UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA POLICY FOR PERIODIC REVIEW OF ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT GROUPS
Updated January 2010

Introduction

The Academic and Administrative Support Unit Review process is one among a number of interrelated processes in place at the University of Georgia to assure institutional effectiveness in accordance with guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

This process, although not identical in all respects, is parallel to the Academic Program Review Process. The purpose of this review process is to provide a systematic means of assuring continuous improvement of the University’s units that are not covered by Academic Program Review, including all Academic and Administrative Support Units.

The outcomes of these reviews serve to guide development of individual programs and to inform administrators making decisions about the allocation of resources. The essential elements of all reviews include:

- Evaluating the viability, quality, and productivity of the Unit according to a set of criteria that are designed to meet the unique goals of the particular program;
- Evaluating the success of the Unit in fulfilling its mission as defined by its internal strategic planning process;
- Evaluating the Unit’s contribution to the University’s mission; and
- Recommending a set of priorities for the Unit’s continued improvement.

The units listed in the review cycles published on the Office of Institutional Effectiveness website are subject to review under this policy. In general, all appropriate sub-units within an administratively distinct unit will be reviewed at the same time. Two or more units on the attached schedule will be combined into a single review process on that schedule when the President or Senior Vice President to whom those units report directs that combination.

The intent of the review process is that a Unit engages in a careful “self review” in light of its own mission and strategic plans and those of the University. The purpose of the process is to promote continuous improvement.
**Background**

The University’s accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools was reaffirmed in 2001. Recommendation #3 of the Reaffirmation Committee stated:

The Committee recommends that the University systematically assess the effectiveness of each administrative and educational support unit and use the results to improve those services.

In order to meet the above standards of SACS, each review shall include the following elements:

1. Periodic (at least every 7 years)
2. Coordinated, to the extent reasonably possible, with any other formal review processes of the University and with review by any accrediting agency. This includes coordination with all dean and director reviews.
3. Inclusion of at least one external reviewer in at least every other review
4. Inclusion of a self-evaluation by the Unit being reviewed
5. Mission based – must include an analysis of the progress of the Unit towards accomplishing its strategic goals and the strategic goals of the University
6. Inclusion of a process and time-table for follow-up on the review process

**Administration of Academic and Administrative Support Unit Reviews**

These reviews will be coordinated by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

**Review Cycle**

There will be a seven-year Review Cycle for all units subject to review. The Review Cycle will be developed and proposed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and approved by the President and the Senior Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, External Affairs, and Finance and Administration. This review cycle shall be established prior to the Fall Semester of 2002.

**Substitution of External Accreditation Review or Existing Assessment Procedures**

For units subject to external accreditation review, the accreditation review may substitute for the review established by this policy if it contains the “essential elements” stated in the Introduction.

Some units already have extensive assessment and follow-up procedures in place. Any such unit may substitute an existing assessment and follow-up process for the review method established by this policy if it contains the four “essential elements” stated in the Introduction.

A Unit which prefers to substitute an external accreditation review or existing assessment process shall submit a request in advance to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.
Self-Study

The basis of each review, unless an exception is approved as outlined above, will be a Self-Study prepared by the Unit and due to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness by October 15 of the review year. Self-Study Guidelines are detailed at Self-Study Guidelines. The purpose of the Self-Study is to provide a mechanism for the Unit to undertake a thorough self-evaluation of its program goals and successes. The quality and usefulness of the document is greatly enhanced by the broadest possible participation of faculty and staff within each Unit. In all cases, the finished Self-Study should be publicized within the Unit and made available to faculty and staff prior to submission for the review.

The Self-Study should identify the key strengths and weaknesses of the Unit’s programs. It should include strategies for continued development of its strengths and correction of its weaknesses. In the process of preparing the Self-Study, the Unit should revisit and renew its Strategic Plan in accordance with the University’s Strategic Plan. It should also consider developments within its field and the needs of the State as appropriate. The Self-Study should provide existing data from sources such as Strategic Planning Reports, Annual Reports, and Institutional Research that will assist the Review Team in understanding the Unit’s work.

Academic and Administrative Support Unit Review Team

A Review Team will be appointed by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to review each Unit using the Unit’s Self-Study and other investigation at the Review Team’s discretion. Each Review Team will consist of at least 3 members.

Review Team Nominations provided to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness

- The President or the Senior Vice President with oversight of the Unit will nominate at least three University of Georgia faculty members, who have agreed to serve. The Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will appoint at least one member of the Review Team from that group.

- The President or the Senior Vice President with oversight of the Unit will nominate at least three University of Georgia administrators from units other than the unit being reviewed. The Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will appoint at least one member of the Review Team from that group.

- A third reviewer will be appointed from one of the above groups of nominees.
If the review includes an external reviewer, the President or Sr. Vice President with oversight of the Unit will nominate one to three External Reviewers. The Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will appoint one member of the Review Team from that group and there will be four reviewers on the review team. The Unit must secure stipend and travel expenses for the external reviewer.

**Review Team Chair:** Review Team members will select the Review Team Chair.

**Conflict of Interest:** Individuals should not participate in the review of:
- A Unit in which the team member holds or has formerly held a position
- A Unit in which a spouse or relative of the team member holds a position

**The Final Report of Academic and Administrative Support Unit Review Team**

The Final Report will be prepared according to guidelines provided in the Review Team Guidelines. The Review Team will have eight weeks to conduct its review and submit a draft report to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness for transmission to the Unit. The Unit will have up to two weeks to respond to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness any recommended changes, which will be forward to the Review Team for its consideration in the Final Report. The Final Report should make explicit recommendations to whether each Unit’s activities should be maintained at current levels, enhanced, in scope, consolidated, or eliminated.

**Administrative Follow-up of Academic and Administrative Support Unit Review Reports**

The Final Report will be distributed to the President or appropriate Senior Vice President, the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, and to all administrators with oversight of the Unit and its activities. A meeting will be held soon after completion of the review with the head of the Unit and the above administrators to discuss the Final Report. At this meeting the head of the Unit will have the opportunity to respond to the review and address the recommendations of the Review Team Report.

**One-year Follow-up Report**

One year following completion of the review, the head of the Unit will submit a written follow-up report on the Unit’s progress in responding to the recommendations of the Final Report. A meeting will be held to address concerns from the follow-up report as necessary only at the request of the Unit or of any of the administrators with oversight of the Unit.
Evaluating these Policies and Procedures

After no more than five years of conducting reviews under this Policy for Review, the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness shall undertake a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of this Policy with the purpose of recommending improvements, as appropriate, to the President and Senior Vice Presidents.