

**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA POLICY
FOR PERIODIC REVIEW OF ACADEMIC
AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT GROUPS
Updated March 2017**

Introduction

The academic and administrative support unit review process is one among a number of interrelated processes in place at the University of Georgia that ensure institutional effectiveness in accordance with guidelines of the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges \(SACSCOC\)](#).

This review process, although not identical in all respects, is parallel to the [academic program review process](#). Its purpose is to provide a systematic means of ensuring continuous improvement of the University's units that are not reviewed under academic program review, including all academic and administrative support units. The review process is based on a thorough self-evaluation by the unit under review in light of its own mission, strategic goals, and success in achieving its expected programmatic outcomes. The evaluation considers these factors in relation to the mission and strategic priorities of the University.

The outcomes of academic and administrative support unit 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 designed to meet the unique goals and outcomes of the particular unit's programs;
- 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 Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness (OAIE) 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 sub-units on the attached schedule will be combined into a single review process when the president, senior vice president and provost, or vice president to whom those sub-units report agrees with this procedure.

Background

Systematic review of academic and administrative support units was first implemented at UGA in 2002 and was modeled on the longstanding process for periodic evaluation of units offering academic programs. The process was developed in part to meet SACSCOC expectations for institutional effectiveness. These expectations are captured in Comprehensive Standards 3.3.1.2-5 and require that for *all* programs and services, “The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieve these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on the analysis of the results....”

In order to meet both SACSCOC expectations and UGA’s needs for a flexible and efficient process that reflects its unique organizational structure and existing evaluation processes, the academic and administrative review process was developed with the following characteristics:

1. Periodic, with a review at least once every seven 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 and allows for substitution of an external accreditation review that contains the essential elements established in this policy;
3. Based on a self-evaluation by the unit being reviewed that defines the unit’s unique mission and the expected outcomes it has identified for its mission-based programs;
4. Includes an analysis of the unit’s mission in relation to the University’s mission, as well as an analysis of the unit’s progress in achieving its mission and its programmatic outcomes; and
5. Includes a process and timetable to follow up recommendations from the review.

Administration of Academic and Administrative Support Unit Reviews

These reviews will be coordinated by the OAIE.

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 OAIE and approved by the president and the senior vice presidents for academic affairs and provost. This review cycle has been continuous since the Fall Semester of 2002.

Substitution of External Accreditation Review or Existing Assessment Procedures

Some units already have extensive internal or external accreditation 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 defined in the Introduction to this policy.

A unit that prefers to substitute an external accreditation review or existing assessment process shall submit a request in advance the OAIE.

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 OAIE by October 15 of the review year. Self-study guidelines are detailed in the [Self-Study Outline](#) provided to the unit at the beginning of the review process. The purpose of the self-study is to provide a mechanism for the unit to undertake a thorough self-evaluation of its goals and successes. The self-study should identify expected outcomes of the unit's programs and services and describe key strengths and weaknesses of the unit in achieving those outcomes. It should include strategies for continued development of its strengths and correction of any 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 the Office of Institutional Research that will assist the review team in understanding the unit's work.

The quality and usefulness of the self-study 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.

Academic and Administrative Support Unit Review Team

A review team will be assembled by OAIE to review each unit, using the unit's self-study and other materials provided at the review team's request. Each review team will consist of at least three members.

Review Team Nominations Provided to the OAIE

- In instances where the unit reports to the president through a vice president, the president, the vice president, and the unit undergoing review will each nominate three persons who are administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.
- In instances where the unit reports directly to the president and not through a vice president, the president will nominate three persons and the unit undergoing review will nominate three persons. All nominees should be administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.
- In instances where the unit reports to the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost through a vice president, the provost will nominate three persons, the vice president will nominate three persons, and the unit being reviewed will nominate three persons. All nominees should be administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.

- In instances where the unit reports directly to the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost directly, the provost will nominate three persons and the unit being reviewed will nominate three persons. All nominees should be administrators or faculty members at UGA who have agreed to serve.

The OAIE will assemble the final review team to ensure that it is balanced between administrators and faculty members to the greatest extent possible and includes at least one nominee from each group.

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 the Review Team

The final report will be prepared according to guidelines provided to the review team by the OAIE at the beginning of the review process. The review team will have eight weeks to conduct its review and submit a draft report to the OAIE for transmission to the unit. The unit will have up to two weeks to respond in writing to the OAIE with any recommended changes to the draft. The OAIE will forward the unit's response to the review team for its consideration in developing the final report. The final report should include formative recommendations meant to help the unit improve achievement of its mission and programmatic outcomes. If any unit programs should be enhanced, consolidated, or eliminated, the review team should make explicit recommendations to that effect.

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

The final report will be distributed, as appropriate, to the president, the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, the vice provost, 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 relevant administrators to discuss the final report. At this meeting the head or director of the unit will have the opportunity to respond to the review and address the recommendations from the review team.

One-year Follow-up Report

One year following completion of the review, the head/director of the unit will submit a written follow-up report on the unit's progress in response to the recommendations from the final report.

A meeting will be held to address concerns from the follow-up report as necessary and only at the request of the unit or of any of the administrators with oversight of the unit.

Evaluating these Policies and Procedures

At least once every five years, OAIE shall undertake a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of this policy with the purpose of recommending improvements, as appropriate, to the president and the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost.