

Guidelines for  
Academic Support Program Review

Texas Christian University

## **Procedure for Academic Support Program Review**

### **Purpose**

The Academic Support Program Review is designed to be a collaborative process that will enhance the mission of Texas Christian University by providing opportunities for programs and departments to assess, share, and improve our impact. Each program review is an opportunity for the department/unit and the campus to take a comprehensive look at the unit, to clearly state and then evaluate strengths and weaknesses, and to assess its future. Such a process allows Texas Christian University to engage with exciting new paths of educational inquiry and discovery, while also supporting quality and distinction in each academic support area.

The centerpiece of the review process is the departmental/unit self-study. It is expected that this self-study will elaborate the departmental ethos and provide an opportunity for reflection and critical evaluation of the department's directions, programs, and influence on the mission of TCU. As a synthesis document, the self-study will provide the basis for the Peer Review process. The self-study should involve an assessment of departmental strengths and weaknesses, and a strategy to meet the opportunities and challenges that the unit anticipates over the next six or so years.

### **Principles**

- The program review is part of an overall assessment plan that provides a portrait of program strengths and limitations and should result in program improvement.
- The process should be broadly participatory.
- The process should facilitate planning in areas such as assessment planning, program development, and resource allocation.
- The program review process allows TCU to account for its use of resources, develop support among its various constituencies, and provide collegial review.

### **Schedule of Academic Support Program Reviews**

Academic support programs usually will be reviewed every six years. In no case shall the time between reviews exceed ten years. The Academic Support Program Review process will begin in January with naming of the program review committee and will be completed by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (VCAA) with the assistance of the associate vice chancellors will establish a master calendar for program review. The Office for Assessment and Quality Enhancement (OA&QE) will maintain the program review calendar ([www.assessment.tcu/ProgramReviewCalendar.htm](http://www.assessment.tcu/ProgramReviewCalendar.htm)). Any adjustments or modifications to the existing review calendar require approval from the appropriate supervisor and immediate notification to the OA&QE.

### **Review Process: Phase I**

Notification of Departments Scheduled for Academic Program Review – By April 1<sup>st</sup>, each department/unit head and respective Associate Vice Chancellor will be notified that they are scheduled for an Academic Support Program Review during the next academic year. Department/unit heads are encouraged, however, to check the OA&QE website to check the Review Calendar ([www.assessment.tcu/ProgramReviewCalendar.htm](http://www.assessment.tcu/ProgramReviewCalendar.htm)).

Establishment of Review Committee. The Associate Vice Chancellor for the department/unit shall establish a review committee in consultation with the appropriate department/unit head. Each review committee must consist of at least three members from within TCU. The review committee members will have no official affiliation with the program under review. The review committee may include no more than one faculty member. The appropriate associate vice chancellor, in consultation with the department/unit head, will designate one member of the committee to serve as chair. In addition, the review committee may add supplemental committee members in non-voting status. The associate vice chancellor will communicate the names of the chair and members of the committee to the OA&QE by January 1<sup>st</sup>.

The review committee will construct a calendar for the program review and will be responsible for its maintenance. The voting members of the committee will conduct the review and write a formal report detailing their findings and substantive recommendations and suggestions.

Self-Study. The program under review must compile a Program Self-Study that includes the basic elements outlined below. The self-study is critically important to the review process. It should be viewed as an opportunity to explore and reflect upon the department's directions, celebrate the departmental achievements, and consider the means by which the mission of TCU is demonstrated through the department/unit. It should involve a description of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges for the department. Because of its nature, the self-study requirements are flexible, allowing the department to determine for itself the critical aspects and important challenges that face the unit. This Self-Study must be submitted to the OA&QE by February 1<sup>st</sup> of the review year.

The Review. The review committee will receive the departmental/unit Self-Study from the OA&QE by February 15<sup>th</sup> of the review year along with a listing of potential issues. The Review Committee will analyze the Self-Study, hold meetings with program staff, faculty, and possibly students to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the program, and delineate issues stemming from these resource materials. From this, the Review Committee will write a draft report with substantive suggestions and recommendations. The Review Committee will submit this draft to the OA&QE by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the review year. A meeting with the appropriate supervisor, department, unit head, members of the Review Committee, and the Director of the OA&QE will be scheduled to discuss the draft report of the committee's findings. The Self-Study and the final report of the review committee will be forwarded to the department/unit head, the appropriate supervisor, and the VCAA no later than October 1st.

The Report and Response. A formal briefing will be scheduled with the department/unit head, supervisor, the Director of the OA&QE, and the VCAA to discuss the review committee's findings. The program under review will submit a formal action plan addressing the review committee's recommendations (no later than 30 academic days after the briefing) to the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor and the OA&QE. The Associate Vice Chancellor and the VCAA will, with discussion, approve the action plan and create a schedule and method of evaluation for assessing the success of the plan. The approved action plan will be given to the Department/unit Head and the OA&QE. The action plan will form the foundation of the next review cycle as well as guide planning and interim assessments such as the department annual report and program assessment plans.

