

**ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROGRAM REVIEW**

**PROGRAM REVIEW COUNCIL AND  
SUBCOMMITTEE GUIDE  
Third Cycle  
2000 – 2009**

*(Revised July, 2008)*

ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW:  
PROGRAM REVIEW COUNCIL AND SUBCOMMITTEE GUIDE

THIRD CYCLE  
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## I. INTRODUCTION

As part of the third cycle planning process, a recommendation was made that a procedures guide be developed to assist subcommittees in their work. This guide has been developed to draw upon the experiences of previous reviewers and as such, we envision it as a “living document” that will be updated regularly through your input. Of course, you should feel free to contact the Office of Administration and Planning at any time you have questions or need additional information or support.

## II. PRC AND SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS: HOW WERE YOU SELECTED?

In the early spring of each year, nominations of individuals to serve on the Program Review Council are solicited from the University’s leadership (senior administration, line vice presidents and deans) and from the General Faculty Committee (GFC). At the fall meeting of the PRC, names of individuals to serve on subcommittees are recommended by the members of the Council, then appointed by the Office of Administration and Planning. Program Review Council members serve for a term of three years, and subcommittee members, for one year.

The selection of Program Review Council and subcommittee members is one of the most significant aspects of the program review process, since Council members’ credentials and professional stature lend an important measure of credibility to the overall process. Council and subcommittee members are therefore carefully selected and only individuals who are highly regarded and who have achieved tenure or reached more senior levels of administration are considered. Each year at the conclusion of the Council’s activities in the late spring, an experienced member of the Council is selected to serve as chair for the following year.

Each member of the Council serves as the chair of a review subcommittee, and the number of units undergoing review determines the number of individuals needed to serve on the Council in a given year.

## III. CONFIDENTIALITY

“Improvement” has been the primary focus and goal of program review since its inception. To this end, the process has always been evaluative, but each program review has also been conducted with an eye toward what changes can be made to enhance the unit, the school, and ultimately, the University. This mindset and approach differs from that used at many other institutions, where program review may serve as a tool for downsizing, for investigating or eliminating problematic units, or for other similar purposes. Also, at these institutions, the results of program review are often not confidential.

In the course of conducting each review, the goal is to obtain the most candid and accurate information possible. Also, the aim of program review is not to publicly embarrass a unit if problems are discovered but rather, to find a way to correct them. To achieve these goals, judiciously maintaining confidentiality—both regarding individual perspectives that are shared with you, as well as findings and recommendations—is an integral aspect of the program review process. **Therefore, anything you hear or that is discussed with you in the course of the review should be considered confidential and not**

**discussed with others outside the scope of the review process.** Confidentiality is of particular importance during any group meetings and it should be emphasized to the participants that they, too, should not share with anyone else, the remarks made during the meeting. This expectation of confidentiality exists not only while the review is being conducted, but also once the review has been completed.

Of course, program review reports and resulting agreements are shared with members of the respective unit, with the University's senior leadership (including deans and line vice presidents), and with University Trustees. The Office of Administration and Planning does not share program review materials with others outside these groups without the unit's express permission. However, units may choose to share their review materials (for example, many units find that sharing the report findings with the unit's advisory board or potential strategic partners can be beneficial), but the Office of Administration and Planning recommends that this should be done with a sense of consensus in the unit.

To enable members of the PRC and subcommittees to fully execute the reviews, the Office of Administration and Planning shares a variety of information with them. Because much of this information is highly sensitive, members should regard all information received through program review activities as confidential, and should not discuss it with anyone outside the review process.

Occasionally, you may have friends or colleagues who may be curious about what you are finding and may try to engage you in conversation. On rare occasions, we have even had newspaper reporters call members of subcommittees trying to find out information about particular units. However, you should not discuss the review with others outside the unit, the PRC, your subcommittee, or the Office of Administration and Planning.

#### **IV. THE REVIEW PROCESS: GUIDELINES FOR SUBCOMMITTEES**

The Office of Administration and Planning (OAP) is available to consult with the subcommittee on any issue that might arise during the course of the review, and to provide assistance or additional information wherever possible and needed. The following is a summary of the major tasks in chronological order. More detail on each of the tasks can be found in the referenced section of this document.

