1. Long-Range Planning and Goals

Department/division role, mission or vision statement
Relation to UI Role and Mission
Department goals, objectives and action strategies

2. Program Context

Needs for programs (regional, state; societal/labor market; economic/educational needs, demand; uniqueness/ lack of duplication)

3. Program Size

Expanding educational opportunity in areas of current or anticipated occupational need

Data to be Reviewed for discussion of issues:

Accreditation history (specialized)
Administrative structure, major intra-departmental committees, advisory councils
Current degrees offered, majors/ minors,
Scope (undergraduate, masters/ doctoral levels),
Cost of new programs, demand for

II. TEACHING/UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Issues to be addressed:

1. General Education [On-campus and off-campus programs where appropriate]

UI General Education program, critical evaluation of its relation to department's programs (knowledge bases and abilities such as critical thinking)
Extension of general education knowledge and skills through departments' major(s)

2. Curriculum [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus programs]:

Changes to curriculum during last cycle, (7 years): List each curriculum change, reason/basis for change (e.g. outcomes assessment findings, accreditation requirements, licensure exam performance, needs assessment results, recommendations from advisory board or professional/ learned society), budgetary impact
Ways of including student initiative and reaction in curriculum improvement
Use of information and learning resources, library
Department plans for courses not offered in last two years
Use of joint-listed and cross-listed courses
Use of interdisciplinary courses

3. Undergraduate Research

4. Program Quality

Information on quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational efficiency of courses and programs wherever and however they are offered

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Requirements (entry, coursework, practica) for each degree offered
 Enrollment class/section size and credit hour production data
 (classified as lower division, upper division, dual, graduate-only courses)
 Frequency of offering each required course/access
 Instructional faculty FTE and contact loads
 Honors Program
 Interdisciplinary degree programs and emphasis
 List of courses in catalog but not offered in last two years
 List of joint-listed and cross-listed courses and enrollments
 Students (by location and delivery method)
 Locations/delivery methods of courses
 Continuing education, extension/service program offerings (scope, location)

III. GRADUATE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Issues to be addressed:

1. Curriculum [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus programs]:

Changes to curriculum during last cycle, (7 years): List each curriculum change, reason/basis for change (e.g. outcomes assessment findings, accreditation requirements, licensure exam performance, needs assessment results, recommendations from advisory board or professional/ learned society), budgetary impact
 Ways of including student initiative and reaction in curriculum improvement
 Use of information and learning resources, library
 Department plans for courses not offered in last two years
 Use of joint-listed and cross-listed courses
 Use of interdisciplinary courses
 Student involvement in research

2. Research Integration

3. Research Initiative and Partnerships

4. Externally-sponsored Research

Grants and contracts available

5. Program Quality

Information on quality of instruction, academic rigor, and educational efficiency of courses and programs wherever and however they are offered

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Requirements (entry, coursework, practica) for each degree offered
 Enrollment class/section size and credit hour production data
 (classified as lower division, upper division, dual, graduate-only courses)
 Frequency of offering each required course/access

Instructional faculty FTE and contact loads
 Honors Program
 Interdisciplinary degree programs and emphasis
 List of courses in catalog but not offered in last two years
 List of joint-listed and cross-listed courses and enrollments
 Students (by location and delivery method)
 Locations/delivery methods of courses
 Continuing education, extension/service program offerings (scope, location)
 Dollar amount expended over seven years
 Publications, competitions and awards
 Graduate program ranking/reputation
 Resource development (grants and contracts, collaboration with business and industry, etc.)

IV. Outreach

Issues to be addressed:

1. Description and Changes

2. Program Quality

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Locations/delivery methods
 Dollar amount expended over seven years
 Resource development (grants and contracts, collaboration with business and industry, etc.)

V. Enrollment Pattern Evaluation:

Issues to be addressed:

1. Admission Criteria

2. Recruitment and retention efforts

Efforts to improve by location
 Diversity improvement efforts
 Quality of students
 Discussion of student demographics

3. Program Quality

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Number enrolled as majors, number graduated in each major, by location, undergraduate and graduate, numbers of transfer students, pattern over 7 years
 Length of time to graduate (average) by degree program
 Admission criteria by location, pattern over 7 years
 Blend of gender, age, ethnicity over time, history of demand
 effects of targeted programs for recruitment or retention, placement/ activities after graduation (advanced studies, employment) by location

VI. Academic Student/Program Assessment: (reported separately for undergraduate programs, graduate programs, core/service courses, location):

Issues to be addressed:

1. Improvements

Assessment findings (academic program quality indicators)
Program improvements made based on assessment data

2. Assess the Assessment

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Student learning goals (by program or major)
Methods of assessing student learning used (during last 7 years)

VII. Personnel

Issues to be addressed:

1. Quality and Productivity

Creative accomplishments (e.g. books, refereed, peer reviewed publications, technical reports, artistic creations)
Diversity and improvement efforts
Interdisciplinary efforts
Faculty evaluation and productivity including instruction, advising, scholarship, research, service/outreach
Summary of continuing education efforts
Professional services to constituents
Quality measures of program

