

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
NUMBERED POLICY MEMORANDA

POLICY MEMORANDUM 94-III.24-63

Issued: May 1, 1994
Editorial Amendments: February 2, 1998
Editorial Amendments: September 1, 2000
Revised: July 11, 2005
Editorial Amendments: August 3, 2006
Editorial Amendments: March 26, 2007

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

All academic programs will be reviewed regularly to evaluate their quality and their effectiveness in supporting the University's mission. As described by this policy, a standing committee, the Program Review Committee (PRC), composed of members of The University of Texas at Dallas faculty and academic administration, will oversee the review process. The Committee will function in cooperation with the Executive Vice President and Provost (Provost), under whose auspices Academic Program Reviews are conducted.

Program Review Committee (PRC)

This University committee will maintain general oversight of the review process to assure its efficacy and uniformity. During each program review, one member of the PRC, designated the PRC Monitor, will participate directly in the process. In addition to responsibilities as a regular member of the Review Team, the PRC Monitor will have the additional duties of conferring with and reporting to the PRC and, on the basis of knowledge acquired as a member of the PRC, helping each Review Team insure consistency of its individual review with the overall Review process. The entire PRC will evaluate the operation of the Review process on a continuing basis and make an annual report to the Provost and Academic Senate. In this report it will recommend any modifications of policy or procedure regarding reviews it considers desirable. In addition, it will consult with and advise the Provost on other aspects of reviews as requested.

The PRC will consist of three faculty members and three Deans, appointed by the President. Members from the faculty will be recommended by the Academic Senate after consultation with the Committee on Committees. Deans will be recommended by the Provost. The three-year terms of members will be staggered initially to provide retirement of one third of the members each year. Members may be reappointed.

Frequency of Review

Academic Programs ("units") shall be reviewed at approximately 5-year intervals, or more frequently if the Provost, in consultation with the appropriate Dean, finds that the circumstances of a particular program suggest an earlier date. The 5-year interval provides a manageable number (2 to 4) of program reviews each year and is long enough to reflect changes in programs and their leadership. However, a program may not need to be reviewed if an external accreditation review has occurred within the previous 5 years. Accreditation reviews should be conducted in such a way as to substantially meet the goals outlined under The Review Procedure below.

Criteria for Selection of Program for Review

The term "Academic Program" or "unit" as used in this document may refer either to a School or to any academically coherent, distinctively functioning subdivision thereof. In order to be separately reviewable under the terms of this policy, a unit must have tenured or tenure-track faculty officially affiliated with it and must offer instruction leading to the awarding of degrees. Appendix A, which may be modified from time to time by the Provost after consultation with the PRC, lists examples of programs that might be reviewable under this policy.

Selection of units to be reviewed in a given year will be made by the Provost after consultation with the PRC and the appropriate Dean(s). The factors (not in priority order) to be considered in the selection of units for review include:

1. Planned program changes;
2. Elapsed time since last major review of budget, staff and academic programs;
3. University or program accreditation cycles;
4. Significant changes in student demand; and
5. Overlap or shared responsibilities with other programs being reviewed.

The Review Team

The evaluation in each review will be carried out by an ad hoc Review Team appointed and charged by the Provost. This Review Team's composition may vary from program to program, but will incorporate both internal and external members. Typically, it will include:

1. At least three individuals from other institutions that have programs similar to those of the unit under review, appointed by the Provost after consultation with the appropriate unit administrators.
2. At least two members from the U.T. Dallas faculty and academic administration who are not affiliated with the program to be reviewed, appointed by the Provost after consultation with the PRC.

3. One member of the PRC, to act as the PRC Monitor, appointed by the Provost after consultation with the PRC. This individual will not be affiliated with the program under review.

Additional members may be added as appropriate. One member of the Team, usually a member not affiliated with U.T. Dallas, will be designated Chair of the Review Team by the Provost at the time the Team is constituted. The Review Team will evaluate the unit as requested by a written charge prepared by the Provost after consultation with the PRC.

The Review Procedure

Reviews will be conducted as follows:

The unit undergoing review will consult with the Provost regarding selection of Review Team members, suitable dates for the Team's campus visit, and the detailed schedule of events during the visit. It will prepare a comprehensive self-study document (an internal planning document, not intended for general distribution) in accordance with guidelines and instructions issued by the Provost. It will also collaborate with the Provost in insuring that the Team's on-campus needs are met. The Provost will designate a Review Coordinator (the Dean, Head, Director, or suitable substitute) from the unit to see that the duties assigned to the unit in connection with the Review are carried out.

The Provost will appoint the Team and provide it with a detailed charge, along with the unit's self-study document. The office of the Provost will issue the visit schedule, oversee the visit arrangements for the Team (transportation, housing, meals, reimbursement, etc.) and serve as liaison between the Team and the unit being reviewed).

Before the campus visit, the Review Team will familiarize itself with the unit's self-study, and with the Provost's charge. During the visit it will consult with members of the unit's faculty, students and staff and inspect facilities. It may request additional information beyond that provided in the self-study. Adequate time will be allowed in the latter part of the visit for the Team to deliberate in private and reach its conclusions.

At the beginning of the visit, the Team will have an introductory interview with the Provost. Before leaving the campus, the Team will hold two exit interviews. In the first, held with the PRC and unit's faculty and administration, the Team will provide its preliminary assessment of the goals, plans, staffing, resources, existing and potential strengths, etc., of the unit, and those areas needing improvement. In the second, held with the Provost, the President and other appropriate senior administrators, the Team will summarize its immediate impressions and provide a forecast of its eventual written report. Then, within one month of the campus visit, the Chair will provide a complete written report on the Team's conclusions to the Provost.

Along with addressing any unique aspects of its charge, the Review Team's report will assess the unit's overall performance and its specific strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations for any changes the Team thinks are advisable. The evaluation should refer to the program's self-study and note items of agreement and disagreement between the Team's assessments and those of the self-study. Typically the Team will consider the undergraduate and graduate curricula and programs of instruction (including student learning outcomes), the student demand for these programs, the scholarly activity of the unit's faculty, the unit's facilities, the national stature and impact of the unit's programs, the quality of its students, the market for its graduates, the level of support for the unit, the effectiveness of the unit's leadership, and the effectiveness of the unit in furthering the university's Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity goals.

The faculty and administration of the unit will have access to the Team's final report, and the unit's chief administrative office in cooperation with faculty and staff will provide a written response to the report for the Provost, giving specific actions planned in the light of Team's recommendations. Where the unit disagrees with findings and/or recommendations of the Team, it will give its reasons for such disagreements. The unit's faculty will have access to this document as well as to the Review Team's report.

The Provost will discuss the Team's report and unit's response with the unit's administration and faculty. Finally, the Provost will prepare recommendations to the President to complete the review. These recommendations, together with the unit's Self-Study, the charge to the Review Team, the Review Team's report, and the unit's response, will constitute the official record of the Program Review of that unit.

In the years between reviews of the unit, this record of the Program Review will be pertinent to decisions on budget, staffing, curricular and degree changes, and allocation of special resources.

APPENDIX A

Examples of Academic Components to be Reviewed as Units

1. School of Management
2. School of General Studies
3. School of Arts and Humanities
4. Programs in Biology
5. Programs in Chemistry
6. Programs in Geosciences
7. Programs in Physics
8. Programs in Mathematical Sciences
9. Programs in Science Education
10. School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences
11. Programs in Computer Science
12. Programs in Electrical Engineering
13. School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences