

**ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE
PROGRAM REVIEW**

**PROCEDURES AND RATIONALE
THIRD CYCLE
2000–2009**

(Revised July, 2008)

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ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW: PROCEDURES AND RATIONALE

THIRD CYCLE

Introduction

The process of program review is one of the most significant and successful collaborations between the faculty and administration at Northwestern University. Initially proposed by the General Faculty Committee (GFC), the systematic review and evaluation of all academic and administrative units of the University has had a profound effect on University decision-making, including the setting of unit, school, and University priorities, hiring plans, budget setting, space allocations, curriculum development, and program sizing, among others. Since 1985, more than 271 academic and administrative units have been. In addition, over 580 faculty and administrators—some serving more than once—have participated in the process as members of the Program Review Council and subcommittees, while more than 500 highly regarded experts have visited campus from other universities and outside organizations to serve as external reviewers.

Although the principal focus of program review is "evaluative," its primary goal has always been the constructive improvement of all aspects of the University. The enormous commitment by all parties to the process is warranted only in the context of the substantive accomplishments that result. Program review at Northwestern is an essential component of university planning and has been key in raising quality and performance thresholds throughout the institution.

Purpose of Program Review

The overall purpose of program reviews is to assess each unit's program quality and effectiveness, to stimulate program planning and improvement, and to encourage the unit's development in strategic directions that reflect the University's priorities. Since the majority of the units to be reviewed in the third cycle were reviewed in the first and/or second cycles, the purpose of the third cycle is to assure that the unit has established and is working toward clear strategic improvements and to address specific issues that grew out of the previous reviews or have arisen since each unit's last review. In this way, the third cycle continues the spirit of the previous two cycles.

Why Do Program Review?

Program review is admittedly time-consuming for units, for faculty, and for administrators. Done properly, it requires a commitment of time and effort on the part of all involved. The University's commitment to program review is evidenced by its willingness to support this process. In light of the costs of time and resources, some have questioned, "Why should the University continue to engage in program review?" The answer is simple: because program review has led to significant and important changes throughout the University and the proven benefits of doing it far outweigh the costs. Central to the success of program review has been the important positive organizational and procedural effect the process has had on the University. These include:

- ***Opportunity for unit self-assessment, planning, and change*** – Program review ensures that each unit systematically takes time to step back from everyday challenges to evaluate its strengths,

weaknesses, and progress, and this process lays the foundation for the development of plans and priorities for the unit.

- ***Vehicle to inform University-wide and area planning*** – Recommendations derived from program review are systematically integrated into the plans and budget requests for the various schools and administrative areas. Follow-up reports provide an additional mechanism for assessing the ongoing needs of a unit.
- ***Input to University decision-making*** – Program review has created a base of knowledge and shared understandings that cumulatively provide a critical backdrop to all University decision processes, including the setting of unit priorities, hiring plans, budget setting, space allocations, fund-raising priorities, and program sizing, among others.
- ***Communication*** – Program review is fundamentally a process of communication within the unit, between the unit and the dean or line administrator, between the chair and dean, and with the central administration. Program review has been a key process for fostering communication and enlarging the vocabulary about specialized areas that is needed to support effective communication. The process also provides an opportunity for each member of the unit to be heard, and to express his or her views directly to the reviewers.
- ***Candid assessment by external experts*** – Program review provides a reliable mechanism for qualitative expert evaluations that are credible to both the unit and the administration. These reviews are rigorous and have traditionally applied the highest standards in the field. In a few cases, the department or dean has used the panel of outside experts for continuing consultations after the review.
- ***Socialization*** – Faculty and administrators frequently remark on the improved understanding engendered by program review between and among related academic areas because of contact with subcommittee members. A similar phenomenon is evident for faculty-administration relations as a result of faculty subcommittees delving into administrative operations. This involvement provides a key opportunity for faculty input as well as a chance to better appreciate the strengths, weaknesses and needs of this sector of the University.
- ***Appreciation of complexity and diversity of the University*** – The special nature of similarities and differences have been underscored by the process of program review. Whether it is the differences in governance between departments in the Medical School compared to those in the humanities or the nature of academic standards in performing or professional fields versus more traditional academic fields, the process has made the nuances of these differences more visible and helped to sensitize a range of University personnel to the need to recognize and address these variations in constructive ways.
- ***Increased external visibility*** – External reviewers often note the unanticipated strengths they observe at Northwestern or comment on the deepening of their respect for the institution as a result of their visit. The program review process itself attracts national and international attention resulting in frequent visitors to campus.
- ***Accountability mechanism with the Board of Trustees*** – Each year, summaries and implementation agreements of all units completed and one-year follow-up progress reports are provided to the Board of Trustees. The candor and commitment represented by this effort provides important assurance to the Board that the University is evaluating itself and striving for improvement. The Board's faith in this process is evidenced by its own requests to be reviewed in the interim years between cycles.

Evolution of the Process

Following the completion of both the first and second cycles of reviews, a hiatus was taken to thoroughly evaluate the program review process for any changes deemed necessary. Procedures were slightly altered for the second cycle based on this process, and they have been changed for the third cycle in accordance with the recommendations of the Third Cycle Planning Committee.

The Third Cycle Planning Committee was appointed in the fall of 1999 and met regularly during the year to discuss all aspects of program review and to consider specific areas where the process could be improved. As was done for the first cycle review and to support their work, the Committee conducted a survey of a wide range of members of the Northwestern community and interviewed deans and other administrators to improve their understanding of the perceived strengths and weaknesses in the process as a basis for improving the next cycle. Based on the information gathered through these steps, the Committee issued a report on the overall status of program review and their recommendations for changes for the third cycle. The report and recommendations were reviewed by members of the University's leadership and were slightly modified based on their feedback. The revised report and recommendations were then approved by the President and Provost in early May. These changes are summarized below and a final report is available on-line at the following web address: <http://www.adminplan.northwestern.edu/progrev/index.htm> and the pdf can be found on the left side of the page.

Changes for the Third Cycle

The Third Cycle Planning Committee made nineteen recommendations for changes to the program review process based on their deliberations. These recommendations focus on the areas of: Follow-up; Communication; Benchmarks and Data; Enhancing the Self-Study/Strategic Planning Process; and the Program Review Process. Additional recommendations specifically for academic and administrative units were also made. Although not all of the recommendations directly affect the program review process from the unit's perspective, units should be aware of them. These changes are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Changes to the Third Cycle

| Follow-Up | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Enhanced Implementation Agreement | Following the review, each unit will receive an enhanced implementation agreement that clearly describes the agreed-upon actions to be taken and specifies who is responsible for carrying out each of these actions—central administration, the dean/vice president, and/or the unit. The dean/vice president is encouraged to be explicit about the commitments s/he is or is not willing to make, and the dean/vice president and unit head are a clear party to the development of this agreement. The implementation agreement will be shared with the internal and external reviewers for the unit. |

Table 1: Changes to the Third Cycle, cont'd.

| | |
|--|--|
| 2. Meeting with the Unit | Once the implementation agreement has been finalized, the dean/vice president and unit head will meet with the unit faculty or professional staff to discuss the agreement and implementation steps (while this has been a part of the program review procedures since its inception it has not been regularly followed or enforced). Administration and Planning will verify with the dean/vice president and unit head that these meetings have taken place. |
| 3. Re-Review of Problematic Units | When a review indicates very serious problems in the unit, the unit will be added back into the schedule for re-review within three years to ensure that these problems have been addressed. |
| Communication | |
| 4. Information Sharing | The Office of Administration and Planning will distribute annually to the deans and vice presidents copies of the summary reports and implementation agreements for all units that have undergone review during that year. One-year follow-up reports will also be shared with the respective internal reviewers. [Note: Board of Trustees members receive copies of the summary reports, implementation agreements, and one-year follow-up reports.] |
| 5. Report to the Northwestern University Community | At the end of the third and subsequent review cycles, the Office of Administration and Planning will develop a report to the University community that will summarize the types of changes and impact that program review has had in each cycle. The report will be reviewed with the PRC, the deans and line administrators prior to its release to make sure that no breaches of confidentiality occur. |
| Benchmarks and Data | |
| 6. Performance Measures | Performance measures are essential to the program review process, as well as to ongoing University functioning, and all units should develop these types of measures if they do not currently exist. Units should work closely with their dean/vice president to begin the process of identifying performance measures and developing a system through which information on these measures is collected on a systematic basis. This data would then be available for program review when it occurs (but would not be collected only for program review). The University's senior administration must take a leading role in the development of these measures and data collection systems. The unit should seek external comparative data. |

Table 1: Changes to the Third Cycle, cont'd.

