



Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure

Subject: Academic Program Review

Number:

I. PURPOSE

Academic Program Review (APR) provides an opportunity for the institution and faculty to examine the quality of their academic programs as a whole, to affirm ways that the program is working well, and to implement improvements. APR is also a mechanism for demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and thus meet accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). At the University of Wyoming, comprehensive institutional reviews will generally be conducted on a department-by-department basis, every seven years. Other types of program reviews may occur as described below.

II. DEFINITIONS

Institutional Academic Program Reviews: Each academic department shall undergo a comprehensive review of its academic programs at least once every 7 years. The purpose of conducting the reviews on a departmental basis is to assure that the degree programs are assessed in the context of the faculty's overall workload. Degree programs that are interdisciplinary, or are housed outside an academic department will be reviewed independently. From time to time, institutional reviews may be requested for special circumstances.

Reviews of New Degree Programs: For effective long-range planning and continuous improvement, it is important to monitor the progress of a new degree program soon after implementation. All new academic degrees, options, and certificates shall undergo a first review approximately five years after initiation to assess the health of these programs. The Provost's office will initiate review. The process is [outlined here](#).

Reviews of Low Producing Programs: When an academic program produces relatively few graduates over an extended period of time, it is often a signal that the program is not performing well and that university resources are not being effectively deployed. In general, low-producing degrees are defined as those that average fewer than five graduates per year for undergraduate degrees, three graduates per year for masters degrees, and one graduate per year for doctoral over a five year period. On an annual basis, the Office of the Provost will review degree production for all academic programs. Those that are low-producing, will be required to conduct an immediate review with a report on the status of the program due back to the Office of the Provost within six months. If in the judgement of the Office of the Provost, a compelling case has not been made for continuation,

the program will be recommended for reorganization, consolidation, reduction or discontinuance pursuant to UW Regulation 2-13. New degree programs are exempt from the minimum degree production thresholds for the first ten years, with the last five years of this period being used to calculate average annual degree production in year ten.

Reviews of Programs on Suspended Admissions: Departments may suspend admission into a degree program for up to two years with the approval of the Provost and notification to the Faculty Senate Academic Planning Committee. Within the two-year window, the program faculty must prepare a detailed recommendation on the future of the program for consideration by the Provost. If the decision is made to close the program, the process governed by University Regulations for discontinuance of academic degree programs will be initiated. This type of review is supported separately by the Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure: Policy and Guidelines for Suspending, Restructuring and Discontinuing Academic Degree Programs.

Specialized Accreditation Reviews: Specialized accreditation reviews are conducted by professional organizations and typically require a self-study and an outside evaluation team named by the professional organization. Such reviews are the responsibility of Deans and Program Directors, with the expectation that the Office of the Provost is provided with documentation from the reviews and is kept informed of their status.

For undergraduate and professional programs, the accreditation review may meet the requirement for institutional program review, depending upon the nature of the external organization's review. Because these types of reviews typically do not view a department's work holistically, especially with regard to graduate degree programs, specialized accreditation reviews are usually not sufficient for meeting the criteria of an institutional review.

III. OVERVIEW OF REVIEW PROCESS

The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) oversees and coordinates program review on behalf of the Provost, except in the case of interdisciplinary graduate programs, in which case oversight and coordination lies with the Vice Provost for Graduate Education. The coordinator for the program reviews in the Compliance and Review Specialist for Academic Affairs. College and School deans, as applicable, hold primary responsibility for working with the Vice Provosts and the Compliance and Review Specialist to schedule reviews and for ensuring that a high-quality review is carried out.

The department faculty has responsibility for producing a self-study prior to a visit from an external review team. The Provost will appoint the external review team in consultation with the relevant dean and department head.

It is the responsibility of the Office of the Provost to track program review status by academic department. The VPUE will maintain a schedule for reviews that is staggered to assure that colleges are not burdened with an inordinate number of reviews in any given year. The VPUE will provide deans and program directors with at least annual summaries of which departmental reviews are upcoming, due, and/or past due. The Office of the Provost will also serve as the repository for all material related to program review. Summary information regarding program reviews will be reported annually.