## **A. Chronology of Key Tasks for Subcommittees:**

### Before Receiving the Unit Self-Study Report:

- ❑ Meet and set aside dates and times during winter and spring quarters for conducting the review. (See Section B1)
- ❑ Review the background materials (the unit's Issues Statement and the information from the unit's prior review: unit self-study report, internal and external reports, external reviewer schedule, and follow-up report). (See Section B1)
- ❑ Determine whether any comparative data or a client satisfaction survey is required. (See Section B4)
- ❑ Prepare a preliminary list of individuals to be interviewed. Share this plan with the unit head and the OAP. Decide if and how the subcommittee wishes to divide the interviewing and/or report writing. (See Section B2)
- ❑ Prepare a preliminary list of questions to ask or issues to raise with the various constituents of the unit and related to the unit. (See Section B3)

### After Receiving the Unit Self-Study Report:

- ❑ Review the unit self-study report to determine if additional information or explanation is needed. (See Section C1)
- ❑ Refine the lists of potential interviewees and questions. (See Section C1)
- ❑ Conduct the review meetings. It is helpful to meet with the unit head at the beginning of the review, as well as at the end, to ask the unit head any questions that may have arisen during the series of interviews. (See Section C1)
- ❑ Meet with the external reviewers. Prepare a list of questions/issues to provide to the external reviewers either prior to their arrival or during the meeting with them on the first morning of their visit. The subcommittee will also be debriefed by the external reviewers at the end of their visit where they should provide an overview of their major findings. (See Section C2)

### Drafting the Report

- ❑ It is helpful to begin drafting the report prior to receiving the written report from the external reviewers. The subcommittee should have received a preview of their major findings at the last meeting during their visit. (See Section C3)
- ❑ An executive summary is very helpful and is strongly suggested. (See Section C3)
- ❑ The recommendations should be summarized at the end, even if already included in the body of the report. The recommendations should be action-oriented, include deadlines where

applicable, and identify a responsible agent or agents. The text of the recommendations is used to develop the implementation agreements. (See Section C3)

- ❑ Utilize appendices and confidential addenda where necessary. (See Section C3)
- ❑ Upon receipt of the external reviewers' report, complete and/or modify the subcommittee's report where required.

#### Presenting the Report

- ❑ The subcommittee's "draft" report is presented to the PRC for full discussion during the Spring Meetings. (See Section C4)
- ❑ The "draft" report should be submitted to OAP no later than one week prior to that presentation date to allow Council members adequate time to read it. (See Section C4)
- ❑ The presentation to the PRC consists of a 5 to 10 minute presentation of the *highlights* of the report with the remainder of the time used for discussion between the subcommittee and PRC members. (See Section C4)
- ❑ Revise the report per the PRC's suggestions, if any. (See Section C4)
- ❑ The "final" report is then submitted to the unit head for a factual review. Any major discrepancies (particularly if they affect a recommendation) will be discussed with the subcommittee. (See Section C5)
- ❑ The subcommittee will present this "final, fact-checked" report to members of central administration. (See Section C6)

## **B. Prior to Receiving the Unit Self-Study Report**

### **1. Developing a Timeline and Plan that Leads to Report Writing**

PRC subcommittee chairs will find that establishing an initial timeline and plan for the subcommittee's work is useful. Not only does it provide a visual overview and reminder of the activities that need to be completed at certain times, it also ensures that all members of the subcommittee have a shared understanding of the commitments and can plan their schedules accordingly.

As key dates are refined or added to the schedule (e.g., external reviewer visit dates, the subcommittee's presentation of its draft report to the PRC, etc.) the timeline can be re-examined to see what adjustments need to be made to interview schedules and other committee activities in order to meet these deadlines.

### **2. Getting Started**

Although subcommittees cannot really begin their work in earnest until after members have received the unit's self-study report, there are some initial steps that can be taken in the fall that will give the subcommittee a leg up on the review, and will enable it to "hit the ground running" when the unit self-study report arrives:

1. When first appointed, the chair of the subcommittee will be provided with contact information on the unit by the OAP (the unit head will be notified of the review chair at the same time). The subcommittee chair should contact the unit head to introduce him or herself at that point. Early on, the unit should identify a liaison to work with the subcommittee, and you can talk to the unit head about this at that time. This person will provide assistance to the subcommittee throughout the review process in setting up interviews, pulling together additional requested documentation, etc. The liaison may be another faculty person, or a department administrator/secretary; the selection of this individual is up to the unit. Units may also have a self-study committee, and the unit head should be able to give you the names of these individuals as well.
2. When the members of the subcommittee are appointed, the OAP will notify the chair of the subcommittee and the unit head of the appointments. The subcommittee chair should then contact each of the subcommittee members to introduce him or herself, and to welcome them to the committee.
3. The OAP will also distribute the unit's Issues Statement, prior review materials (unit self-study report, PRC and external reviewer reports, implementation agreement, follow-up reports), external reviewers' itinerary (if any), and a list of current department faculty/unit staff and heads of related or collaborative units. These materials will enable the subcommittee to begin determining the individuals with whom they wish to meet and perhaps any sequencing that may be required.

Once subcommittee appointments have been finalized, it is highly recommended that subcommittees meet at least once in the fall to organize the review. The chair should coordinate this meeting. During this planning meeting, the subcommittee can accomplish several things:

4. Set aside blocks of time during winter and spring quarters to conduct their interviews, meetings, and other work. Then, once the unit self-study report is received, the time has been pre-allocated for the interviews and the subcommittee will not have to scramble to find times when all are

available. It is also recommended that more time slots than the subcommittee anticipates needing be reserved, and then be cancelled if unused.

5. Review the materials from the unit's prior review (unit self-study report, PRC and external reviewer reports, implementation agreement, follow-up reports, etc.). These materials will be sent to you soon after you are appointed. Reviewing these previous review materials will give the subcommittee a good sense of the background of the unit.
6. Review the list of issues that have been submitted for the current review and the feedback given to the unit on its issues. These will help to guide the subcommittee in developing a plan for its work (this plan will be fine-tuned during the course of the review, as the information that is gathered either reinforces certain issues or new ones become apparent). You should keep an open mind. Don't assume that the most important issues are going to be those raised in the unit self-study report. They may be, but the unit may also be overlooking key issues. Your most valuable role is as an unbiased outsider who can provide an objective perspective on the state of the unit.
7. Depending on the size of the unit under review and the preferences of the subcommittee, the subcommittee can develop a preliminary plan for assigning responsibility for various aspects of the review (e.g., interviews, determination and writing of the various sections of the report, etc.) to members of the subcommittee. Subcommittee members can identify key areas that are of particular interest to them, and these interests can lead to that member being assigned responsibility for covering that particular area in the review.
8. Prior to this meeting, the subcommittee chair obtains (either from OAP or from the unit directly) a list of names of current members of the unit to begin developing an interview schedule. The subcommittee can then begin working with the unit to schedule these meetings. Since this can be a time-consuming process, getting started early, before schedules completely fill up, can greatly facilitate this aspect of the process. The OAP will assist you in scheduling meetings with senior administrators. (See Section 2 below.)
9. There are a number of individuals from outside the unit that the subcommittee can meet with prior to receiving the unit self-study report. This is especially the case with administrative units, who have numerous "customers" throughout the University with which they interact. Academic units may also have collaborative partnerships with other departments or centers that should be explored.
10. The subcommittee can develop a preliminary list of questions to explore with the unit; these can be tailored and refined for individual meetings in the unit and for meetings with the external reviewers once the unit self-study report has been received and reviewed (see Section 3, below).
11. The subcommittee can determine the types of data it will need to conduct the review (See Section 4, below.)
12. If members of the subcommittee are from both the Evanston and Chicago campuses and/or you require parking stickers for subcommittee-related meetings (e.g., the unit being reviewed is on a different campus than the members of the subcommittee), these can be provided to you by the OAP. Simply email or call in your request in advance so that we can provide you with the appropriate sticker or waiver prior to your meeting.

### **3. Developing a List of Potential Interviewees**

Although the subcommittee will not have detailed information on the members of the unit until the unit self-study report with the faculty vitae or staff resumes is received, as noted above, the subcommittee can begin developing its interview plan in the fall. Beginning this process early will help ensure that the

subcommittee has adequate time and opportunity to meet with key individuals, accommodating all schedules as much as possible.

A key prerequisite to success of the review process is buy-in by the unit itself. Ultimately, it is the people in the unit that must implement the recommendations. It is therefore important that they feel involved in the process. If you interview only a select few in the unit, the rest are likely to feel disenfranchised and be less likely to support the change process.