| Enhancing the Self-Study/Strategic Planning Process | |
|--|--|
| 7. Refined Letters of Notification | In order to provide a linkage to the previous review and to focus units on strategic issues from the outset, the letter of notification sent to the unit informing them of their upcoming review will be tailored by the Office of Administration and Planning to reflect the highlights and outcomes of the unit's previous review, including such aspects as the issues identified and recommendations made, and known changes that have taken place since the review. |
| 8. Unit Orientation | Once the unit has been notified of its forthcoming review, a member of the Program Review Council, along with staff from the Office of Administration and Planning, is available to meet with all members of the unit to introduce and review the process, explain what types of information and activities will be needed, and answer any questions that members of the unit may have. These sessions take place at the unit's office, in addition to the general orientation sessions that are held in the spring prior to the beginning of the review year. |
| 9. Unit Self-Study Report Review | Members of the PRC subcommittee, in addition to Administration and Planning staff, will review the unit's self-study report when it is submitted to ensure that it is complete. Incomplete unit self-study reports will be returned to the unit with explicit feedback on how the report is to be revised. Units can contact the Office of Administration and Planning as they develop their unit self-study report to discuss the approach they are taking to develop the report or for additional guidance. |
| Program Review Process | |
| 10. Accelerated Schedule Option | For the third cycle, an "accelerated" schedule has been developed that units may elect to follow. This schedule accelerates the review process by approximately four months. It may be especially attractive to administrative units, which are not constrained by the academic calendar, although academic units may also choose an accelerated schedule. The unit should contact the Office of Administration and Planning to agree upon the schedule it will follow. |
| 11. Unit Grouping and Clustering | Units that share an intellectual or functional component have been grouped during both the first and second cycles to create an increased synergy through the review. In addition, units have been clustered by year to create a similar consideration of common themes and potential tie-ins across units. The impact of these groupings and clusters has been substantial, and is being continued and expanded for the third cycle. |

Table 1: Changes to the Third Cycle, cont'd.

| | |
|--|---|
| 12. Reviewer Guidance | Clearer guidelines and procedures for internal and external reviewers have been developed. |
| 13. Unit Review of the PRC Report | Once the report has been finalized by the PRC, but before it is forwarded to the administration, the report will be shared by the subcommittee with the unit head to check for and correct any factual errors. The unit head should not discuss this report with the line administrator at this time, since neither they nor the President and Provost will have had the opportunity to see it. |
| 14. External Reviewer Identification | Units are being asked to identify external reviewers substantially in advance of the unit's review in order to try to schedule them earlier in the process. |
| Recommendations Specific to Academic Units | |
| 15. Dean's Office Reviews | For larger schools that are not considered a single unit for the purpose of program review, the Dean's Office for that school should be reviewed as part of the program review process. |
| 16. Timing of Reviews | In the setting of the review schedule, the deans should be urged to consult with their chairs as to appropriate timing for the next cycle. |
| 17. External Reviewer Specialization | Academic units should be aware that they can propose external reviewers in subgroups to ensure coverage of sub-fields within the department. |
| Recommendation Specific to Administrative Units | |
| 18. Administrative Representation on Subcommittees | For administrative units, the Office of Administration and Planning will try to include at least one administrator as a member of the review committee during the third cycle. |

Program Review Council and Subcommittees

Program review is overseen by the Program Review Council, an appointed group of senior faculty and administrators who also serve as chairs of the review subcommittees. The Chair of the Council is appointed annually from among the senior members of this group, while the Vice President for Administration and Planning serves as Council Vice Chair on an ongoing basis.

The size of the Program Review Council mirrors the number of reviews scheduled each year so that each PRC member chairs an internal subcommittee guiding the review. At least two-thirds of the members of Program Review Council are faculty. During the late spring/early summer, the Council is appointed by the Vice President for Administration and Planning based upon a slate of potential members recommended by the General Faculty Committee, deans, and senior administrative officers. The Program Review Council is representative of the various disciplinary and administrative interests within the University, but not all units in any single year need be represented. Members of the Program Review Council are appointed to serve staggered, three-year terms. The Council chair is appointed by the University's senior administration.

In early fall, the Program Review Council appoints subcommittees (with each subcommittee generally consisting of three persons) to assist it in meeting its responsibilities. A member of the Program Review Council chairs each subcommittee; the remaining subcommittee members are not members of the Program Review Council. Members of the subcommittee *cannot* be members of the unit under review. Generally, two members of the subcommittee are from cognate or related fields/offices. At least one member is from a different or unrelated area. For example, in the review of a science field, a humanist or social scientist may be included. For administrative unit reviews, subcommittees will include at least one administrator.

The Director of Program Review in the Office of Administration and Planning is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Program Review Council and assuring the completion of each program review. The Office of Administration and Planning provides other administrative and secretarial/clerical support services for the Program Review Council and its subcommittees.

Schedule

The third cycle, like the previous one, is scheduled to take place over seven to ten years. A schedule for the complete review cycle has been established and will be reviewed annually and revised during the cycle as needed. (See <http://www.adminplan.northwestern.edu/progrev/index.htm>) As was done in the previous two cycles, some units to be reviewed are grouped together or clustered in the same year based on functional compatibility—rather than organizational lines—and scale (for example, life sciences, cognitive sciences, area studies, business operations, etc.). For the most part, the "unit of analysis" has been maintained across the cycles (e.g., departments in larger schools, smaller schools as a whole, individual research centers, individual administrative units). Dean's offices for larger, multiple unit schools have been added back into the schedule for the third cycle.

The President, Provost, and Vice President for Administration and Planning discuss with individual deans and vice presidents about the appropriate scheduling of their units. Deans and vice presidents should consult with their units to discuss scheduling options prior to providing feedback and recommendations to central administration. The President, Provost and Vice President for Administration and Planning make the final determination on scheduling. Where possible and appropriate, the timing of the review relative to accreditation will reflect the preference of the dean/vice president and the unit. However, while some of the materials required may be similar, the purpose and goals of an accreditation review is very different from that of program review and, therefore, an accreditation review is *not* a substitute for this process of program review.

As noted earlier, beginning with the third cycle, in situations where the program review indicates very serious problems in the unit, the unit will be added back into the schedule for re-review within three years to ensure that these problems have been addressed.

Review Timeline

Start to finish, program review for a unit generally takes place over a three-year period, beginning with the pre-review planning through the unit's one-year follow up. (See Table 2). Typically, review pre-planning begins in the Winter Quarter, with units formally notified in the spring. The actual review is conducted over the course of the next academic year, and a follow up is conducted one year after the review has been completed.

Units seeking to follow an accelerated review schedule are notified of their review in February after this has been confirmed with the Vice President for Administration and Planning. Units are then asked to submit within the next month their list of key issues (see subsequent section, "Identification

of Key Issues” and Appendix A for information on this) and the names of individuals to potentially serve as external reviewers to the Office of Administration and Planning; these are then reviewed by the respective school/administrative and senior University leadership. Feedback is given to the unit on each of these areas, and the unit drafts its unit self-study report over the summer. External reviewers are also appointed by Administration and Planning over the summer, and their visit is scheduled for early winter (depending, of course, on their availability). Subcommittees begin their work in the fall once the unit self-study report has been received. The subcommittee then presents its draft report to the PRC in late winter. The follow up process then follows the regular review schedule.

TABLE 2: PROGRAM REVIEW: PROCESS FLOW AND TIMELINE

| TIME | ACTIVITY/EVENT |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Spring (of year prior to review) | Units to be reviewed in forthcoming year notified by the Office of Administration and Planning; asked to submit list of issues and list of potential external reviewers |
| Spring/Summer (prior to review year) | Units to be reviewed identify issues to focus the upcoming review (issues may be unresolved items from the first review, or new issues that have arisen since that review) Unit head submits final list of issues to Vice President for Administration and Planning, who distributes it to Dean/VP and central administration. |
| Late Spring/Early Summer | Vice President for Administration and Planning holds orientation meeting with chairs/heads of departments/units to be reviewed |
| August/September | Program Review Council appointed by the President (staggered 3-year terms) |
| October (of review year) | Program Review Committee appoints subcommittees for units to be reviewed |
| October -- November | Finalize external reviewers for the current year reviews (selected by the Vice President for Administration and Planning based on recommendations) |
| by December 15 (end of Fall Qtr.) | Units prepare and submit a Unit Self-Study Report (15-25 pages) to Program Review Office, which reviews it for completeness and distributes to PRC and central administration. |
| Winter/Spring (of review year) | Internal subcommittee conducts interviews with key faculty/administrators prior to external reviewers’ visit. External reviewers brought in to visit each unit. Within 14 days of visit, written report is submitted by external reviewers. |
| Spring Quarter | Each internal subcommittee writes and submits brief report (5-10 pages) to PRC. Report refined and modified as needed, then submitted to administration and others for information and review |
| Spring/Summer | Each Program Review Council subcommittee meets with leadership (administration) to discuss final report. Each unit head sent copy of final report and external reviewer composite for unit review |
| Summer/Fall | Implementation meetings with Dean/central administration and Unit Head/Dean/central administration occur to develop implementation agreement. |
| Summer/Fall (of 2 nd year) | Unit provides written report of progress to date to administration |