The Provost's Office will maintain the following data:

- A list of departmental reviews that were completed in the prior year.
- Copies of the external review team's report, the program's response and the self-study.
- A list of departments and programs that are due for the one-year follow up
- An up-to-date list of reviews of any programs that were identified as low-producing in the prior year.

A list of all department reviews that are at the five-year mark or later in the seven-year cycle, including confirmation that the review has been charged, a status update on the self-study, the review committee's progress, and the expected submission date for the review committee's report to the dean and the timeline for the dean's final summary.

IV. RELATIONSHIP OF INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAM REVIEW TO PROPOSALS FOR NEW PROGRAMS

In general, proposals for new degree programs will only be considered when a recent UW institutional academic program review or external accreditor review is available to provide context for the implementation of the new program. Exceptions to this requirement may be made as the new institutional process is implemented. The proposing unit should also be prepared to provide a rationale for existing degrees in their unit that are low-producing as part of any request for adding degree programs.

V. PROCESS FOR INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Step 1: Annually, the Provost's Office provides a list of departments and programs due for review to Deans and Program Directors

Annually ([see timeline](#)), the Provost's Office will remind the deans and directors of reviews that are scheduled for the upcoming year, and of those which are in the fifth year of the seven-year cycle and due to be charged with program review the following year. The dean or provost may initiate a review at any time if deemed necessary.

Step 2: Dean or Director Initiates the Program Review

Upon notification by the Provost in the Spring term (usually no later than the beginning of February), the review is initiated by a charge memo from the dean to the lead member of the department's faculty, usually the academic unit director, department chair or head. The Provost's Office will provide a charge memo to directors of independent academic programs. The charge memo will include the following elements:

1. A request that a self-study be developed and a request that a lead study director be appointed. This director may be the department chair or head, or their designee;
2. A description of specific issues to be addressed, such as degrees offered in the department or program, characteristics of students and graduates, faculty activity

- including scholarly and creative activity, extension and experiment station activity, advising, mentoring, service, and teaching;
3. A due date for completion and submission of the self-study, typically in mid-summer no later than July;
 4. Directions for how to obtain assistance with data resources;
 5. For programs that have undergone a previous review, the dean's summary memo from that previous program review is attached for reference.
 6. External Site visits will be held in the Fall semester following the charge letter.

Step 3: Program Faculty Prepare the Self-study

The program faculty prepare a self-study according to the instructions in the charge memo, the self-study [template](#) and [guidelines](#). The self-study should include institutional data wherever possible. The self-study should reflect on the recent past and present to provide context for the external reviewers, but need not review the entire previous seven years in detail. The self-study will also serve as a reference against which progress can be measured at the next program review.

The study should also reflect on the value the department and programs contribute to the university, innovations made in degree programs and curricular offerings, program productivity (e.g. enrollment and graduates), accomplishments related to private fundraising and grant and contracts, research and creative work, and other departmental/program accomplishments that have been occurred to adapt to changes in the profession and higher education.

When complete, the self-study is submitted to and approved by the dean or the university official who requested that it be prepared, before it is forwarded to the Office of the Provost.

Step 4: The external team is appointed and carries out the review

The external review team is comprised of three or more experts appointed and convened by the Provost. In general, the majority of the team will come from outside of the university, but members may also come from programs or departments within the university as long as they are not affiliated with the programs under review. The program faculty, in consultation with the dean, will provide the Provost with a list of possible reviewers who have familiarity with the discipline and are outstanding leaders in the field and/or higher education. A member of the program faculty should be appointed to serve as a liaison to the external review team.

The Provost's office will provide the external review team with a written charge that outlines the expectations of their work. This charge will specify the chair of the committee and will provide guidelines for the work of the committee and a due date for the report. Their charge will generally be to review the self-study and to collect additional data, feedback, and information that will speak to the quality of the department and programs during a campus visit. A [sample charge letter](#) provides context for the faculty preparing the self-study. A [sample external review team schedule](#) is here.

The department liaison will be responsible for developing a visit schedule, in consultation with their Dean and the Provost's Office, and for scheduling required meetings for the review team.

The chair of the committee is responsible for convening the meetings, setting the meeting agendas, making any specific assignments to review team members, overseeing the process, producing the review report, soliciting feedback from the committee, and submitting the final APR report to the Provost's Office.