## **Review Process: Phase II**

Indication for Phase II. The appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor and/or the VCAA may deem it necessary to further evaluate the program based on the findings of the Phase I review or the review of the action plan. They may extend the program review to include an external review component. This does not preclude a department/unit head from requesting an external review at any time during the process, subject to approval from the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor. Costs associated with external review are born by the Academic Affairs office.

Establishment of External Review Team. The appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor and VCAA, following consultation with the department/unit head, will select the external reviewer(s). The external reviewer(s) must come from similar programs at accredited institutions. Team members will have no official affiliation with the program under review. The team will submit a formal report of the findings and substantive recommendations and suggestions.

External Review Criteria. Criteria for the external program review will be the same as those established for the internal review. The appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor will make the criteria available to the external team members. The Program Portfolio from Phase I will also be made available to the external review team upon their selection.

External Review Process. The external reviewer(s) will review the Program Portfolio. The appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor, in consultation with the department/unit head, will schedule a two-day visit to the campus by the external reviewer(s). On the first day of the campus visit, the external reviewer(s) will hold separate meetings with the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor, the department chair, the VCAA, program staff, and students to discuss the program and pose questions that may arise from the materials. On the second day of the campus visit, the external reviewer(s) will meet with the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor and department/unit head to discuss the preliminary findings. Within 30 days, the external reviewer(s) will submit a draft written report of its findings to the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor. The appropriate

Associate Vice Chancellor, in consultation with the department/unit head, will review the draft report and, where appropriate, suggest revisions to the external review team within 30 days. A final report from the external team will be forwarded to the department chair, the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor, and the VCAA no later than 90 days from the date of the campus visit.

**Report and Response.** A formal briefing will be held to discuss the external review team's findings with the department/unit head, appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor, director of the OA&QE, and the VCAA. The program under review will submit a formal action plan addressing the review committee's recommendations no later than 60 academic days after the briefing. The appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor and the VCAA will approve the action plan and create a schedule and method of evaluation for assessing the success of the plan. The action plan will form the foundation of the next review cycle as well as guide planning and interim assessments such as the department annual report and program assessment plans.

### **Self-Study**

Critical elements for the program review will be determined by the appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor and department/unit head and approved by the VCAA, but the Program Self-Study must address, at a minimum, the areas noted below.

#### **1. Brief History/Profile of the Program**

A. Provide a brief overview of the history of the program including such things as changes in administrative organization; dates new programs were established; significant additions to the staff; and major changes in program direction.

#### **Required Appendix Item:**

A. Catalog copy

#### **2. Program Mission/Goals/Outcomes/Assessment Results**

- Describe the mission of the unit and its relation to the mission of the university.
- Describe the critical elements of the program,
- Describe program goals/ outcomes and the role of staff in formulating the goals/outcomes.
- Describe the process for assessing the extent to which goals/ outcomes are met.
- Describe the analysis of the assessment results for the past two years (at a minimum) and indicate how those have been used to make planning decisions.

#### **Required Appendix Items:**

A. Current program assessment plan (or access to the WEAVE Online system),

B. Assessment results for the past two years (or access to the WEAVE Online system), and

C. Previous program review documents (if applicable)

### 3. Staff Service to the University

- Note outstanding achievements/contributions, e.g., leadership in national professional/research organizations, external funding for individuals or groups, success in recruiting staff from underrepresented groups.
- Summarize the process for determining salary. The department/unit head and appropriate Associate Vice Chancellor should review salaries and be able to report that salaries are generally appropriate for the staff in the unit.
- **Required Appendix Items:**
  - A. Table of average and median salaries by rank. (when the number of staff in rank is < 3 report salary data in the aggregate),

### 4. Resources

- Describe the physical areas for the program. Include usual space and technological resources. Note strengths, limitations, and possible resolutions.
- Review the departmental budget in terms of history, constraints, and immediate needs linked to goals, etc.

### 5. Summary and Future Plans

- Describe the vision for the program over the next five to ten years.
- Describe any limiting factors not previously discussed that prevent, or will prevent, the program from fulfilling its mission and/or achieving its goals/outcomes.
- Describe how the program can overcome these limiting factors to fulfill the vision outlined above.
- Should additional resources become available, specify three to five priority actions for the next five years. Identify specific outcomes to be accomplished with the additional resources.
- Assuming existing resources, identify specific outcomes to be accomplished prior to the next program review.

### Calendar of Program Review Events

April 1 <sup>st</sup> of Prior Year	Notification of Academic Support Program Review
January 1 <sup>st</sup>	Review Committee Named
February 1 <sup>st</sup>	Self Study Submitted
February 15 <sup>th</sup>	Self Study Given to Review Committee
September 1 <sup>st</sup>	Draft of Program Review Results Completed
Prior to October 1 <sup>st</sup>	Meeting with Dept. Chair, Assoc. VC, and Review Team
October 1 <sup>st</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup>	Briefing with Assoc. VC, VCAA, and Dept/Unit Head
30 Academic Days Later	Action Plan Due to Assoc VC, VCAA, and OA&QE