Review Process Overview

The third cycle program review process includes the following steps, each of which is discussed in more detail below:

1. Notification
2. Unit Orientation
3. Identification of Key Issues
4. Unit Self-Study Report
5. Subcommittee Review
6. External Reviewer Visit
7. Program Review Council (PRC) Review and Report
8. Presentation of the PRC Report to Central Administration
9. Distribution of Final Report to the Unit
10. Implementation Meetings:
 - a. Meeting with Dean or Vice President
 - b. Meeting with Dean/Vice President and Unit Head
 - c. Dean/Vice President Meeting with Unit Constituents
11. Communication of the Review Outcomes to Trustees, Vice Presidents, and Deans
12. One-Year Follow-up

Notification

Beginning in the winter quarter, members of the administration review the schedule of units to be reviewed for the upcoming year. Deans and vice presidents are asked to confirm with these units that the timing of the review is not problematic, and the schedule is adjusted to accommodate unit needs. Once the list of units to be reviewed has been confirmed, these units are notified during the summer of the review formally by individualized letters from the Office of Administration and Planning. The letter of notification provides information on the unit's previous review, and lists the initial information requests (names of potential external reviewers, list of issues, etc.) from the unit as well as the dates by which this information is needed.

Unit Orientation

A new element of the program review process introduced for the third cycle is the option of an individualized unit orientation session. These sessions are in addition the orientation sessions for unit heads. Their purpose is to provide members of the unit the opportunity to ask questions and gain clarification about the process to minimize confusion or misunderstandings as the review process progresses, and to underscore the importance of all members of the unit being active participants in the review.

Upon request, the Program Review Council, working with the Office of Administration and Planning, will conduct these individualized orientation sessions for those units. The session provides all members of the unit with an overview of the program review process, as well as tips for identifying

issues, developing the self study, identifying potential external reviewers, etc., in order to get the most benefit from the review.

Identification of Key Issues

In the first cycle, a common set of procedures was used by all units—the so-called "single template." Inherent in this methodology was an assumption that all units of the University could benefit from review and planning and that there should be no "priors" on the strength or weakness of a given unit. For the second cycle, the consensus was that the template should be varied in order to:

- build on the first cycle
- better reflect special issues related to each unit
- integrate more effectively with school planning and related processes such as accreditation, standing visiting committees, and annual progress reporting in some schools.

This approach is maintained for the third cycle. The third cycle reviews follow from the reports and agreements generated in the second cycle and the particular issues in each unit, as well as changes and developments that have taken place in the unit since the previous review. Each unit should, however, have a strategic plan in place or use the review as a catalyst to update or develop one.

After receiving the notification letter, one of the unit's first steps is to identify a list of key issues that it believes should be the subject of its review. These should be the critical issues facing the unit currently and for the next three-to-five years (see below). The list of issues is submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Planning, who will distribute it to the appropriate University officers and PRC member for review. The unit then receives a letter that summarizes the feedback received on these issues, and lays out specific additional issues that should be addressed by the unit. As the work of the review unfolds, the PRC subcommittee may identify other issues in concert with the dean or line vice president. This identification of issues significantly streamlines and focuses the review process. (See Appendix A for additional information.)

Unit Self-Study Report

The unit self-study report, and the development of this report through the self-study process, has been identified by many as perhaps the most important and valuable aspect of the program review process. The self-study phase of program review represented a valuable opportunity for the unit to make a candid assessment of itself and to consider future directions and options that would strengthen it. Many units found the process to be useful for planning within the unit, leading to choices about focus and strategies for the department.

Each unit is asked to prepare a unit self-study report to be submitted to the Program Review Council by no later than the beginning of winter quarter. As has been stated, the third cycle of program review builds directly on the previous cycles. This approach applies unless there are reasons to believe that the circumstances in the unit have changed dramatically since the prior review, or if the unit is undergoing review for the first time. Therefore, the results and reports of the previous review, including follow-up reports, should provide the framework and grist for the next cycle.

The primary purposes of the unit self-study report should be: to address the identified issues; to focus upon program strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, as judged against the University mission; and, to define ways, primarily within existing resources, that the program should improve. *It must be reiterated that, while the need for additional resources may be identified, the document should not be regarded as a means by which a unit should expect to persuade colleagues or the*

administration to reallocate resources to the program. The report should, however, address appropriate areas where resources should be reallocated *within* the unit.

Units, in preparing their report, should undertake a searching review of the previous review and consider whether the recommendations from that review have been implemented and important issues addressed. In addition, they should identify changes that have occurred more generally in the unit or the field since the previous review, as well as any new or impending relevant developments and how those developments affect the plans and directions of the unit. The list of issues submitted to the administration and PRC for review is derived from this process. The report provides a fresh examination of the unit, and, while building on the previous cycle, should be a self-sufficient document that directly addresses the issues identified by the unit, the dean/line vice president, and the central administration.

The report should include, as appendices, data on key performance measures through which a unit's success in meeting its goals can be ascertained. These measures are essential to objectively evaluating a unit's performance, but in many cases they do not exist, or the data are incomplete. The University is now asking that all units have such measures, not only for program review but also to inform other University processes (e.g., budget, strategic planning, etc.). Units should work closely with the dean or vice president in the development of these measures.

The unit should ensure that junior faculty are given some role in the delineation of issues (described previously) as well as in preparing the report. Whatever process is used, *the report should be shared with all members of the unit and should represent a consensus, or it should state the nature of differences in viewpoints before its submission as a final report.* In each case, the process and participants in the unit self-study report should be noted. In general, the length of the unit self-study report should be no more than fifteen pages (exclusive of appendices and vitae/resumes) unless major new issues have been identified, in which case a twenty-five-page limit will be enforced. Electronic transmission of your complete report—either on disk or as an email attachment—is the preferred method. The complete report (including appendices) should be submitted electronically to the Office of Administration and Planning. If electronic copies of all materials are not available (for example, all faculty/staff vitae), please submit unbound print copies of these documents to the Office. (See Appendix B for further information.)

The unit self-study report will be reviewed by the Office of Administration and Planning and the subcommittee to ensure it is complete. Incomplete reports will be returned to the unit with explicit feedback on how the report is to be revised. The report does not become a public document, but is made available to the PRC subcommittee, the Program Review Council, the external reviewers, and relevant administrative officers. In the case of academic programs, "officers" includes the President, the Provost, the Vice President for Research, the Dean of the Graduate School (for units with graduate programs), and the relevant dean; for administrative units, it is the President and the vice president(s) with line or related responsibility for the unit reviewed.

A single, unbound copy and an electronic copy of the unit self-study report (including appendices) are to be provided to the Office of the Vice President for Administration and Planning in accordance with the schedule provided in the letter of notification to the unit. If the electronic copy is submitted in .PDF format, an additional electronic copy in Microsoft Word should also be submitted. The Office of Administration and Planning is responsible for the distribution of the unit self-study report to the appropriate individuals.

Internal Subcommittee Review

The Program Review Council internal subcommittee conducts a parallel review of the unit. Subcommittees meet with all members of the unit, as well as individuals who work closely with the

unit, once the unit self-study report has been received. At the conclusion of its review, the subcommittee develops a draft review report that draws upon the unit self-study report, input from external reviewers, and the subcommittee members' visits with the respective units and key individuals.

For the third cycle, guidelines have been developed for the subcommittee based on what has worked well during the previous two cycles. One of the first tasks of the PRC subcommittee is to review the relevant documents from the previous cycle and the current list of issues as developed by the unit, the dean/line vice president, and the central administration. This provides the foundation for the subcommittee's work. The PRC subcommittee may ask the unit or other University offices for any additional information or clarification of the unit self-study report that they consider appropriate.

For academic units, the subcommittee members meet with members of the program faculty (including courtesy appointments), undergraduate and graduate students in the program, faculty in other related departments, deans and other administrators, etc., to discuss the information in the report and the status and future of the program. In the case of administrative units, the subcommittee members meet with professional staff in the unit and may ask the Office of Administration and Planning to survey users or departments that are dependent on these units for support in order to determine needs, problems, and satisfaction with services provided by the unit. The subcommittees also meet with the external reviewers while they are on campus and generally communicate with them before and after their visit in developing their report.