Step 5: Completing the Academic Program Review

The external review team report is submitted to the Office of the Provost, which will immediately provide the report, along with a cover memo and timeline for formulating a response, to the relevant Dean, Department Head, or Director. After departmental review, the dean or dean's designee will lead a discussion with the department about the program review documents, the self-study, the APR review committee report, and the program's response, which will include formulation of action items that support UW's strategic plan and the program's mission.

The dean or designee, in consultation with the department head, prepares a final summary of the review. This summary identifies program strengths and recommendations for improvement or any requirements and action items for follow-up. The dean and department head sends the final summary of the review, the external APR review team's report, and the program's response, as outlined below, to the VP for Undergraduate Education, VP of Graduate Education, and the Provost. The department will also create a timeline for implementing requirements discussed in this meeting

Step 6: Progress Report on Academic Program Review

Each year after the review is completed, the department or program, in consultation with the Dean or Director, will prepare a progress report for the Provost on the status of implementation of action items resulting from the program review. The Provost's Office will meet with members of the program to discuss the progress report.

VI. FIVE YEAR REVIEW FOR NEW MAJORS/DEGREES

The Provost's Office will initiate five-year reviews for new degree/majors. New programs are initiated after a lengthy study of market conditions, faculty strengths, and curricular trends pursuant to UW Regulation 2-119 (Degrees and Diplomas). To ensure that the program's faculty can make appropriate adjustments to the program, it is essential that it circle back to the program's goals and objectives and assess performance after the degree has been launched. Thus, a review of the new degree itself, separate from the department or program that offers it, is critical after data on it can be collected.

The department offering the program will be notified the semester before the review is due that it should prepare to collect, analyze, and share data with the Provost's Office on:

1. The number of students in the major by year, and the number of graduates.

2. Current degree/major requirements, and an analysis of any courses or requirements that are:
 - a. Routinely oversubscribed
 - b. Routinely undersubscribed
 - c. Have high D/F/W rates
3. How does the mission of the degree programs fit with the home department/unit, the school/college, and the mission of the university?
4. What are the approved learning goals, and how are they being assessed? How is the curriculum being adjusted to reflect assessment results.
5. Are there any substantial and structured collaborations with other programs, such as dual, double or joint degrees, and any 2+2 articulation agreements with Wyoming or other community colleges, and benefits of these arrangements.

Responsible Division/Unit: Provost's Office

Source:

Links:

Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms: Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure: Policy and Guidelines for Suspending, Restructuring and Discontinuing Academic Degree Programs; HLC Accreditation Criterion (4.A.1)

Approved: DRAFT 6-5-18

Appendix A: Typical Timeline for Institutional Academic Program Review

| Term | Term | Term | Term | Term | Term |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| <p><u>Spring:</u></p> <p>Review notifications issued to departments / programs that will undergo next AY review (notification to go out by February)</p> <p>Programs begin organizing and starting self-study</p> | <p><u>Summer:</u></p> <p>Programs continue and complete self-studies. Self-studies will typically be due by late November.</p> <p>Program and college provide potential names for external review teams.</p> <p>External review teams appointed by Provost</p> <p>Schedule for external review teams established</p> | <p><u>Fall:</u></p> <p>External review team visits</p> | <p><u>Spring:</u></p> <p>First-round external review team APR submitted to Provost</p> <p>Provost's office shares first-round reports with Dean(s) and Department Head(s) with cover memo and response deadline.</p> <p>Department response should be made in consultation with Dean and will include action items that emerge from review and support UW's strategic plan.</p> | <p><u>Summer:</u></p> <p>Provost's office meets with first-round programs' Dean(s) and Department Head(s) to review report(s) and response(s)</p> | <p><u>Fall:</u></p> <p>First-round reviewed program(s) submits progress report on APR action items to Provost's Office</p> |

Appendix B: Guidelines for Structuring the Self-Study

The self-study provides an opportunity for departmental and program faculty to think in a focused and strategic way about the value and quality of the programs they deliver, their scholarship and creative activity, their service and value to the University, their college, and their state. A self-study should be in the range of 15-25 pages, not including appendices (links to websites are preferred, especially for syllabi or CVs.) Guiding principles for the self-study include:

