

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Swanlund Administration Building
601 East John Street
Champaign, IL 61820

RECEIVED

DEC 18 1998

DMI

December 16, 1998

Dean Leigh Estabrook, *Chair*
Professor Paul Bohn
Professor Clifton Brown
Dean Kathleen Conlin
Dean Jesse Delia
Professor Bruce Chassy
Professor Lizanne DeStefano
Dr. Carol Livingstone ✓
Dr. Lawrence Mann
Professor Richard Schacht
Dean William R. Schowalter

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your willingness to serve on a committee to advise us on the implementation of a campus-wide unit review process that will contribute to our overall improvement.

We have not had a systematic process for program quality review for some years. As you know, the Task Force on Graduate Education delivered an excellent report in 1997. Among its recommendations was that we should institute periodic reviews of our graduate programs. Also in 1997, the Task Force on Assessment and Program Improvement recommended a campus-wide plan for outcomes assessment designed to encourage programmatic improvement at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Using these reports as catalysts, we now ask that you consider what sort of program review process would best serve our institutional interest of achieving excellence in each of our programs (graduate and undergraduate), and could be implemented with a reasonable cost-benefit ratio. Ideally, any system we implement will provide an integrated assessment of the various aspects of our programs, and also interface appropriately with the annual budget process.

Elements we hope you will consider include how programs will be identified for review, standard elements all reviews should contain, and appropriate frequency of unit reviews (no more frequently than every ten years comes to mind!). Another issue that might arise is how and when an external review component might be incorporated into these processes. We believe that a reasonable process, one that minimizes both the need for additional structures and unit-level burden, can be created.

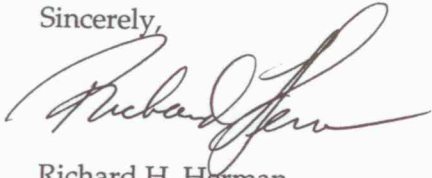
Members of your committee bring a variety of perspectives and experience to this task. In addition to those who served on the Task Force on Graduate Education and the Task

Force on Assessment, among you are members with experience with prior program review procedures and with the pilot program currently underway. Others upon whom you might call for additional information include Associate Dean Wesley Seitz, who has been responsible for the implementation of the Task Force on Graduate Education, and Assistant Provost Karen Carney, who coordinates the IBHE program reviews that occur for every unit on campus decennially. In addition, Associate Provost Walter Tousey might provide useful insight into the budget process, should that prove deliberations in the course of your deliberations.

Associate Graduate Dean Michael Loui will provide staff support for your committee. To facilitate the scheduling of the first meeting, we have enclosed schedule grids to be completed and returned to Dean Loui's office.

We hope to receive your final report by the end of March, with perhaps an interim report for discussion by the Council of Deans by February 15. Thank you again for your willingness to undertake this important service to our academic community.

Sincerely,



Richard H. Herman
Provost and Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs



Richard C. Alkire
Vice Chancellor for Research and
Dean, the Graduate College

c: Council of Deans
Associate Dean Loui

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Graduate School of Library and Information Science
Library and Information Science Building
501 East Daniel Street
Champaign, IL 61820-6211



RECEIVED

MAR 25 1999

DMI

March 24, 1999

Provost Richard Herman
Vice-Chancellor Richard Alkire
Swanlund Building
MC-304

Dear Provost Herman and Vice-Chancellor Alkire:


Enclosed please find the report from the Program Quality Review Committee. We are proposing this process as a complement to the CBOC annual report from units, the current work on outcomes assessment on campus and other reviews such as those done for accreditation. While the Committee does not believe there should be additional review by the Graduate College, both the Provost and Dean of the Graduate College have the authority to initiate reviews under our recommended proposal. In our discussions of unit review, committee members concluded that our proposal provides an alternative, but equally powerful, way to attain the goals of assessment and review envisioned by the Task Force on Graduate Education.

The committee also discussed briefly how the costs associated with review should be handled. We recommend that the dean or the Provost (in the case of units that report directly to that office) should be responsible for funding reasonable costs for the review.