The PRC subcommittee may also choose to conduct special surveys to solicit additional opinions, or gather additional information using questionnaires sent to persons at other institutions (note: these are in addition to the information on performance measures, customer satisfaction, etc. to be collected by each unit on an ongoing basis). The report of any surveys or consultant(s) are made available to the unit faculty and/or professional staff, dean(s) and line vice presidents, Provost, President and the Program Review Council. Review(s) by the subcommittee and external reviewers are usually completed by the end of the winter term. Following meetings with the subcommittee and outside consultants, the program may provide any comments or clarification deemed appropriate.

External Reviewer Identification and Visit

As in the previous two cycles, at least two outside experts are asked to visit the unit, with the visit generally occurring in the winter or spring. The knowledge and objectivity brought to bear on the reviews by the external reviewers have been relied upon heavily by the PRC subcommittees. The expertise and dedication of the external reviewers continues as a core strength of the program review process.

During the late Spring/early Summer, the members of the unit are asked to recommend individuals to serve as potential outside experts. These individuals should be the eminent leaders in their field, who represent the best programs in the field, from highly reputable institutions. Units may request that one or more of the reviewer from a previous cycle be employed again; this request will be considered in light of the appropriateness and availability of the same reviewer(s). Units may also delineate reviewers by their areas of expertise and ask that the team be comprised on a reviewer from each group to ensure coverage of sub-fields within the unit. Units are encouraged to submit this list quickly, since it will enable Administration and Planning to issue invitations to reviewers more quickly, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will agree to serve.

The list of potential external reviewers nominated by the unit is reviewed by senior and area administrators to ensure that there is consensus on the appropriateness of these individuals to serve as reviewers. Final selection of reviewers is the responsibility of the Office of Administration and Planning. Individuals are invited to serve as reviewers by the Office of Administration and Planning.

All arrangements for these reviewers are made by the Office of Administration and Planning. In preparation for their visit, the reviewers receive and are asked to study the unit self-study report and the procedures for program review, and are also provided with the reports from the previous review. In addition, the unit head is given the names and addresses of these reviewers in advance of their visit so that members of the department can have the opportunity to provide individual comment directly if so desired.

The external reviewers generally visit during the Winter or Spring of the review year and meet with the faculty and/or professional staff, from the unit being reviewed as well as the related units' students (both undergraduate and graduate), the Program Review Council, the respective PRC subcommittee, line administration involved (dean or unit manager, appropriate vice president(s), Provost, and President), and others appropriate to the review. Whenever possible, the meetings with central administration officers are consolidated into a single session to permit more time for unit interaction with the external reviewers. The external reviewers should have the opportunity to meet with individual faculty and staff during their visit on campus. The visit is usually about two days in length but can be extended for particular needs. The opportunity for more unstructured interaction time with the unit at the end of the visit is encouraged; administrative units, in particular, noted the value of this opportunity when it occurred. (See Appendix C.1 and C.2 for guidelines and sample schedules.)

Within ten days of the visit, each external reviewer is asked to provide a written assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, personnel, leadership, and opportunities for the unit to the Office of Administration and Planning. A joint report, written by both (or all, if there are more than two) reviewers, is also acceptable. These reports ultimately are distributed to the PRC subcommittee, the President, the Provost, and, in the case of academic units, the Vice President for Research, and the Dean of the Graduate School (for units with graduate programs), along with the PRC report. If individual reviewer reports are submitted, a composite report is constructed by the Office of Administration and Planning that contains the full text of each of the external reviewer's reports. This provides the reviewers with a measure of confidentiality. Also, the composite report *excludes* any comments about individuals; these may take the form of a confidential addendum to the report. A copy of the composite (or joint) report is provided to the Program Review Council, the dean/line vice president, and the unit.

PRC Review and Report

Following review of the unit self-study report, meetings with members and participants in the unit, and review of the outside reviewer reports, the PRC subcommittee prepares a relatively brief report (five to ten pages) that includes an assessment and recommendations regarding the unit under review, and presents this report to the Program Review Council. The subcommittee's report should include observations on progress made by the unit since its previous review, its present condition, its importance to the University, and the ways in which it might be improved. The subcommittees are urged to make this report concrete and direct as to the issues identified early in the process, the strengths and weaknesses of the unit, and the recommendations to the unit and administration for addressing relevant concerns. The subcommittee should provide an electronic copy of the report to the Office of Administration and Planning with the *draft date* indicated; the Office of Administration and Planning will then distribute the report to the appropriate individuals (e.g., Program Review Council, members of central administration). [Note: Electronic submission of the report is preferred; however, if there are documents for which electronic copy is unavailable, an unbound, print copy of these should be submitted to the Office of Administration and Planning.]

During the Winter and Spring, each PRC subcommittee presents the draft report on the unit it has reviewed to the members of the Program Review Council. At that time, the Program Review Council

may request modification or amplification of a subcommittee's report. Following this presentation, the report is modified to reflect the consensus of the PRC.

Because program review is built upon a foundation of perceptual data, and in the absence of other types of data to counterbalance these inputs, factual errors based on misperceptions may occur in the final reports despite the best efforts of the PRC to avoid these. These errors can create issues of credibility with the unit and weaken the unit's willingness to take seriously the recommendations of the review. As a strategy to address this, once the report has been finalized by the PRC, the report will be shared by the subcommittee with the unit head to ensure that there are no factual errors. If factual errors are discovered, they are corrected prior to submitting the report to the senior administration. *The unit head is not to discuss this report with the line administrator at this time, since s/he will not yet have had the opportunity to see it.*

The final PRC report is then forwarded, along with the external reviewers' report, to the President and appropriate line officers for their information and review. Line officers in academic reviews include the Provost, Vice President for Administration and Planning, Vice President for Research, Dean of the Graduate School (for units with graduate programs), and the appropriate dean(s); in administrative reviews, officers include the Provost, Vice President for Administration and Planning, and the line vice president(s).

Presentation of the PRC Report to Central Administration

Through the late spring/early summer, each PRC subcommittee meets with the President, the Provost, the Vice President for Administration and Planning, and, in the case of academic units, the Vice President for Research, and the Dean of the Graduate School (for units with graduate programs), to discuss the Program Review Council's final report. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the subcommittee and/or the Program Review Council to provide additional confidential information as a supplement or addendum to the report as previously described (for example, in situations where little can be served by public comment about a specific individual).

Distribution of Final Report to the Unit

Following the subcommittee's presentation of the report to central administration, the unit head is sent a copy of the final report along with the external reviewers' report. These reports are made available to all faculty and/or professional staff in the unit for reading/review in the unit head's office. At this time, members of the unit receive a communication from the Vice President for Administration and Planning notifying them of the availability of the report and of the implementation meetings that will be scheduled. The reports are considered confidential and, generally, are *not* to be copied or distributed. The unit may choose through its director or chair to provide comment and individual members of the unit may also make comments. Any comments should be provided to the Office of Administration and Planning, who will distribute them to members of the respective PRC subcommittee, President, Provost, Vice President for Research, Dean of the Graduate School (for units with graduate programs), and other appropriate line officers. The response becomes a permanent part of the review record.

Implementation Meetings

Meeting with Line Head (Vice President or Dean)

Through the late Spring to early Fall (as calendars permit), the President, Provost, Vice President for Administration and Planning, Vice President for Research, and the Dean of the Graduate School (in the review of academic units with graduate programs) meet with the appropriate dean/line vice

president to discuss the results of the review and the recommendations of the Program Review Council. Whenever possible, all units related to the dean/line vice president are discussed at the same time to reduce the number of meetings.

Meeting with Line Head and Unit Head

Following that meeting, the Provost, Vice President for Administration and Planning, Vice President for Research, and Dean of the Graduate School (again, in the review of academic units with graduate programs) meet with the dean or appropriate line officer and the unit head to discuss the results of program review and the Program Review Council recommendations, and to agree on the next steps for implementation. Based on this discussion, each unit will then receive an explicit implementation agreement that clearly describes the agreed-upon actions to be taken and specifies who is responsible for carrying out each of these actions (central administration, dean, and unit). The dean/vice president is encouraged to be explicit about the commitments he/she is willing or not willing to make. The dean/vice president and unit head are a clear party to the development of this agreement.

Line Head Meeting with Unit

Once the implementation agreement has been finalized, the dean/vice president and unit head should meet with the faculty or professional staff in the unit to discuss the agreement and needed implementation steps. Administration and Planning will verify with the dean/vice president and unit head that these meetings have taken place. Implementation agreements will be shared with the internal and external reviewers, as well as all deans/vice presidents.

Communication of the Review Outcomes

A summary of findings and agreements for each unit reviewed in a given year is prepared for examination by the Board of Trustees. These summaries are also provided to the Program Review Council and to the deans and vice presidents. In addition, the Board of Trustees receives a report on the one-year follow up progress for those units reviewed during the prior year.

Unit heads always have the option of sharing their reports with related unit heads where cross-department or cross-school initiatives would be served. This remains a unit-level prerogative.