- Building a basis for continuous self-evaluation and improvement in scholarship, teaching, learning, engagement, service, and extension activities.
- Focusing on the recent past and key points over the previous review period as context for present and future improvements.
- Concentrating on the academic degrees delivered, the undergraduate and graduate, student experience, and the scholarly, engagement, extension, service, and other contributions of the department or program.
- Reviewing program learning goals and assessment of learning in undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Understanding the current student experience with regard to academics, advising, climate, and career development.
- Understanding the current faculty composition and profile, the range of faculty scholarly activity, and how the department culture supports the development of excellence.
- Identifying program strengths and recommendations for improvements.

In some cases, a review will need to address specific program or department issues that are outside of these questions. In such cases, the initiating memo from the dean should specify these other program issues.

Appendix C: Components of the Self-Study

A. Response to Previous Program Review Recommendations

Summarize recommendations from the previous program review and how they were acted upon. If the program has not been reviewed recently, this is not required.

B. Overview of the Program

Describe the mission and goals of the program and how its structure (both of the program and of its governance) support them. Consider the following questions:

- Who are the current departmental faculty, by rank?
- What are department's resources, including facilities, and other assets such as collections, data resources, computing resources, studios, rehearsal/performance spaces, laboratories, and budgets?
- What is the program's external accreditation status, if any, or other external review results recently done?
- Provide current degree/major requirements as approved for both undergraduate and graduate offerings.
- How does the mission of the degree programs fit with the home department/unit, the school/college, and the mission of the university?
- What are the approved learning goals for each of the degree programs offered (i.e. bachelor's, master's or doctoral degrees?)
- What are the degrees' structures? For example, is there a single undergraduate program in the department, or does it have informal tracks/concentrations, formal named options or certificates?
- Describe any substantial and structured collaborations with other programs, such as dual, double or joint degrees, and any 2+2 articulation agreements with Wyoming or other community colleges, and benefits of these arrangements.
- If there are several degrees in the same academic department, how are they related to one another and what impacts do they have on student learning?

C. Current Departmental Faculty

Outline faculty job descriptions, expectations, and accomplishments, including:

- What are the teaching loads of faculty? Advising and mentoring loads? Research loads?
- Describe the grant and external funding activities of the faculty, if applicable.
- Using internal and external gauges of scholarly productivity, describe the quality of scholarly work in the department.
- Describe significant university, community, statewide, national, and international contributions of the department's faculty, including scholarly publications, creative activity, service to the university and state, extension and experiment station work, et al.
- What are the T tenure and promotion guidelines used by the department and college?

D. Departmental Community and Climate for Students and Faculty

Describe the efforts taken to foster a sense of professionalism and community by considering the following:

- Discuss efforts to welcome, orient, and retain new students. What is offered to connect students within the program, as well as with the greater campus community?
- Discuss efforts to welcome, orient, and retain new department faculty and staff. What is offered to connect faculty and staff within the program, as well as with the greater campus community?
- What efforts are there to enhance faculty/staff/student of engagement? How does the unit rate its ability to attract and retain a diverse faculty?

E. Departmental Governance and Resources

Describe the department's structure, resources, and accreditation status.

- How do the department's governance model, committees, and hiring criteria lead to active faculty engagement? How does succession planning work for leadership?
- What are department's resources, including facilities, collections, data resources, computing resources, laboratories, and university budgets? What are the department's grant budgets?
- What is the program's external accreditation status, if any, or other external review results recently done?

F. Degree Programs - Assessment and Evaluation

Summarize the assessment plan used to evaluate the extent to which students are meeting departmental or program learning goals and how the department is engaged in a coherent process of continuous curricular and program improvement.

- What has the department learned through assessment of its curricular learning goals? Provide evidence.
- What changes have been made to curriculum structure or content as a result of assessment?
- What are the emerging changes in the discipline? What is being done and can be done to move forward and seize emerging/future opportunities for degrees?
- If relevant to the program, how do leaders within industry, business, government, or non-profit organizations become involved in offering advice and perspectives on the program and the curriculum?

G. Student Recruiting and Enrollment

Analyze current practices and trends to determine if enrollment levels are consistent with plans and resources. Discuss relevant program data in the context of the following:

- Are enrollment levels consistent with plans, program resources, and career outcomes?