Finally, I would like to note that the committee could not reach consensus on the timing of unit review. A number of committee members believe that it would be in the best interests of the University to mandate these reviews at specified intervals, ideally no less often than every 10 to 12 years. Others felt that the timeline for review should be entirely determined by the Provost, deans and department executives. Nevertheless, this report does have the full support of the committee.

We would be happy to discuss this with you or with other campus groups. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the University in this important matter.

Sincerely,


Leigh Estabrook
Dean and Professor

kap

enclosure

Final

Proposed Guidelines for Review of Units Organized as Academic Departments¹
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Program Quality Review Committee: Dean Leigh Estabrook, Chair, Professor Paul Bohn, Professor Clifton Brown, Dean Kathleen Conlin, Dean Jesse Delia, Professor Bruce Chassy, Professor Lizanne DeStefano, Dr. Carol Livingstone, Dr. Lawrence Mann, Professor Richard Schacht, Dean William Schowalter.

The following guidelines for reviews of units organized as academic departments have been designed to assist the University in building a culture of ongoing quality assessment and improvement. Although a variety of mechanisms have been used or proposed before, including COPE, the Task Force on Graduate Education and ad hoc committees, these have been driven primarily by groups external to the department or unit. These new guidelines place the primary locus of review directly within the units and give first responsibility for review to the executive officer of the unit. They have been designed to accommodate the variety of disciplines and governance structures on the campus while, at the same time, making provision for external review to verify, validate and enhance unit-based assessment.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign strives for excellence in teaching, research and service throughout the institution. The quality of every academic program is manifested by its activities pursuant to this threefold institutional mission and by the excellence of its faculty, staff, students and resources. Each unit is also responsible for carrying out the University's mission and achieving the University's goals, consistent with the institutional values of a collegial work environment; the encouragement of innovative scholarship that reaches across disciplinary and administrative lines; and our distinctive character as a land-grant, research-oriented institution.

We recognize that all units can benefit from periodic evaluation, and indeed such reviews are already part of the institutional character as carried out through such activities as accreditation studies, professional society certification reviews, IBHE reviews and planning activities under budget reform. The self-study occasioned by such activities can provide many specific benefits, including strengthening unit planning efforts; clarifying problem areas and priorities; improving communication; and establishing benchmarks for future evaluation.

Beyond these benefits it is useful from time-to-time to conduct more focused and intensive unit reviews. We propose that the campus formalize a system of strategically occasioned reviews consisting of a unit self study and external peer review. These reviews provide the basis for the Provost, deans² and unit executive officers to assess emerging intellectual growth areas in the context of the campus structure and, consequently, opportunities for differential investment; and reassessments of unit practices, program directions and use of resources. Such reviews provide an opportunity to receive advice from external experts and are undertaken with the principal goal of identifying mechanisms for enhancing unit quality. Reviews by peers from other universities can provide external referents, validate benchmarks, and offer

¹ The term department or unit is used in this document to refer to any academic unit similar in organization and structure to a department (for example, the Program in Religion, the School of Social Work or the College of Law).

² In the case of undivided schools or institutes, the Provost is the [executive] reporting officer and the dean or director is the executive officer acting in the role of what in this document is referred to as the "unit head." "Unit head" will further be used to refer to unit chairs, even though it is recognized that in units with chairs, executive authority resides in the executive committees, which may therefore have to be more actively and directly involved in the review process from the outset than is required in departments organized under the headship system.

fresh input into planning efforts. The dean, who is responsible for paying ongoing attention to the quality of the units within the college and activities falling under multiple jurisdictions, will determine the timing and focus of such intensive reviews in consultation with unit executive officers. We expect that all units will be reviewed within a reasonable time frame. Furthermore, we expect as this process is implemented, the timing of reviews will be reconsidered.