At the conclusion of the third cycle of reviews, the Office of Administration and Planning will develop a report to the Northwestern community indicating the types of changes and impact that program review has had. The report will be reviewed with the PRC, the deans and line administrators to ensure that no significant breaches of confidentiality occur. This report will clarify to the University community what impacts program review has had and help disseminate a wider understanding of changes that have occurred.

Program Review Follow-Up

During the first cycle, and for the majority of the second cycle, program review follow-up consisted of units submitting brief reports describing their progress in addressing the review recommendations at two and four-year intervals following their review. This process met with mixed success and increasingly during the second cycle, it became apparent that the follow-up process needed to change. In 1997-98, the two and four-year follow-up schedule was changed to a one-year follow-up schedule, with the deans/line vice presidents playing a strengthened and central role in the follow-up process on an ongoing basis. Initial indications from units and deans show that the one-year follow up provides a more effective and useful mechanism for assessing the unit's progress.

Units are notified by letter of their one-year follow up in the Spring. The implementation agreement provides the basis of the one-year follow up report, and units are sent a template to use to respond. All units are instructed to work closely with their dean or vice president in the development of this report. The report is submitted by the unit to the dean or vice president, who forwards it to Administration and Planning along with his or her comments. These reports are reviewed by members of the University's senior administration in the Fall, and units receive written feedback on their progress to-date following that meeting.

Subsequent follow-up is then carried out by the dean or vice president, in consultation with the President and Provost. The one-year follow up reports are shared with the PRC subcommittee that conducted the review. In certain cases where the dean or vice president believes the unit requires an additional follow up, the dean or vice president may request the Office of Administration and Planning to conduct another follow up check the next year.

Conclusion

The goal of the previous cycles of program review was to encourage improvements in the quality of each unit of the University and to provide a collective basis of refined judgment by the members of each discipline or profession on:

- current strengths and weaknesses of the unit
- areas of comparative opportunity
- important future developments in the discipline or profession that need to be addressed
- the relationship of existing faculty and staff resources to these opportunities
- the quality of leadership in the unit
- the adequacy of other resources to carry out the mission of the unit
- potential areas of cross-unit collaboration where the University and units' resources could be leveraged

The product of this process, in most cases, was a plan for phased improvement in each unit. The plans that were developed were, in general, explicit, realistic, and viable, calling out the best aspirations of each unit. Implementation of these individual plans has led to strides in improvement not only for the unit itself, but for the University as a whole.

The third cycle continues to build on this foundation. Substantively, there now exists a store of information on each unit that continues to support University-wide decision-making and which helps focus the subsequent reviews on relevant issues. As those who have gone through program review can attest, the process has been a pervasive and time-consuming effort for Northwestern's faculty and administration. The efforts of these groups, combined with that of the faculty and staff in each unit reviewed, should be recognized and commended by the entire University community. The enormous commitment by all parties to the process is warranted only in the context of the substantive accomplishments that result. The process has been enormously beneficial to the University. Program review at Northwestern is an essential component of university planning and has been key in raising quality and performance thresholds throughout the institution. The faculty and administration are very ambitious about improving the competitive performance of the institution. Program review has been a central lever to this goal.

July 2008

APPENDIX A:

IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

The initial step of the program review process is the identification of current and emerging issues over the next 3-5 years that have the potential to have a significant impact on the unit and with which the unit must contend in order to improve. At the time a unit is notified that it is due for its review, it will be given a date for submission of the issues statement. Units may use a variety of mechanisms for generating the list of issues; however, the list of issues should be shared with all members of the unit prior to submission to ensure that it represents the perspectives of the entire unit (if there are areas where perspectives are mixed, these should be noted). The list of issues should be brief and should provide a short description of each issue.

To identify the issues that will become the subject of the third cycle review, unit members should carefully analyze the second cycle documents, including the external reviewers' report, the Program Review Council final report, and any follow-up reports or agreements that resulted from program review. Attention should be focused on changes that have occurred (or not) since the previous review. This analysis should generate an initial set of core issues. Units should also examine internal changes or significant pressures from the external environment that are affecting the unit's operations and mission. Some questions that units could ask to initiate this examination are listed below.

Once the list of issues has been submitted to the Office of Administration and Planning, Administration and Planning will distribute the issues statement to the dean or line vice president and the University's senior leadership (e.g., President, Provost, Senior Vice President Business and Finance, Vice President for Research, Dean of the Graduate School, etc.) for review. These individuals will provide feedback on these issues and may add additional issues to this list. The unit may be asked to modify the list based on feedback from this group.

It is important to bear in mind that the list of issues generated by the unit should correspond with the unit's strategic plan. Program review assumes that units have a strategic plan in place (in which program review provides an opportunity to review and update the plan. Or, if units do not have a strategic plan, program review serves as a mechanism for developing one, using the list of issues generated as the basis for the plan. The Office of Administration and Planning is available to consult with units that would like assistance in launching a strategic planning process or developing a strategic plan. Units should feel free to contact the Office of Administration and Planning if additional help or guidance is desired.

I. Academic and Research Units

A. Mission and Strategic Position

MISSION: The mission statement should clearly describe the unit's purpose, and should establish the foundation upon which the unit's strategic plan is built. It should guide a unit in its thematic focus (primary areas of effort) and in the types of programs/activities it conducts. The mission should neither be so broad as to permit the unit to pursue virtually any type of activity, nor so narrow as to restrict its ability to adapt. Unit activities should be understandable in the context of its mission.

- What is the unit's purpose? Are the unit's activities understandable in the context of the mission? What are the current trends in the discipline/field? How has this changed, and how has the unit responded? Is the unit mainstream? cutting edge? behind the times? Do

any of the changes in the discipline/field suggest the unit should reexamine its mission or program focus?

EXTERNAL REPUTATION AND "UNIQUENESS" OF POSITION: The unit should create high external visibility for itself and Northwestern through its reputation. This could be through high standing relative to other similar units, or it could be a result of its "uniqueness" and the outcomes it achieves.

- What are the unit's strengths? weaknesses? Have these changed in recent years? How do these areas correspond to where the unit would like to be?
- Is the unit's relative quality among peer units across the country and beyond improving? What has been the unit's position over time and for what specific areas is it known? What factors contribute to this image and quality assessment? What is the unit doing to improve its quality and visibility, both within and outside the University?

B. Faculty

- Have there been any significant faculty hires or losses since the previous review? Has the unit been successful in recruiting and retaining top quality faculty members? Have faculty from related units been involved in management meetings in this recruitment? What are the prospects for the future with regard to the market for the best scholars?
- What efforts have been made to make the unit more diverse with regard to ethnicity and gender? At what levels in the organization has such hiring occurred? What has been the pattern of retention by ethnicity and gender?
- What is the teaching load of the unit's faculty members? Are undergraduate and graduate courses distributed among the different levels of faculty? What percentage of undergraduate courses is taught by part-time faculty, lecturers, or graduate students? Is this too high? If so, what strategies may be employed to reduce this percentage?
- How are junior faculty mentored? Are they given guidance regarding expectations for promotion and tenure? Are they evaluated and counseled regularly?
- Is the intellectual life of the unit active and stimulating for both faculty and students? What is being done in this area currently? If needed, what could be done to improve the situation? Do faculty actively seek out partnerships with faculty in other potentially related departments? Are these efforts encouraged and supported by the unit?

C. Research Programs

ADAPTABILITY: The unit should have exhibited an ability to adapt to its internal and external environments. It should also have the leadership and resources to adapt to future conditions. One key indicator is the degree to which the unit is able to set its own programmatic agenda, particularly its research agenda. This agenda should be reflected in clear themes established by the unit rather than through the coincidental efforts of the individual members or affiliates of the unit.

- What are the research strengths of the unit? Do these research strengths support the unit's mission? Correspond to the current trends in the discipline/field? What new areas should the unit develop and what areas may need to be phased out? Are there faculty in other areas within the University with whom the unit could develop collaborative partnerships?

- Has research support of faculty in the unit increased since the last review? What are the sources of funding? With cutbacks in government support, what other sources of funding is the unit exploring?
- How has the unit engaged undergraduate students in its research activities and the unit's intellectual life?

MANAGEMENT OF PROGRAM LIFECYCLES: All programmatic areas experience classical lifecycle phenomena—innovation, growth, maturity, and decline. The earliest stage requires investment (of leadership, time, and resources). At maturity, the program should be generating peak levels of activity. As—or before—it moves into decline, the programmatic areas needs to be displaced and new ones introduced. Thriving units should understand the lifecycle position and implications of each programmatic area, should include programs in various stages, and should be prepared to displace declining programs with new ones.