2. Operational procedures [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus programs]:

Operational policies relative to faculty (determination of assignment, methods of evaluation, incentives, recruiting, promotion, tenure)

3. Use of Human Resources [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus]

Faculty FTE and assignments

4. Plans for Development

Faculty development activities, participation

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Numbers of department faculty FTE, FTE assigned to instruction, etc.
Faculty workloads
Description/demography, research/instruction/extension/service distributions
Numbers, salaries, salary competitiveness

VIII. Facilities

Issues to be addressed:

1. Use of Space, Facilities, Technology and Equipment: [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus programs]:

Adequacy of support services including:
Library, information resources
Laboratories and equipment
Student, faculty, and department computer resources
Secretarial/clerical/technical
Adequacy of physical plant, space, facilities, technology

Data to be reviewed for discussion:
Physical plant, space, facilities, technology

IX. Finances

Issues to be addressed
1. Summarize

2. Plans for Development

Data to be reviewed for discussion:
Budgetary summary for program (personnel, operating, state and non-state funds, research, development efforts)
Scholarships and assistantships

X. Innovation and Distinction

Issues to be addressed
1. Innovations

2. Distinguishing characteristics

**Self-Study Criteria for Service/Support External Program Reviews
Overview of Self-Study Report**

- I. Mission and Vision
 - 1. Long-Range Planning and Goals
 - 2. Program Context
 - 3. Program Productivity

- II. Teaching/Undergraduate Education
 - 1. Services Provided

- III. Graduate Education and Research
 - 1. Services Provided

- IV. Outreach
 - 1. Description and Changes
 - 2. Program Quality

- V. Personnel
 - 1. Quality and Productivity
 - 2. Operational Procedures
 - 3. Use of Human Resources
 - 4. Plans for Development

- VI. Facilities
 - 1. Use of Space, Facilities, Technology and Equipment

- VII. Finances
 - 1. Summarize
 - 2. Plans for Development

- VIII. Advancement
 - 1. Supporting UI Initiatives
 - 2. Maximize Financial Support

- IX. Innovation and Distinction

Self-Study Criteria for Service/Support External Program Reviews Issues and Data

I. MISSION AND VISION

Issues to be Addressed:

1. Long-Range Planning and Goals

Department/division role, mission or vision statement
Relation to UI Role and Mission
Department goals, objectives and action strategies

2. Constituencies Served

Environmental factors (political, social, economic, technological, demographic, demand)

3. Program Productivity

Challenges, changes, achievements

Data to be Reviewed for discussion of issues:

Accreditation history (specialized)
Administrative structure, major intra-departmental committees, advisory councils
Cost of new programs, demand for

II. TEACHING/UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Issues to be addressed:

1. Evaluate Services [On-campus and off-campus programs where appropriate]

III. GRADUATE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Issues to be addressed:

1. Evaluate Services [On-campus and off-campus programs where appropriate]

IV. Outreach

Issues to be addressed:

1. Description and Changes

2. Program Quality

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Locations/delivery methods
Dollar amount expended over seven years
Resource development (grants and contracts, collaboration with business and industry, etc.)

V. Personnel

Issues to be addressed:

1. Quality and Productivity

Creative accomplishments (e.g. books, refereed, peer reviewed publications, technical reports, artistic creations)
 Diversity and improvement efforts
 Interdisciplinary efforts
 Evaluation and productivity including instruction, advising, scholarship, research, service/outreach
 Summary of continuing education efforts
 Professional services to constituents
 Quality measures of program

2. Operational procedures [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus programs]:

Operational policies relative to staff (determination of assignment, methods of evaluation, incentives, recruiting, promotion)

3. Use of Human Resources [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus]

FTE and assignments

4. Plans for Development

Staff development activities, participation

Data to be reviewed for discussion of issues:

Numbers of department staff
 Results oriented job descriptions
 Description/demography
 Numbers, salaries, salary competitiveness

VI. Facilities

Issues to be addressed:

1. Use of Space, Facilities, Technology and Equipment: [On-campus, continuing education, off-campus programs]:

Adequacy of support services including:
 Library, information resources
 Laboratories and equipment
 Student, faculty, and department computer resources
 Secretarial/clerical/technical
 Adequacy of physical plant, space, facilities, technology

Data to be reviewed for discussion:

Physical plant, space, facilities, technology

VII. Budgeting

Issues to be addressed

1. Summarize

2. Plans for Development

Data to be reviewed for discussion:

- Budgetary summary for program (personnel, operating, state and non-state funds, research, development efforts)
- Scholarships and assistantships

VIII. Advancement

Issues to be addressed

- 1. Supporting UI initiatives**
Programs, services and strategic initiatives

- 2. Maximizing Financial Support**
Federal, state and private contributions

IX. Innovation and Distinction

Issues to be addressed

- 1. Innovations**

- 2. Distinguishing characteristics**