1. While recognizing that the staffing of each unit is somewhat unique, there are general guidelines regarding with whom the subcommittee should meet. The following table summarizes the individuals the subcommittee should plan to meet with during the course of the review. For small units, the subcommittee may choose to meet jointly with each of the following:

ACADEMIC UNITS	ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS
Chair	Department Head
All tenured/tenure-eligible faculty ( <i>individual meetings; you should also be attentive to the roles that some of these individuals play within the unit, e.g., Director of Undergraduate Studies, Director of Graduate Studies, etc.</i> )	Key professional staff ( <i>individual meetings</i> )
Dean	Line vice president
Cross-section of ( <i>can meet in small groups</i> ): – graduate students – undergraduate students – post-docs (if applicable) – residents (if applicable)	Primary constituents ( <i>can meet in small groups</i> ): – professional staff – faculty – students – outside contacts, vendors, etc.
Chairs/faculty in related areas who are affiliated with the unit (or could interact more with the unit)	Heads/individuals in related areas who are affiliated with the unit, or who utilize the services provided by the unit
Senior administrators: – Dean of the Graduate School – Others relevant to the unit (i.e., joint program heads, center directors)	Senior administrators: – Senior Administrator to whom the unit reports – Associate Vice President for Budget Planning, Analysis and Allocation – Others relevant to the unit

2. For larger units, the subcommittee may choose to split the interviews among the subcommittee. For very large units (for example, Medicine, which has many divisions), it is not possible to meet with all tenured/tenure-eligible faculty. In these cases, the subcommittee should work closely with the department and with the OAP to develop a representative list of faculty from each of the sub-areas.
3. As the subcommittee considers its list of potential interviewees, it should pay special attention to the role that these individuals play (or have played) in the department. The subcommittee should request an organizational chart from the unit (or a list of the department’s various committees) when they ask for the list of members of the unit.

4. Few, if any, units work in an academic vacuum, and thus each unit usually has significant relationships with other units within the University. Some of these relationships are obvious (for example, the basic life science units connect on a number of levels, as do the language and literature departments). Some connections are much less obvious (for example, the Program of African Studies with Preventive Medicine on issues relating to AIDS). When developing a list of individuals to be interviewed, the subcommittee should be especially attentive to related units and to identifying key people within these units with whom they should meet (the chairs of these units should definitely be included, but there may be others as well).
5. In the third cycle, there are a number of units that are grouped according to a collective area (e.g., basic life sciences, cognitive sciences, humanities, etc.). The rationale for grouping these units is to derive an element of synergy from conducting all of the similar reviews at once, so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. As the individual subcommittees reviewing units in these groups carry out their reviews, it is highly likely that there will be some cross-cutting issues that arise, or information that is gathered that has importance for other units in the group. In these particular instances, subcommittees are encouraged to communicate with one another on areas of mutual concern that can be mutually beneficial to each of the reviews.
6. Meet with the unit head early in the process; the unit head will provide you with an overview of the unit. You may do this prior to receiving the unit self-study report. Subsequent meetings may also help answer any questions arising from the self-study and/or to clarify issues once interviews have been completed.
7. It is critical to talk to the Dean or senior administrator with responsibility for the unit. A significant pitfall of reviewing units independently is that it can lead to a myopic perspective. The true performance of a unit must be viewed in terms of the larger strategy of which it is part. Talking to the Dean or administrative head is essential to gaining an understanding of the larger strategy.
8. The subcommittee is *strongly encouraged* to share its plan for interviews with the unit head and the OAP, and seek input on particular persons who should be interviewed and issues that should be addressed. (See above for more specific information on who should be included on this list.)
9. Once the list is finalized, the subcommittee should contact the unit for assistance in setting up these meetings. (*Note: The unit liaison should arrange these meetings. Interviews should not take place until after the subcommittee has received and read the unit's self-study report, although they can be set up in advance.*) As many meetings as possible should take place prior to the external reviewers' visit, although the scheduling of the external reviewers' visit will certainly affect this. You should plan on meetings with individuals of at least 30 minutes, although group meetings may be longer.
10. If you have meetings with senior administrators, the OAP will be happy to make the arrangements for you. These meetings are generally scheduled for one hour unless you believe less time is needed.
11. For individual interviews, the department should be able to reserve a conference room (or similar space) for you to use to conduct the interviews.
12. A strategy that has worked well for subcommittees is to schedule interviews in several blocks of time (e.g., 9 am – 12 noon one day, 1 pm – 5 pm another, etc.). Some subcommittees have blocked off entire days for interviews, although this has generally proven to be more difficult for subcommittee members and units to arrange given schedules. There is no “right” or “wrong” approach, so this is something the subcommittee should decide.