- Are there emerging areas of research on which the unit believes it should be focusing? Likewise, are there areas that no longer appear as relevant and should be phased out? What are the implications of these changes for the unit?
- How do the research strengths of the faculty support the curriculum? What exciting scholarly research undergirds the education of the students?

ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITY PROGRAMS: The University's most recent strategic vision is outlined in *The Highest Order of Excellence, A Planning Framework 2005-2010*. If the unit's mission and programs are aligned with these University priorities, it is more likely to attract internal resources and faculty.

- What strategic relationships/collaborations exist between the unit and other entities, both internal and external to the University? Are there other relationships that should be pursued that would strengthen the unit's research efforts?

D. Educational Programs

- Are the undergraduate and graduate educational programs providing a high quality experience for the unit's students? What specific innovations has the unit implemented with regard to the improvement of undergraduate teaching? Have there been changes, improvements, and enhancements in the programs of graduate students and/or post-doctoral scholars? What interdisciplinary options and avenues are open to the students?
- Have there been significant changes in the discipline since the last review? What modifications to the curriculum have been made to address these changes? What future changes are anticipated?

E. Students

- Have trends in undergraduate and graduate student applications/ admissions/ enrollments changed? Have there been changes in the quality of the student body? How adequate are the efforts of the unit in the recruitment of graduate students? How might this be improved? How does the marketplace for top quality students (undergraduate and graduate) look? Is the size of the graduate program appropriate?
- What is the average time-to-degree for the unit's PhD students? Are students taking too long to complete their degrees? What factors affect this?

- What has been the placement record for all PhDs in the past ten years (please list all students receiving degrees and their placement)? What is the quality of these placements? What factors are affecting the market for these graduates? What can the unit do to ensure timely completion and quality placements?
- What is the involvement of graduate and undergraduate students in the unit? in research? in faculty hiring? in curriculum?
- For medical units, how successful have NU medical students been in obtaining residencies in their desired specialties? At what institutions are they being placed?
- For medical units, what has been the assessment of the unit's residency program by the specialty's Residency Review Committee? How many applications for how many positions have there been over the past several (5-7) years? How successful have the residents been on the certifying exams?

F. Leadership and Governance

LEADERSHIP: Leadership should be visionary and entrepreneurial and be successful in achieving strong collaboration among the unit members and with other elements of the Northwestern community. The unit should be in a position to assure an orderly leadership transition, when necessary.

- Has there been a leadership change in the unit? How has this change affected the organization? administration? programs? intellectual community? external collaborations/interactions? How does the unit ensure orderly leadership transitions, when necessary?
- How has the unit organized its operations and functions: through an executive committee, through heads of the graduate, undergraduate, and research programs, etc.? How effectively is the structure and its components functioning? Are there changes that need to be made?
- Does the unit have a board of external or internal advisors? How is this group selected? How active is this group in providing strategic guidance, and where appropriate, oversight? How can the board be used to best effect?

G. Departmental Support

- How has technology been integrated into the teaching, research, and administrative activities of the department? How successful have these efforts been? How has the unit developed hardware, software, and training support?
- How well does the unit's current space meet its research and teaching needs? What reallocation or renovation could be done to accomplish the unit's goals? What are the unit's long-term space needs?
- Have Library collections kept pace with changes in the discipline? What steps have been taken to evaluate and discuss the needs of faculty and students?
- For medical units, what has been the level of support from affiliated hospitals for the unit's teaching, research, and clinical missions?

H. Cross-Unit Relations

- Have any new efforts been made to interact with other University units? with entities outside the University? In what areas are these interactions most fruitful? Are there other areas of unit strength that could be leveraged through external collaborations?

II. Administrative Units

A. Mission and Strategic Position

MISSION: The mission statement should clearly describe the unit's purpose, and should establish the foundation upon which the unit's strategic plan is built. It should guide a unit in its thematic focus (primary areas of effort) and in the types of programs/activities it conducts. The mission should neither be so broad as to permit the unit to pursue virtually any type of activity, nor so narrow as to restrict its ability to adapt. Unit activities should be understandable in the context of its mission.

- What is the unit's purpose? What functions does the unit perform to carry out this purpose? How has this changed? What are the current trends in the unit's service area nationwide? How have marketplace forces affected the unit's operations?
- What are the unit's strengths? weaknesses? Have these changed in recent years? How do these areas correspond to where the unit would like to be?
- How does the unit compare to equivalent units in peer institutions? What are the comparative measures used to assess performance?
- What are the key relationships for this unit to other units within the University? outside the University?

B. Services

- Does the unit have defined performance goals or targets? How does the unit determine whether it is achieving these? What specific performance measures does the unit use to assess its performance on an ongoing basis?
- What improvements have been made in the delivery of services from the unit to its constituencies?
- Has the unit implemented any innovative or state-of-the-art approaches to improve its effectiveness and efficiency?
- How does the unit assess its users' needs on an ongoing basis? How flexible is the unit in responding to those needs? How does the unit assess user satisfaction with the unit's performance?
- Are any new services being planned by the unit based upon users' current or anticipated needs? How will these change current unit operations?
- Is there overlap or duplication of services with other units of the University? How could this be reduced, if appropriate?

C. Staff

- What efforts have been made to make the unit more diverse with regard to ethnicity and gender? At what levels in the organization has such hiring occurred? What has been the pattern of retention overall, and by ethnicity and gender?

- How have changes in service delivery affected the skills required by staff? How are staff being trained, retrained, and developed to meet these needs?
- D. Organizational Structure
- How does the unit organize its operations and functions? How has this changed?
 - Have any significant staffing or organizational changes taken place? How have they affected the unit?
 - Have there been any changes in leadership? How have these changes affected the unit's operations? its morale? its service orientation?
- E. Unit Support
- How has technology been integrated into the service and administrative functions of the unit? How successful have these efforts been? How has the unit developed hardware, software, and training support? How has the unit addressed security and obsolescence issues?
 - How well does the unit's current space meet its needs? What reallocation or renovation could be done to accomplish the unit's goals? What are the unit's long-term space needs?

The questions presented above are only examples of the areas which units may explore. Fundamental to the process of issues identification is that the unit itself knows best what challenges confront it. With the historical context and substantive foundation of the previous two cycles of reviews, and with an examination of the changes and external forces which affect the unit, the third cycle should be designed to identify issues confronting the unit that, when addressed, should continue to help the unit move in a trajectory of improvement and quality enhancement.

APPENDIX B

UNIT SELF-STUDY REPORT

As in the previous cycle, the third cycle unit self-study report should extend the unit's previous review self-study. All reviewers will be provided copies of the unit's previous program review reports and current self-study, so descriptions of the unit's historical context should be brief, concentrating on changes that have taken place since the previous review. Information on faculty (academic units) or staff (administrative units), students, programs/services and facilities should be sufficient, however, to provide the reviewers with an overall sense of the department as it currently stands. Units that are undergoing program review for the first time should include more information on the unit's historical context so that the reviewers have a clear understanding of the unit's evolution.

The primary focus of the unit self-study report is on the issues identified by the unit and reviewed by the dean or line vice president and the University's senior leadership (including any additional issues that are identified through their review). The most significant part of the report is the analysis of those issues; units should concentrate their efforts on this section. Recommendations for the future should be concise and presented in the context of the identified issues.

Page limits (excluding appendices) should be adhered to. The limit is fifteen (15) pages, unless major new issues have arisen, in which case the limit is twenty-five (25) pages. Keep in mind that the unit self-study report will have readers from both outside the unit and outside the University. Please identify acronyms and initials and try to avoid jargon. These prescriptions should facilitate the efforts required of both the writers and the readers of the unit self-study reports.

When completed, the unit self-study report should be given to the Office of Administration and Planning (one unbound copy, one copy in electronic format, either on disk or sent as an email attachment¹). The Office and the PRC subcommittee will review the report for completeness. If it is determined that the report is incomplete, it will be returned to the unit with specific feedback on the areas where additional information is needed.

The following outline is intended to provide a basic framework for the report. Units should feel free to contact the Office of Administration and Planning if additional help or guidance in preparing the unit self study report is desired.

¹ If the electronic copy is submitted in .pdf format, please submit an additional electronic copy in Microsoft Word format.

Suggested Outline for Unit Self-Study Report

I. Description of current status and historical context

This section should provide a brief introduction and a description of the current status of the unit: its mission, how it is organized, programmatic/service areas, number of members, etc. The remainder of the section should concentrate on changes since the previous review and can include administrative reorganizations, significant changes in personnel, special initiatives or programs, progress on first cycle recommendations, etc.

II. Issues identified for the third cycle review (see Appendix A)

The final list of issues identified by the unit with input from senior administrators should be discussed.

III. Analysis of issues

This section should form the bulk of the report. Each issue should be explored, with enough description to allow the reader to understand the nature of the issue and why it is important for the unit.