- What effort has the department/program made to enhance student access, enrollment, and success? Have those efforts been successful?
- If applicable, what do trends in enrolled students signal about program strength?

H. Student Advising and Student Support

Discuss the process by which students get regular advising and accurate program information. Reflect upon the following:

Undergraduate

- Who does advising for the department? Describe how advisors are hired, selected, and trained within the context of the centralized UW advising model. How are students transitioned between advisors when personnel changes?
- What is the ratio of advisors to students? How often do students to meet with an advisor?
- What other responsibilities do the advisors have in the unit?
- What material is available to support advising of undergraduates? How is that information kept up to date and accurate?
- How are advisor performance reviews conducted?
- How is the impact of the advising assessed? Is advising in alignment with the UW Advising, Career, and Exploratory Students Center (ACES) guidelines?

Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate

- How are advisors assigned and matched to students? How many advisees does each faculty member have?
- How often are program contacts and program information updated and made available online? Is the program information inclusive of program learning goals, program requirements as well as a program-level grievance procedure?
- How are students transitioned between advisors when personnel changes?
- How often and in what manner is satisfactory progress monitored? Do students receive written annual feedback on their academic progress? How is the impact of the advising assessed?

I. Degree Completion and Time to Degree

Referencing relevant institutional data and campus goals, describe efforts to help students make timely progress to degree. Include the following in your discussion:

- Use institutional data sources to examine and evaluate progress to degree metrics and comparison to peers.
- What efforts have been made to improve progress to degree performance and completion rates?
- Are students succeeding within the program at rates comparable to students in similar programs at competitor institutions? Does student success vary among demographic groups?

J. Career Services and Post-Graduation Outcomes

Evaluate student career outcomes, exit survey, and alumni survey data, and reflect upon how these outcomes are consistent with program goals.

- What do students do after graduation? How does the program prepare them for careers or further academic training?
- What career resources are available to students?
- What is the range of student career outcomes, and are these outcomes consistent with program goals? Does the program track the career progression of its graduates?

K. Graduate Student Funding

Discuss the department's student funding data and mechanisms, along with any goals for providing funding guarantees. Include a discussion of funding issues, such as:

- How is the program ensuring masters and especially doctoral students have adequate funding and taking steps to provide a multi-year funding guarantee upon admission, subject to success and progress towards degree? Are there opportunities for graduate students to secure individual extramural support?
- To what extent is the program making use of funding for recruitment efforts?

L. Graduate Student Professional Development and Breadth

Discuss the professional development opportunities of graduate students and consider the following:

- How does the program encourage graduate students to participate in professional development opportunities that will enhance their skills and support their career goals?
- What resources and guidance are available for exploring academic and/or non-academic careers?
- What opportunities and funding are available to attend and present at professional meetings?
- To what degree does the program offer teaching experience and teaching-related professional development to graduate students?
- How does the typical graduate's program ensure exposure to breadth training? Does the program require a doctoral minor for doctoral students or evaluate other breadth requirements?

M. Overall Analysis of the Self-Study and the State of the Department or Program

What have you learned from the process of this self-study? Outline key findings from the departmental/program's self-study, including primary strengths and challenges, and priorities the department/program has identified for improvement. Highlight in your analysis the value the department/program contributes to the university, innovations made in degrees and curricular offerings, fundraising and grant-getting accomplishments and goals, research and creative work, and other departmental/program goals and changes that have been made to adapt to changes in the profession and higher education.

Appendix D: Template Self-Study for APR in [Department/Program Name]

Date submitted:

Primary Contact:

School(s)/College(s):

Response to previous program review recommendations

Summarize recommendations from the previous program review and how they were acted upon.