13. In the course of conducting your interviews, other names of individuals you should meet with may be suggested or become apparent, and those additional meetings can be added at that time (and if the subcommittee has prearranged blocks of time in advance, such additional meetings will be easier to accommodate).

### **3. Developing a List of Potential Questions**

1. The subcommittee should begin to develop a preliminary list of questions during the fall. This list may be derived from the knowledge members currently have about the unit, from the unit's Issues Statement, or from the unit's previous review materials. The list can be refined or supplemented once the unit's self-study report is received. Having a set of questions that the subcommittee has reviewed and agreed to will provide cohesiveness to the review, particularly if the interviews are split among the members of the subcommittee.
2. The subcommittee may want to develop different sets of questions for the chair, the members of the unit, the dean/line vice president, the external reviewers, and senior administrators.
3. Some subcommittees have elected to give the interviewees the list of questions in advance of their meeting. This has worked well, in that it provides the interviewees with the opportunity to fully prepare for the interview and to respond more fully to the questions. It has also helped to focus the discussions.

### **4. Comparative Data and Client Satisfaction Surveys**

1. At its planning meeting in the fall, the subcommittee can make initial decisions as to the type of comparative information it needs from the unit for the review. This information can be requested through the OAP.
2. For administrative units (primarily), the subcommittee should also decide whether it wants to collect additional information about aspects of the unit's operations, either through a survey or through peer institutions. Since developing a survey can also be time-consuming, this decision should be made as early in the process as possible. OAP staff can assist in designing and implementing the survey, should the subcommittee wish to pursue this course of action.
3. Once you receive the unit self-study report, if the report doesn't contain data you feel is critical (e.g., it is lacking data on PhD placement, hiring statistics, rankings, or whatever), you are entitled to ask the unit or the OAP for help in obtaining it. Don't write an incomplete report with a recommendation that next time (in seven years!) the unit needs to collect better data. Do it now and append any data that was not included in the unit self-study report to your report.

## **C. After Receiving the Unit Self-Study Report**

### **1. Conducting the Internal Review**

1. As soon as the subcommittee has received the unit self-study report (this is sent to subcommittee members by the OAP), it should review the document as a group to ensure that the unit has done a good job of addressing the issues and that the report is complete. If the subcommittee believes there is information missing that should be included, or that the agreed-upon issues have not been adequately addressed, the Chair should communicate this to the OAP. The OAP will then give the unit specific feedback on the changes needed in a formal request to revise the unit self-study

report. The OAP will work with the unit to establish a date by which the revised document is due and will advise the subcommittee of this deadline.

2. The subcommittee should plan to meet to discuss the unit self-study report prior to conducting interviews. At this meeting, the subcommittee can further refine the list of questions it would like to have answered and identify any additional types of information it would like. Changes to the list of potential interviewees can also be made at this time.
3. The subcommittee may want to develop an “interview template” that highlights the major areas of information to be explored. Such a template, based on the questions the subcommittee has identified, can be useful for keeping track of all pertinent information, and can be helpful to the interviewers in ensuring that key topics are addressed. *This should not rule out the exploration of other topics that may be introduced during the interview.*
4. The subcommittee can follow up with the unit head or other interviewees (including external reviewers) with any additional questions that arise during the course of the review.
5. If key members of the unit are on leave during the year, the subcommittee may consider having a conference call with this individual. These can be arranged through the OAP.
6. The focus of the review is strategic, not operational. There have been some occasions when a problem or conflict in the unit has been presented to the subcommittee with hopes they will “fix it.” This is not the role of the subcommittee. While the subcommittee should be aware of the situation, they should not let themselves get distracted from the primary purpose of the review. The subcommittee members should feel free to contact the OAP to discuss any matters of this nature that may arise.