IV. Major recommendations

- A. Goals and priorities for next five years (taking into account the issues that have been identified)
- B. Steps needed to improve the quality and strategic positioning of the unit
- C. Plan for implementing the recommendations

V. Other appropriate issues (*if applicable*)

VI. Brief description of unit self-study report process

VII. Appendices (*see below*)

Appendices for both Academic and Administrative Units

- Most recent unit annual report and strategic plan

Appendices for Academic and Research Units (*required*)

- Summary list of all faculty, including their rank, affiliation, appointment status (assistant, associate, full professor, lecturer, clinical professor, etc.) Please include joint and courtesy appointments as well.
- Organization of unit governance and committee structure as applicable (e.g., an organizational chart, executive committee members, programmatic committees as applicable, directors of undergraduate/graduate studies, other committees, and key administrators/staff, etc.)
- List of research/scholarly activity, e.g., research grants, books, journal articles as applicable, and faculty honors of each tenure-line faculty member, for the last five years (if not otherwise contained in the vitae) (see below)

- Undergraduate program metrics: course enrollment trends and number of majors/minors (*as applicable*)
- Graduate program metrics: quality measures of applicants/admits/enrollees; analysis of PhD student completion rates, time to degree, and placement record for the past five years (*as applicable*)
- Current vitae of all faculty members and/or key administrators/staff (*Clinical departments in the Medical School need not include vitae of contributed service faculty*). For units with a large number of faculty (more than 10), please submit a biographical sketch or summaries of vitae. The primary purpose of the vitae is to provide the reviewers with general data on the quality and qualifications of the faculty and personnel.
- Other appendices and data as needed to support the unit's analysis of issues in the self-study.

Administrative Units (*required*)

- Summary list of all full-time staff, including job titles
- Current organizational chart including number of staff per function/area
- Current vitae/resumes of all professional staff (or directors for larger units)
- Data collected on unit performance measures collected for the past five years

APPENDIX C.1

Guidelines for the Schedule of the External Reviewers' Visit

Each unit is responsible for most of the detailed scheduling of the external reviewers' visit. Scheduling of these visits is one of the most important and one of the most challenging parts of the review process.

Once the date of the external review has been set by Administration and Planning, the unit will be sent confirmation of the dates and information regarding scheduling. It is important to circulate the dates of the visit to all key personnel in the unit (faculty and professional staff as applicable).

Approximately four to six weeks prior to the visit, the Office of Administration and Planning will send a draft itinerary for the visit to the unit head. This draft itinerary is only a guide and aims to include the universe of individuals with whom the reviewers should meet. Section 1 below provides examples of the constituents for academic versus administrative units. The unit head should review the draft itinerary and provide feedback to Administration and Planning whether the appropriate individuals are included and whether anyone has been omitted. Once a consensus has been achieved regarding the individuals who should be included on the itinerary, the responsibility for confirming the meetings will be divided between the unit and Administration and Planning.

Once all of the meetings are confirmed, the final schedule will be distributed by the Office of Administration and Planning to everyone on the schedule, along with brief biographies of the reviewers. Please feel free to consult with Administration and Planning and the Program Review subcommittee as you develop your schedule. In addition, Section 2 below includes some general guidelines, and Appendix C.2, includes a general outline of a schedule and several samples.

1. Personnel to be Interviewed by the External Reviewers

| ACADEMIC UNIT | ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The unit's dean• Department chair/Center director• Department's self-study committee• Individual faculty• Graduate students as a group• Undergraduate students as a group• Residents, post-docs (if appropriate)• Clinicians (if appropriate)• Representatives from other units that collaborate or have linkages with the unit (e.g., faculty with joint appointments or collaborative arrangements, deans, representatives from affiliated hospitals, other department chairs or unit heads)• Administration: President, Provost, Vice President for Research, Vice President for Administration and Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The unit's vice president• Unit head• Unit's self-study committee• Unit's professional staff• Groups of users of the unit's services (e.g., faculty, staff, students)• Representatives from other administrative units that have linkages with the unit (e.g., vice presidents, unit heads, professional staff) <p>Administration: President, Provost, Vice President for Administration and Planning</p> |

2. General Guidelines for Meetings

- A. Faculty or key staff should be scheduled for individual meetings as much as possible. In larger units, the reviewers may need to be separated so that each reviewer meets with an individual (see Sample B). In smaller units, two reviewers with one interviewee, which provides a common experience for the external reviewers, is best. Individuals should be assigned to these sessions.
- B. Students should be scheduled in groups and arranged by level, e.g., undergraduates only, graduates only, residents only, etc.
- C. When scheduling group sessions (e.g., students, faculty from units with collaborative arrangements, users of a unit's services) limit the groups to five or six persons. Larger groups inhibit everyone's ability to contribute.
- D. For meals, which are to be considered working functions, small groups of a *total* of four to six persons (including the reviewers) should be scheduled to allow for good interaction and conversational exchange. The unit is financially responsible for the luncheon on the first day; other meal functions are negotiable. University guidelines regarding reimbursements are strictly followed.
- E. A tour of the facilities may be scheduled, if appropriate. A tour of both clinical and laboratory facilities may be particularly important for units in the Medical School. Keep such a tour very brief and schedule toward the end of the day.
- F. Sessions may be scheduled for 20 (minimum), 30, 45, or 60 minutes as necessary.
- G. In general, individuals should be scheduled only once (including meal functions) so that the reviewers have the opportunity to meet with as many individuals in the unit as possible.
- H. Try to keep the reviewers in one location as much as possible since much time is lost in transit. If you do need to move the reviewers, be sure to build the transit time into the schedule and arrange for escorts to take them to the meeting and bring them back.
- I. On the schedule sent to Administration and Planning, please include the following for each of the individuals to be interviewed by the external reviewers: full name; complete title, telephone number/email address. Also, please specify the meeting location(s).
- J. If there are any expenses anticipated for which the unit expects to be reimbursed, these should be discussed with the Office of Administration and Planning prior to incurring the expense. The unit is responsible for submitting all the necessary information (e.g., name, address, and social security number of the person to be reimbursed, properly filled out paperwork, and original receipts) to the Office of Administration and Planning

3. Sample Schedules

Several sample schedules are included in Appendix C.2. Sample A is a small/ medium academic unit; Sample B, a large academic unit; and Sample C, an administrative unit. These are not strict models; each unit's review schedule will be tailored to meet the individual needs of the unit.

APPENDIX C.2

General Outline for the External Reviewers' Visit

EVENING BEFORE THE REVIEW BEGINS

- by 6:00 pm External reviewers arrive at hotel
[travel arrangements by reviewers; hotel and ground transportation by Administration and Planning]
- 7:00 pm Reviewers are met in the hotel lobby by the unit head.
- 7:30 pm Reviewers have dinner with the unit head alone
[arranged by the unit]

DAY 1

- 7:30 am – 8:30 am Reviewers have breakfast with the Program Review Council subcommittee
[arranged by PRC subcommittee and Administration and Planning]
- 8:30 am – Noon Unit schedules meetings with individuals/groups of the unit's administrative staff, faculty, professional staff (meeting length varies depending upon the number of individuals to be interviewed by external reviewers)
[location arranged by the unit; try to keep reviewers in one place]
- Noon – 1:00 pm Lunch—Usually a good opportunity for external reviewers to meet with selected students (undergraduate and/or graduate) or clients/customers in the case of an administrative unit
[food and location arranged by the unit]
- 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Unit schedules meetings with individuals/groups of the unit's administrative staff, faculty, students, professional staff, and unit head (meeting length varies depending upon the number to be interviewed by external reviewers)
[location arranged by the unit; try to keep reviewers in one place]
- 6:30 pm External reviewers have dinner together and discuss the day's meetings.