At Illinois, we expect unit reviews to be designed to recognize disciplinary diversity and to balance the value of review against the burden of data collection. Academic unit reviews thus inform and are informed by other activities in academic units and the campus such as accreditation studies, IBHE reviews and planning under budget reform. Reviews should seek to define quantitative and qualitative measures of quality appropriate to a unit in a manner understandable to faculty outside the discipline, e.g., a College Promotion and Tenure committee.

Process

The Provost, dean (including the Dean of the Graduate College), or unit executive officer may initiate a review. At such time it is determined that a review will be undertaken, the unit head and the executive officer to whom the unit reports will draw up a memorandum of understanding. This memorandum will specify the time frame for the review, the process for review and any specific questions the unit should address in the course of the self-study. In appropriate circumstances multiple units may be included within a review of an area or field of study that spans units. In each case it is important that all parties involved understand the focus and objectives of the review. At the time the memorandum of understanding is concluded, the unit will be asked to identify three to five individuals suitable to be named to an external review panel, and to provide a brief statement describing their qualifications and the rationale for their selection. The dean will make the final decision whether to appoint a small external review panel, drawing from the list submitted by the unit and from other individuals with prominence in the unit's area. The committee may include campus faculty members from outside the unit. One panel member will be designated as panel chair.

The unit will normally have six to twelve months to complete a self-study of its activities. In conducting its work, the unit may draw on the resources of the dean and Provost's offices, the Graduate College and the Office of Instructional Resources. When complete, the self-study report will be submitted to the dean. Units are encouraged to make their self-study reports available for review by the wider campus community.

Members of the external review committee should be given the self-study report and supporting materials at least six weeks prior to an on campus visit. The external review committee will meet with the dean, the unit head and unit advisory or executive committee both at the beginning and at the conclusion of the visit, first for purposes of orientation and then to discuss its findings. The external review committee will also be asked to submit a brief written report within three weeks of its visit.

Once the review is completed, the dean will meet with the unit head and the unit executive/advisory committee to discuss the report of the external committee and to consider what actions, if any, will be taken as a result of the review. This meeting will normally result in a second memorandum of understanding of actions to be taken by the unit and the college. The dean will be responsible for reporting to the Provost and the dean of the Graduate College the outcomes of such reviews. We believe that the periodic reporting and monitoring that logically follows from this

understanding and its implementation by units will accomplish the primary objectives of the Task Force on Graduate Education's in its recommendation of annual graduate program reviews.

Guidelines for the Unit Self-Study

[The elements of the self-study described below are offered as guidelines for a comprehensive review. While it is expected that each of the general topics will be addressed, responses to all items indicated are not required. These topics are intended to be suggestive; but units are expected to be selective in their responses. The contents of each unit's self-study will vary based on the agreed upon focus of the review.]

MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

What are the goals and objectives of the unit? How do they relate to the different aspects of the university's broad threefold mission of education, research and service? How does the unit embody institutional values, including striving for diversity? How do campus values and goals relate to the discipline(s) and profession(s) with which the unit is associated? What is the relationship between the unit and any associated profession(s)? What particular areas of special emphasis and strength does the unit now have? Are there any such areas that the unit aspires to develop? Why?

What is the evidence of quality in the unit at the local and national level? Are there national rankings or competitive indicators? If the unit is generally recognized to be among the best in the country in its disciplinary and professional context, what sets it apart from those of second rank? If the unit is not generally so recognized, what separates it from those generally regarded as being of the first rank? In either case, what will be most important for the unit to do during the next five years or so to preserve and enhance its quality and stature? What changes, challenges and opportunities does the unit anticipate that will have implications for its goals, objectives, and standing?

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Which elements of the discipline's intellectual or creative spectrum does the unit seek to cover? What are the special elements of emphasis that define the unit's research or creative efforts?

What is the quality of the unit's research or creative activities and what external indicators substantiate the quality assessment? What realistic avenues for improvement can the unit exploit?

What are the principal obstacles to the unit's achieving its highest aspirations?

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Describe the instructional programs in the unit, including undergraduate, graduate and professional degree and non-degree programs, service teaching to non-majors, non-credit programs, interdisciplinary and inter-institutional activities, and distance, face-to-face, extramural and continuing education offerings. For **each** program, where appropriate, describe:

- The goals of the program.
- The recruitment and admission processes for the program and the preparedness and diversity of the students entering the program
- Advising, extracurricular and mentoring processes that support the program
- Financial aid provided to students, if any. For graduate programs, describe typical patterns of support (fellowships, assistantships, scholarships, waivers), including the unit's policy of assistantship tuition waivers
- Staffing. Who teaches what and why? How are they supported? In particular, what are typical teaching loads for teaching assistants and faculty? Are classes sized appropriately for the type of instruction?

What is the evaluation process for teaching? What does the unit do to improve the quality of teaching?

What is the unit's role in General Education and "service teaching" to non-majors? How is quality of this type of instruction assessed?

What are the processes for assessing the quality and effectiveness of the unit's instructional programs and of student outcomes? How is assessment translated into unit improvement? In particular, what changes in instruction have been made recently and why?

Have there been significant recent changes or trends in the composition of the unit's instructional portfolio or in the methods of delivery? What changes does the unit anticipate in the next few years?

SERVICE

Briefly describe the unit's service and outreach activities and the target audiences. Explain how the intended audience is selected. Is there a planning/prioritization process in place that is used to select audiences for service activities? How is service delivered and what resources are involved? Who provides the service? Is service activity voluntary or assigned? Explain how these services relate to the mission of the unit, college and university.

Describe the relationship of service activities to the unit's instructional and educational programs. Describe the relationship of service activities to research programs. Describe the overall impact(s) and outcome(s) of service activities and the system for evaluation of quality.

ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

Briefly describe the unit's organizational and operational structure, indicating which officers or committees decide which sorts of significant matters. Who does what, and with what wider input/involvement? (Attach copies of the unit's Bylaws and any other formal policy statements, especially those applying to standard expectations of faculty; annual review processes for faculty, students and staff; salary increase determinations; and tenure decisions.)

What sorts of planning (strategic or otherwise) does the unit practice? How is conflict resolution handled? In what ways are students, graduate assistants, academic professionals and other non-faculty groups associated with the unit involved in its governance? Are there problems in the interface of the

policies and practices of the unit with those of other campus units and offices (e.g. college, Graduate College, Provost's or other vice chancellors' offices)?

Have there been any significant changes in the unit's administration and governance structure and practices in recent years? Are any changes in them being contemplated?

HUMAN, PHYSICAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Briefly describe the unit's resources.

How adequate are those resources to carry out the mission of the unit?

What is the unit doing to enhance resources?

What is the unit doing to optimize the allocation of resources?

Guidelines for the External Panel Review

As part of the initial memorandum of understanding, the unit executive officer will identify three or four individuals who would be well qualified to serve on the external review panel and draft a brief statement describing their qualifications and rationale for selection. The dean may add to this list and will make the final decision whether to appoint an external review panel and, if appointed, the selection of panel members. The dean will use the memorandum of understanding to shape the focus and scope of work. Committee members will be asked to serve six to twelve months prior to review. One panel member will be designated as chair of the panel. Panel members will receive a standard honorarium for their service. All travel and related expenses will be reimbursed.

The external panel should expect to receive the self study materials at least six weeks prior to the review. The unit executive officer will work with the panel chair to establish an agenda for the review. It should include, but not be limited to, a meeting with the unit executive, the dean, selected faculty and students, the unit executive or advisory committee, and a representative of The Graduate College and/or Provost's Office. Other meetings and activities should be directed to the specific questions the review is designed to address. It is expected that reviews will last from two to four days.

At the conclusion of its visit, the external review committee will meet with the dean, the unit executive officer and unit executive/advisory committee to discuss their findings. The panel chair will be asked to submit a brief written report to the unit executive and dean within three weeks of its visit. Panel members will receive an honorarium for their service, and will be reimbursed for all travel and related expenses.