Overview of the Department/Program

Describe the mission and goals of the program and how its structure (both of the program and of its governance) support them. Consider the following questions:

- Who are the current departmental faculty, by rank?
- What are department's resources, including for example facilities, collections, data resources, computing resources, laboratories, and budgets?
- What is the program's external accreditation status, if any, or other external review results recently done?
- What departments or programs are peers and/or aspirational peers. At least some of these peers should be those identified by the university as institutional peers
- Provide current degree/major requirements as approved for both undergraduate and graduate offerings.
- How does the mission of the degree programs fit with the home department/unit, the school/college, and the mission of the university?
- What are the approved learning goals for each of the degree programs offered (i.e. bachelor's, master's or doctoral degrees?)
- What are the degrees' structures? For example, is there a single undergraduate program in the department, or does it have informal tracks/concentrations, formal named options or certificates?
- Are there any substantial and structured collaborations with other programs, such as dual, double or joint degrees, and any 2+2 articulation agreements with Wyoming or other community colleges, and benefits of these arrangements.
- If there are several degrees in the same academic department, how are they related to one another and what impacts do they have on student learning?

Current Departmental Faculty

Evaluate faculty job descriptions, expectations, and accomplishments, including.

- What are the teaching loads of faculty? Advising and mentoring loads?
- Describe the grant and external funding activities of the faculty, if applicable.
- Using internal and external gauges of scholarly productivity, describe the quality of scholarly work in the department.
- Describe significant university, community, statewide, national, and international contributions of the department's faculty, including scholarly publications (both authorships and editorships), creative activity, service to the university and state, extension and experiment station work, et al.
- What are the department-specific RT&P criteria used by the department and college?

Departmental Community and Workplace Climate for Students, Staff, and Faculty

Where applicable, evaluate exit survey and climate survey data. Describe the efforts taken to foster overall program inclusiveness, a climate of respect and professionalism, and a sense of community by considering the following:

- Discuss efforts to welcome, orient, and retain new students. What is offered to connect students within the program, as well as with the greater campus community?
- Discuss efforts to welcome, orient, and retain new department faculty and staff. What is offered to connect faculty and staff within the program, as well as with the greater campus community and the community and state at large?
- What efforts are there to enhance faculty/staff/student sense of engagement? How does the unit rate its ability to attract and retain a diverse faculty/staff?

Departmental Governance and Resources

Describe the department's structure, resources, and accreditation status.

- How do the department's governance model, committees, and hiring criteria lead to active faculty engagement? How does succession planning work for leadership?
- What are department's resources, including facilities, collections, data resources, computing resources, laboratories, and university budgets? What are the department's grant budgets?
- What is the program's external accreditation status, if any, or other external review results recently done?

Degree Programs - Assessment and Evaluation (all degrees, all levels)

Summarize the assessment plan used to evaluate the extent to which students are meeting degree programs' learning goals and how the department is engaged in a coherent process of continuous curricular and program improvement.

- What has the department learned through assessment of its curricular learning goals? Provide evidence.
- What changes have been made to curriculum structure or content as a result of assessment?
- What are the emerging changes in the discipline? What is being done and can be done to move forward and seize emerging/future opportunities for degrees?
- If relevant to the program, how do leaders within industry, business, government, or non-profit organizations become involved in offering advice and perspectives on the program and the curriculum?

Student Recruiting and Enrollment (all degrees, all levels)

Analyze current practices and trends to determine if enrollment levels are consistent with plans and program resources. Discuss relevant program data in the context of the following:

- Are enrollment levels consistent with plans, program resources, and career outcomes?
- What effort has the department/program made to enhance student enrollment? Have those efforts been successful?
- If applicable, what do trends in enrolled students signal about program strength?

Student Advising and Student Support

Discuss the process by which students get regular advising and accurate program information. Reflect upon the following:

Undergraduate:

- Who does advising for the department? Describe how advisors are hired, selected, and trained within the context of the centralized UW advising model. How are students transitioned between advisors when personnel changes?
- What is the ratio of advisors to students? How often do students to meet with an advisor?
- What other responsibilities do the advisors have in the unit?
- What material is available to support advising of undergraduates? How is that information kept up to date and accurate?
- How are advisor performance reviews conducted?
- How is the impact of the advising assessed? Is advising in alignment with the UW ACES guidelines?

Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate:

- How are advisors assigned and matched to students? How many advisees does each faculty member have?
- How often are program contacts and program information updated and made available online? Is the program information inclusive of program learning goals, program requirements as well as a program-level grievance procedure?
- How are students transitioned between advisors when personnel changes?
- How often and in what manner is satisfactory progress monitored? Do students receive written annual feedback on their academic progress? How is the impact of the advising assessed?

Student Degree Completion and Time to Degree

Referencing relevant data and campus goals, describe efforts to help students make timely progress to degree. Include the following in your discussion:

- Use institutional data sources to examine and evaluate progress to degree metrics and comparison to peers.
- What efforts have been made to improve progress to degree performance and completion rates?
- Are students succeeding within the program at rates comparable in similar programs at competitor institutions?
- What impediments to success might be contributing to lack of progress or non-completion?

Career Services and Post-Graduation Outcomes

Evaluate student career outcomes, exit survey, and alumni survey data, and reflect upon how these outcomes are consistent with program goals.

- What do students do after graduation? How does the program prepare them for careers or further academic training?
- What career resources are available to students?
- What is the range of student career outcomes, and are these outcomes consistent with program goals? Does the program track the career progression of its graduates?

Graduate Student Funding

Discuss the program's student funding data and mechanisms, along with any goals for providing funding guarantees. Include a discussion of funding issues, such as:

- How is the program ensuring masters and especially doctoral students have adequate funding and taking steps to provide a multi-year funding guarantee upon admission, subject to success and progress towards degree? Are there opportunities for graduate students to secure individual extramural support?
- To what extent is the program making use of funding for recruitment efforts?

Graduate Student Professional Development and Breadth

Discuss the professional development opportunities of graduates and consider the following:

- How does the program encourage graduate students to participate in professional development opportunities that will enhance their skills and support their career goals?
- What resources and guidance are available for exploring academic and/or non-academic careers?
- What opportunities and funding are available to attend and present at professional meetings?
- To what degree does the program offer teaching experience and teaching-related professional development to graduate students?
- How does the typical graduate's program ensure exposure to breadth training? Does the program require a doctoral minor for doctoral students or evaluate other breadth requirements?

Overall Analysis of the Self-Study and the State of the Program:

What have you learned from the process of this self-study? Outline key findings from the departmental/program's self-study, including primary strengths and challenges, and priorities the department/program has identified for improvement. Bring to bear and highlight in your analysis the value the department/program contributes to the university, innovations made in degrees and curricular offerings, fundraising and grant-getting accomplishments and goals, research and creative work, and other departmental/program goals and changes that have been made to adapt to changes in the profession and higher education.

Appendix E: External Review Team – Sample Charge Letter

Dear Review Team,

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Academic Program Review Team. Please examine the department and its programs and make recommendations that will help in planning improvements. Your resources are a self-study report prepared by the department, copies of materials from the program's last review (if appropriate), information you gain through personal interactions while visiting the University of Wyoming, copies of strategic plans and goal-setting documents at the department, college, and/or university level, and any additional information requested by you or by the department.

Within the broad charge of recommending ways the department can continue to improve are some specific questions that we would like you to address:

- Based on the data / information provided in the self-study report or gathered by the external review team, what are the department's overall strengths and weaknesses?
- How well do the department's strategic goals align with those of its college and with those of UW?
- How would you compare this department with its peers?
- What improvements (including student learning and faculty development) has the department made since the previous program review?
- With only current resources or a modest infusion of new ones, what specific recommendations could improve the department's performance, marginally or significantly?

This letter provides you with background on the Department/School and explains the expectations for our upcoming external review. Below is a summary of the department and its programs providing the number of graduates per degree program from the previous five years.

Please address the department's contributions to two guiding strategic initiatives developed by the University of Wyoming. The first of these is documented in our strategic plan, *Forward for Wyoming 2023+*. The other is the College/School of strategic plan. Summaries of both documents will be provided to you upon your first meeting.

Appendix F: External Review Team – Sample Visit Schedule

| Day | Activities |
|--------------|---|
| One | Welcome and briefing with college leadership Welcome and briefing with department chair Meeting with department faculty Meeting with faculty outside department with related teaching and research interests Tour of departmental and university facilities Review team meetings |
| Two | Meeting with undergraduate students Meeting with graduate students Meeting with support staff Meeting with assistant professors and academic professionals Meeting with senior faculty and academic professionals Review team meetings with additional stakeholders as needed Review team |
| Three | Review team meetings Debriefing meeting with college and department leadership |