DAY 2

- 7:30 am – 8:30 am External reviewers have breakfast with representatives from outside units having a relationship to the unit, or another small group of students, e.g. graduates only, or selected members within the unit who have not been scheduled earlier
[arranged by unit and Administration and Planning]
- 8:30 am – 11:45 am Meetings with appropriate line officer, representatives from outside units having a relationship to the unit, and other representatives from the unit
[arranged by unit and Administration and Planning]
- Noon – 1:30 pm External reviewers have lunch with the PRC subcommittee for a wrap-up session
[arranged by Administration and Planning]

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm | External reviewers meet with senior administrators: President, Provost, Vice President for Research, Vice President for Administration and Planning, Dean of the Graduate School (as appropriate) and Director of Program Review <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm | External reviewers confer privately <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm | External reviewers meet with the unit head for a debriefing session <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 3:30 pm | External reviewers depart <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |

Sample Schedule A Small/Medium Sized Academic Unit

Evening before the Review Begins

| | |
|------------|---|
| by 6:00 pm | External reviewers arrive at hotel <i>[travel arrangements by reviewers; hotel and ground transportation by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 7:00 pm | Reviewers are met in the hotel lobby by the department chair. |
| 7:30 pm | Reviewers have dinner with the department chair alone or with the chair and associate/vice chair <i>[arranged by the unit]</i> |

DAY 1

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 7:30 am – 8:45 am | Reviewers have breakfast with the Program Review Council subcommittee <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 8:45 am | Reviewers are escorted to the unit by a member of the Program Review subcommittee or a member of the unit. |
| 9:00 am – 9:30 am | Faculty member |
| 9:30 am – 10:00 am | Faculty member |
| 10:00 am – 10:30 am | Faculty member |
| 10:30 am – 11:00 am | BREAK |
| 11:00 am – 11:30 am | Faculty member |
| 11:30 am – Noon | Faculty member |
| Noon – 12:45 pm | Lunch with undergraduate students <i>[arranged by unit]</i> |

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| 12:45 pm – 1:30 pm | Lunch with graduate students <i>[arranged by unit]</i> |
| 1:30 pm – 2:00 pm | Faculty member |
| 2:00 pm – 2:30 pm | Faculty member |
| 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm | BREAK |
| 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm | Faculty member |
| 3:30 pm – 4:15 pm | Group of adjunct, lecturer or visiting faculty |
| 4:15 pm – 4:45 pm | Tour of department/unit facilities |
| 4:45 pm | Reviewers return to the hotel. |
| 6:15 pm | External reviewers have dinner together and discuss the day's meetings. |

DAY 2

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 7:30 am – 8:30 am | Breakfast with selected faculty/department chairs from units with linkages <i>[arranged by unit]</i> |
| 8:30 am | Reviewers check out of the hotel and are escorted to the department by a member of the breakfast group or a member of the department. |
| 8:45 am – 9:15 am | Faculty member |
| 9:15 am – 9:45 am | Faculty member |
| 9:45 am – 10:15 am | Faculty member |
| 10:15 am – 10:45 am | BREAK |
| 10:45 am | Reviewers are escorted to the Dean's Office by a member of the department |
| 11:00 am – 11:45 am | Meeting with the Dean |
| 11:45 am | Reviewers are escorted to central administration by the chair/director or other member of the department |
| Noon – 1:30 pm | External reviewers have lunch with the PRC subcommittee for a wrap-up session <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm | External reviewers meet with senior administrators: President, Provost, Vice President for Research, Vice President for Administration and Planning, and Director of Program Review <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm | External reviewers confer privately <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm | External reviewers meet with department chair for a debriefing session <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 3:30 pm | External reviewers depart <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |

Sample External Reviewer Schedule B Large Academic Unit

EVENING BEFORE THE REVIEW BEGINS

- by 6:00 pm External reviewers arrive at hotel
[travel arrangements by reviewers; hotel and ground transportation by Administration and Planning]
- 7:00 pm Reviewers are met in the hotel lobby by the department chair.
- 7:30 pm Reviewers have dinner with the department chair alone or with the chair and associate/vice chair
[arranged by the unit]

DAY 1

- 7:30 am– 8:30 am Reviewers have breakfast with the Program Review Council subcommittee
[arranged by Administration and Planning]
- 8:30 am Reviewers are escorted to the unit by a member of the Program Review Council subcommittee or a member of the unit.

| | REVIEWER 1 | REVIEWER 2 | REVIEWER 3 |
|---------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| 8:45 am – 9:15 am | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 9:15 am – 9:45 am | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 9:45 am – 10:15 am | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 10:15 am – 10:45 am | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 10:45 am – 11:15 am | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 11:15 am – 11:45 am | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 11:45 am – 12:30 pm | All reviewers meet for lunch with group of undergraduates | | |
| 12:30 pm – 1:15 pm | All reviewers meet for lunch with PhD students <i>[arranged by unit]</i> | | |
| 1:15 pm – 1:45 pm | BREAK | | |
| 1:45 pm | Reviewers are escorted to the Dean’s office by a member of the unit. | | |
| 2:00 pm – 2:45 pm | All reviewers meet with the Dean. | | |
| 2:45 pm | Reviewers are escorted back to the department by a member of the unit. | | |

| | REVIEWER 1 | REVIEWER 2 | REVIEWER 3 |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 3:30 pm – 4:00 pm | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 4:00 pm – 4:30 pm | Faculty | Faculty | Faculty |
| 4:45 pm | Reviewers return to the hotel | | |
| 6:15 pm | External reviewers have dinner together and discuss the day's meetings. | | |

DAY 2

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| 7:30 am – 8:30 am | Breakfast with selected faculty or department chairs from units with linkages <i>[arranged by unit]</i> |
| 8:30 am | Reviewers are escorted to the department by a member of the breakfast group or a member of the department. |
| 8:45 am – 9:15 am | All reviewers meet with Director, Undergraduate Education |
| 9:15 am – 9:45 am | All reviewers meet with Director, Graduate Education |
| 9:45 am – 10:15 am | All reviewers meet with Director/Coordinator, Faculty Research |
| 10:15 am – 10:45 am | BREAK |

| | REVIEWER 1 | REVIEWER 2 | REVIEWER 3 |
|---------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| 10:45 am – 11:30 am | Faculty Faculty | Faculty Faculty | Faculty Faculty |
| 11:45 am | Reviewers are escorted to lunch with the administrators by the chair/director or other member of the unit. | | |
| Noon – 1:30 pm | External reviewers have lunch with the PRC subcommittee for a wrap-up session <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> | | |
| 1:30 pm – 2:00 pm | External reviewers meet with senior administrators: President, Provost, Vice President for Research, Vice President for Administration and Planning, and Director of Program Review <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> | | |
| 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm | External reviewers confer privately <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> | | |
| 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm | External reviewers meet with the department chair for a debriefing session | | |
| 3:30 pm | External reviewers depart <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> | | |

Sample External Reviewer Schedule C Administrative Unit

Evening before the review begins

| | |
|------------|---|
| by 6:00 pm | External reviewers arrive at hotel <i>[travel arrangements by reviewers; hotel and ground transportation by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 7:00 pm | Reviewers are met in the hotel lobby by the unit head/director. |
| 7:30 pm | Reviewers have dinner with the unit head alone or with an associate director <i>[arranged by the unit]</i> |

DAY 1

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 7:30 am – 8:30 am | Reviewers have breakfast with the Program Review Council subcommittee <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 8:30 am | Reviewers are escorted to the unit by a member of the Program Review Council subcommittee or a member of the unit. |
| 8:45 am – 9:15 am | Assistant director of unit |
| 9:15 am – 9:45 am | Assistant director of unit |
| 9:45 am – 10:15 am | Professional staff member Professional staff member |
| 10:15 am – 10:45 am | BREAK |
| 10:45 am – 11:15 am | Professional staff member Professional staff member |
| 11:15 am – Noon | Selected students who are users of the unit's services |
| Noon – 1:30 pm | Lunch with faculty members who are users of the unit's services <i>[arranged by unit]</i> |
| 1:30 pm – 2:15 pm | Meeting with unit staff |
| 2:15 pm – 2:45 pm | Professional staff member Professional staff member |
| 2:45 pm | Reviewers escorted to the office of the line vice president by a member of the unit |
| 3:00 pm – 3:45 pm | Line vice president |
| 3:45 pm | Reviewers escorted back to the unit by a member of the unit. |
| 4:00 pm – 4:30 pm | Tour of facilities |
| 4:45 pm | Reviewers return to the hotel |
| 6:15 pm | External reviewers have dinner together and discuss the day's meetings. |

DAY 2

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 7:30 am – 8:30 am | Breakfast with unit heads or staff from other units who are users of the unit's services <i>[arranged by unit]</i> |
| 8:45 am | Reviewers are escorted to the next meeting by a member of the breakfast group |
| 9:00 am – 9:30 am | Meeting with related unit heads or users of the unit's services |
| 9:45 am – 10:15 am | Professional staff member from Chicago campus Professional staff member from Chicago campus |
| 10:15 am – 10:45 am | Professional staff member from Chicago campus Professional staff member from Chicago campus |
| 10:45 am – 11:15 am | Professional staff member from related areas Professional staff member from related areas |
| 11:15 am – 11:45 am | BREAK |
| 11:45 am | Reviewers are escorted to lunch with the administrators by the unit head or other member of the unit. |
| Noon – 1:30 pm | External reviewers have lunch with the PRC subcommittee for a wrap-up session <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm | External reviewers meet with senior administrators: President, Provost, Vice President for Research, Vice President for Administration and Planning, and Director of Program Review <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm | External reviewers confer privately <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |
| 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm | External reviewers meet with the unit head for a debriefing session |
| 3:30 pm | External reviewers depart <i>[arranged by Administration and Planning]</i> |