

# UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

## 2007- 2008 Academic Center Review Guidelines

### Purpose and Process

The University of Missouri's Executive Guideline 25 describes a policy for the review of academic units at five-year intervals. Each undergraduate, graduate, professional, certificate, and extension program is reviewed with attention to teaching, research, and creative activities. Reviews of Academic Centers are based on the teaching, research, and creative activities central to their missions.

Center reviews are intended to:

1. Initiate and/or reinforce a continuous improvement model as units engage in self-study;
2. Support long-range planning for the unit within the academic and fiscal contexts of the campus and University.

At UM-St. Louis faculty in each academic unit prepare a Self-Study Report in response to the following questions:

1. What are the mission and goals of the academic unit and how do they support the UM-St. Louis Mission and Action Plan and the University of Missouri Strategic Plan?
2. What is the evidence that each unit has successfully met its goals?
3. What are the unit's goals and long-range plans for the next five years?
4. What strategies are in place for the unit to assess progress, review processes, and revise its goals annually?

The review process consists of the following steps:

- The unit plans the Self-Study Report and then submits it to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- A Campus Review Team is appointed consisting of three senior faculty representatives (including colleagues recommended by the unit) and an external reviewer from another institution; it may also include a representative from the Office of Academic Affairs.
- The Self-Study Report is submitted to the Campus Review Team and academic leadership (dean, vice-provost for research, associate provosts, provost).
- The Campus Review Team conducts a one-day site visit to verify the information in the Self-Study Report.

- The external reviewer and the Campus Review Team submit separate reports with recommendations to the unit and the Provost. The unit may submit a response to the reports.
- The dean meets each director to discuss the reports and review the center's goals: they may invite the Provost and/or other academic officers.
- The director submits an Executive Summary of the review to Academic Affairs; after approval it is forwarded to the UM Office of Academic Affairs.

## **The Self-Study Report**

The University of Missouri Office of Academic Affairs recommends that units consider the seven quality principles identified by William Massy in *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education* (Anker Pub., 2003). They are (1) define quality in terms of outcomes, (2) focus on how things get done, (3) work collaboratively, (4) base decisions on evidence, (5) strive for coherence, (6) learn from best practice, and (7) make continuous improvements a priority. A descriptive summary of these is included in the appendix.

During the **self-study process** faculty and center associates identify appropriate measures of quality, apply those measures to evaluate current center activities, and use that data to determine revisions and improvements. Preparing the Self-Study Report provides an opportunity to assess the unit's strengths and weaknesses, consider the consistency of the unit's goals with those of the campus and the University, and identify, revise, or apply measures to evaluate progress toward the unit's goals for its scholarly and creative activities (related to teaching, research, service). Effective self-studies rely upon evidence from the past to improve future performance. They describe the unit's current operations and changes over time by presenting evidence that describes the unit's mission, research and scholarly programs, funding, effective use of resources, personnel, administrative organization and governance, attention to and engagement with students, faculty, and the community. Evidence may be conveyed with a) direct assessments such as external and internal funding, publications, presentations, awards and recognitions, impact on social, economic, legislative, scientific policies or b) indirect assessments obtained from surveys, questionnaires, or focus groups of constituents, alumni, and employers. In short, the self-study process includes a review of all the major processes carried out in the unit.

**Five-year institutional data** are available from Institutional Research at:

<https://fusion.umsl.edu/ir/login.cfm>

Here you will find data including:

- a. Degrees awarded by unit, department and level.
- b. Degrees awarded by unit, department, degree program, and level.
- c. BSEd degrees by emphasis area.
- d. Enrollment by unit, department, course level, term, and fiscal year.
- e. Student credit hours by unit, department, course level, term, and fiscal year.
- f. Majors by term, unit, department, and degree level.
- g. Department expenditures by general revenue, instruction, and research.
- h. Grade data by term, fiscal year, unit, department, and course level.
- i. The most recent Delaware data.

The five year review web site has research expenditure data based on the accounting records. Contact the Office of Research Administration for award data. Data on budgets can be obtained from senior fiscal officers.

For **comparative purposes**, it is useful to identify a similar center or research unit on a comparator campus or, if preferred, on a campus with centers that have missions, standards, and outcomes to which the unit aspires. The comparison allows center associates and faculty to think beyond the constraints of this campus and fiscal context. Studying other institutions may guide the unit to consider alternative sources of evidence, identify innovative interdisciplinary strategies, or parlay its own strengths into alternative goals and aspirations.