## **2. Meeting with the External Reviewers**

1. Although the timing of the external reviewers’ visit will affect this, the subcommittee should have completed, at a minimum, the primary interviews prior to the external reviewers’ visit. These include meetings with the unit head (and other key unit governance positions), the dean/vice president, other key faculty/staff, senior administrators, and students (undergraduate and graduate). This will allow the subcommittee to be adequately informed when meeting with the external reviewers and to focus the external reviewers’ attention on particular facets of the unit where more insight and information is needed.
2. The subcommittee should develop a list of questions/issues prior to the external reviewers’ visit. Developing this list of issues/questions serves as a guide to the external review and the unit may raise additional or different issues during their meetings.
3. To develop the list of issues or questions, keep in mind that while external reviewers are more knowledgeable than you about the discipline of the unit, they do not have the intimate local perspective you do nor are they unbiased. External reviewers tend to act as advocates for their disciplines and if left to their own devices will generally recommend expansion of the unit. (Northwestern has many small academic units, so it is natural for reviewers from larger institutions to reach this conclusion.) While this is fine, it may not fit with University strategy or reality. To make maximum use of highly qualified external reviewers, you need to pose to them the questions you are not qualified to answer (e.g., How does a unit rank in a particular research field? Are the areas into which the unit is expanding on the cutting edge of the discipline?). You should present the external reviewers with your list of questions prior to or at the very start of their visit (e.g., at breakfast), so that they will have them in mind as they perform their review.
4. During the external reviewers’ visit, which takes place over two days, the subcommittee meets with the reviewers as follows:

- Breakfast on the first day—this is a very important meeting for the subcommittee and all members should attend this. At this meeting, the subcommittee has the opportunity to share their perspectives on what you see as the issues. You also can discuss the questions you have, and can highlight areas you would especially like the external reviewers’ input on for the review.
- Wrap-up session (usually after lunch) on the last day of the external reviewers’ visit—this meeting is also very important. At this meeting, the external reviewers debrief the subcommittee, and share their initial assessment of what they view to be the major issues and the directions that they will be emphasizing in their final report. It is also a key time for the subcommittee to ask any follow-up questions to the external reviewers.

### 3. Drafting the Report and Recommendations

The subcommittee should begin drafting the report immediately after the external reviewers’ visit is completed, *if not earlier*. It is not prudent to wait until receiving the external reviewers’ written report, as there have been instances where such reports were significantly delayed, or even not submitted at all.

The external reviewers’ report and recommendations should be viewed as a resource in drafting the subcommittee’s report, similar to the interviews, meetings, or client satisfaction surveys. The external reviewers’ report and recommendations may be adopted, integrated or rejected, in whole or in part. One purpose of the subcommittee is to filter the external reviewers’ report through the lens of the peculiarities and unique environment of this institution.

#### Body

The subcommittee’s draft report should be as close to final as the subcommittee can make it. (The report is “final” after the subcommittee makes any revisions suggested by the PRC.) Although there is not a prescribed format, the report should include:

- a cover page identifying the unit and the subcommittee members, and the date of the report;
- an executive summary of the report;
- a brief overview of the unit (size, areas of emphases, governance structure, location);
- a synopsis of significant changes since the previous review;
- a focus on the findings of the current review and recommendations for change;
- a summary list of the recommendations at the end; and
- an appendix listing all individuals with whom the subcommittee met in the course of conducting the review.

The main body of the report can be organized in whatever manner is most suited to the unit and its issues. Some reports discuss issues and conclusions/recommendations in the body, while others only discuss issues and save recommendations for the end. Either way is fine. *However, ALL recommendations should be summarized at the end, even if they are given in the body of the report.* There is no set length for the report, although they usually fall between 5-10 pages.

Program Review has traditionally been considered a “zero sum” activity; that is, it is not an exercise whereby units can ask for more resources or staff, but rather, new initiatives are expected to come through reorganization or reallocation. This should be kept in mind as you write your report and recommendations.

## Recommendations

The last section of the report is the most important, since it gives the action items that have resulted from the review. In general, these should be enumerated in a clear and concise way. If there is discussion, then the actual recommendation should be highlighted in boldface or italics. The following are sample recommendations:

1. **The Rhetoric Department should articulate a strategic plan for hiring that spells out the kinds of interdisciplinary, cross-cutting positions it views to be central to its identity.** The express purpose of the plan should be to map out specific strategies that will boost the national profile of the Department, building in a focused and sustained manner on the strengths that the Department already has. The plan should be submitted to the Dean by no later than January 1, 2002. In developing this plan, the department should actively seek input from the related units with which it intends to forge partnerships. The Chair should then meet regularly with the heads of these departments to promote and coordinate interdisciplinary hires (and to promote and systematize interdisciplinary relationships more generally).
2. **The projected move of Cultural Studies into College Hall should not be implemented at this time.** An overall agreement between the Central Administration, the Dean’s Office, and the affected departments—including Cultural Studies—regarding building additions, renovations and/or retrofits to the Swift/Cresap complex should precede any final decision about the disposition of space or the move of this department.
3. **By the end of fall quarter 2001, an Advisory Board for the Center should be appointed by the Provost.** It should play an important role in determining the future programs of the Center and in the assessment of its success in serving a wide variety of needs. The question of who should serve on this Advisory Board—and the scope of control that this Board should have—should be determined by the Provost’s Office in conjunction with the Center. One possibility would be to choose representation from each of the schools and colleges, as well as other related organizations. This would increase the visibility of the Center’s programs and services to faculty, staff, and students throughout the University, and might provide a way to solicit more information on the needs of these constituencies.

Recommendations should be action-oriented and desired results should be measurable, specifying what is to be done and by whom, as well as the timeframe for accomplishing it. Each recommendation should identify an agent who is charged with carrying it out. Often the agent is a member of the unit, but not always. It is reasonable to make recommendations to University administrators or other people outside the department. Keep in mind that the recommendations are used to develop the implementation agreements and follow-up reports and should be drafted in a manner to reflect that.

## Appendices

While it is not necessary to reiterate data supplied in the unit self-study report, any new data should be included in appendices. Also, supplementary materials (e.g., plots, summaries of who was interviewed, survey results, etc.) belong in appendices.

## Confidential Addendum

Sensitive recommendations, particularly those relating to specific individuals should be made in a confidential addendum. The addendum should identify who should see it (e.g., the Department Chair, Dean, and Senior Administration). This is a way to make pointed recommendations without injuring peoples' feelings. It can also be a way to call attention to stellar performance (e.g., if you feel that someone deserves a chair or a promotion, it is best to put this in a confidential addendum, since having it in the main report could actually injure the person you are trying to reward if the recommendation is not carried out).

## 4. Presenting the Report to the PRC

The subcommittee should be prepared to complete its report soon after receiving the external reviewers' reports. The Spring PRC meetings will be scheduled based on the external reviewers' schedule as much as possible, so the timing of the presentation generally (although not always) follows that order. The subcommittee should be prepared to submit its draft report (sent electronically as an email attachment) to the OAP *no later than one week before the report is to be presented to the PRC* to allow members of the PRC adequate time to read it.

1. Each subcommittee will present its draft report to the PRC for review and feedback. These meetings are generally scheduled during April – June.

*Note: Meetings are not necessarily scheduled in the order of the external reviewers' visits. Instead, they are scheduled based on the PRC Chair, Vice Chair, and subcommittee members' availability. This could mean that a subcommittee presents its report to the PRC as soon as 2-3 weeks after the external reviewers' visit.*

- Each presentation is scheduled for one and a half hours (usually two presentations are scheduled for each PRC meeting).
- Optimally, the draft report is due to the OAP at least one week prior to the PRC presentation so that the report can be distributed to Council members (although we recognize this can be affected by the timing of the external reviewers' visit).
- You should assume the PRC members have read the report, so there is no need to reiterate the report in the meeting. A 5-10 minute presentation providing an overview of the general state of the unit and major issues is all that is needed. Generally, the chair provides this overview and the other subcommittee members address key points in the area of their work.
- You should allow time for general questions. Before you go into the specifics of your recommendations, the PRC members may have general questions about the unit or your review.
- The PRC will go through each of your recommendations carefully to make sure that they are clear and consistent with the needs of the unit. You should take careful notes about changes needed to sharpen or alter these recommendations, since this is the most important feedback

you will get from the PRC. The OAP will also take careful notes on the changes to be made. All changes to be made to the report should be discussed and agreed upon by the PRC in this meeting.

- PRC members who are members of the unit under discussion do not attend that meeting, nor do they receive copies of the reports.
  - Again, confidentiality throughout the process is extremely important. Because these discussions are very candid, nothing said in these meetings is to be discussed outside of the meetings.
2. The subcommittee revises its report based on the PRC discussion. The final document is considered to be a report of the entire PRC and is sent to Administration and Planning (disk or email attachment) as soon as possible after the meeting. Additional stylistic or content changes may be requested before the meeting with the President.

## **5. Sharing the Final Report with the Unit Head**

A new step has been initiated as a result of the third cycle planning process: Once the report has been finalized by the PRC, but before it is given to senior administrators, the OAP will share a copy of the report with the unit head to ensure that there are no *factual* errors (e.g., things that are verifiable) that could affect the report's credibility. If factual errors are discovered, the OAP will work with the subcommittee to correct these prior to submitting the report to the senior administration. The OAP stresses to the unit head that he/she is *not* to discuss this report with the dean or line vice president at this time, since they will not yet have had the opportunity to see it.

## **6. Presenting the Report to Senior Administrators**

Each subcommittee presents the final PRC report to the appropriate members of Central Administration (e.g., the President, Provost, Vice President for Administration and Planning, Vice President for Research, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Senior Vice President for Business and Finance, etc).

- This meeting may be scheduled as soon as one week after the PRC presentation. The OAP tries to schedule as many of these as possible before faculty leave in the summer, although a few may be scheduled in late summer/early fall.
- The final PRC report is distributed to the attendees prior to this meeting.
- Meetings are scheduled for one hour and include a brief presentation by the subcommittee starting with the subcommittee chair (similar to the presentation given to the PRC).

# **V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PRC MEMBERS**

## **Fall Meeting of the Program Review Council**

The Program Review Council meets once during the fall quarter, usually early in the term (as soon as possible once faculty return and after appointments to the PRC are finalized). This meeting has several

purposes: to introduce and welcome the new members of the Council, to review the program review process, and to go over unit review chair assignments.

In addition, there are several important items to accomplish in this meeting:

1. Identify individuals to serve on the PRC subcommittees.
2. Review progress-to-date for the units being reviewed this year (for example, which units have submitted issues statements, list of potential external reviewers, extensions that have been requested, etc.).
3. Review one-year follow-up progress reports of units reviewed in the previous year.
4. Review any finalized implementation agreements from the reviews just completed.

PRC members are sent materials in advance of the meeting and are asked to bring to the meeting suggestions of individuals who would be appropriate candidates to serve on the various review subcommittees. Names of individuals who have served on past PRC subcommittees will be supplied as part of the meeting materials. Individuals who have previously served on a unit's subcommittee may be nominated again for that same unit's review. At the meeting, names are solicited for each unit and decisions regarding appointments are then made in consultation with senior administrators. Following this meeting, potential subcommittee members are contacted and invited to serve on each particular subcommittee by the OAP. Subcommittee chairs and unit heads are informed of these appointments as they are finalized.

Generally, on each review subcommittee there are two subcommittee members in addition to the chair. For very large or complex units, there may be an additional member. If the subcommittee chair thinks their subcommittee needs an additional person in order to adequately cover the unit for the review, he or she should discuss this with the OAP either before or immediately following this meeting.

## Spring Meetings of the Program Review Council

The Spring Meetings of the PRC are intended to discuss the draft subcommittee reports. The meetings are generally scheduled for 3-hours, and two reports are discussed at each meeting. The OAP attempts to distribute the draft subcommittee reports at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. PRC members are strongly encouraged to read the reports *prior* to coming to the meeting. The subcommittee is advised to assume the PRC members have read the report and to highlight the primary issues in 5-10 minutes.

The PRC members should come to the meeting prepared to submit in writing at least one major issue/question regarding the report to the Chair. These written submissions will serve as a guide for the discussion and will help ensure that the discussion addresses more than one or two points. The discussion period is intended to take the majority of the meeting.

The subcommittee will revise its report based on the discussion at this meeting. This "final" report is considered the report of the Program Review Council and is provided to the unit head for a "factual check." After that "factual check," the final report is distributed to members of central administration in preparation for the subcommittee's presentation to them.

For the third cycle reviews, some related units have been grouped together (i.e., basic life sciences, business and finance units, humanities, etc.). During the spring meetings, it may become apparent that certain issues arise repeatedly across different but related units. The PRC may wish to formally identify these “cross-cutting” issues and prepare a list of these issues with recommendations that can be presented to central administration by the Chair of the PRC.