## **Organizing the Self-Study Report**

### I. Overview

Introduce the unit by beginning with one or two paragraphs that include:

- A brief history of the center or academic unit,
- The unit's mission and goals,
- The unit's facilities, faculty, research associates, post doctoral researchers, graduate students, and staff,
- How the unit contributes to the campus' identity regionally, nationally, globally.
- Identify (if any) the academic programs that the center administers and/or describe the center's relationship with academic departments;
- A brief appraisal of how the scholarly and research activities and programs have operated, changed, or developed since the last five-year Program Review. Be sure to include the work already completed for UMSL's re-accreditation process.

### II. Review and Assessment of Academic Centers

The questions below may help center colleagues focus their inquiries as the self-study proceeds, but they are not intended to limit the scope of the process or the report. How this information is presented will be unique to each unit. The self-study should provide evidence to show that the center is meeting its goals and contributing to the campus Action Plan goals. Supporting data may be displayed in appendices.

- How the expertise, size, diversity, and scholarship (including research and creativity) of the center's associates is consistent with and supports the center's goals;
- How successes in scholarly, creative, and related activities are assessed and evaluated annually;
- How the center recruits personnel, fosters scholarship among its colleagues (incentives and support), and assesses the effectiveness of those efforts;
- An evaluation of the center's scholarly activities for the recent five-year period (include publications, refereed presentations, exhibits, invited talks, and other creative endeavors);
- An evaluation of the unit's five-year record of securing grants, contracts, and gifts; explain how these efforts reflect scholarship within the discipline;
- The extent to which and how effectively the unit uses information technology (including MyGateway and the world wide web) administratively, in research, and, if relevant, instructionally;

- How the faculty regard their role as citizens in the center, the campus community, the metropolitan area, and professional organizations. Explain how faculty scholarship informs these activities;
- How the center's administrative structure and policy-making processes support the center's goals;
- How undergraduate and graduate students' experiences are enriched by the center;
- How the center's work supports and facilitates the academic programs offered by related departments.

### III. Five-year Plan

Conclude the report with a strategic plan.

- Prioritize the center's goals and outcomes for the next five years.
- Describe implementation strategies to attain the goals. Include a timeline and assign responsibilities.
- Identify how progress toward the outcomes is assessed, reviewed, and revised (if necessary) annually.
- Describe any costs or savings expected with the planned changes.

### IV. Appendices or Displays

Assemble supporting materials in binders that are available to the Campus Review Team during the Site Visit. Appendices include, but are not limited to:

- Current curricula vitae for all center faculty and associates;
- Annual reports for the center.

Post these materials and the Self-Study Report on the Accreditation Website so that they are available to members of the campus community:

### **Preparing the Academic Center Review Materials for Submission:**

- Limit the Self-Study Report to 25 pages by focusing on the topics outlined above that are most salient for the unit.
- Add a cover page identifying the academic unit, its college or division, and date.
- Include a table of contents to identify sections and number the pages consecutively.
- Incorporate relevant supporting materials as appendices.
- **Please submit all materials as electronic files (Word Documents) no later than March 3, 2008** (or four weeks prior to the Site Visit), to Associate Provost Judith Walker de Felix (jwdfelix@umsl.edu) and to the Dean of the College.

**An Executive Summary based on the Self-Study Report and Reports of the External Reviewer, and the Campus Review Team is due in the Office of Academic Affairs by August 25, 2008.** Formats for these reports follow.

**UM-St. Louis Center Review**  
**Guidelines for Reports from the External Reviewer and the Campus Review Team**  
Please submit all reports electronically to Associate Provost Judith Walker de Felix  
(jwdfelix@umsl.edu).

**Suggested Format for the report from the External Reviewer:**

**The report is written based on:**

1. The center's Self-Study Report;
2. Meetings with faculty, research associates, staff, students, and partners affiliated with the unit;
3. Meetings with the Campus Review Team;
4. Meetings with the Dean(s) and members of the Provost's Office.

**Include attention to these and other issues noted during the campus visit:**

1. The evidence provided to document the center's effectiveness;
2. The extent to which the scholarship is focused on national trends;
3. The degree to which the unit's future goals are consistent with scholarship in the field and the campus goals and mission;
4. The choice of center selected for comparative purposes: please suggest other comparable or more comparable units if necessary;
5. Recommendations about scholarship, personnel, resources, internal operations.

**Your report:**

1. Has a flexible format adapted to the unit under review;
2. May be limited to five pages;
3. Identifies the Reviewer and his/her academic affiliations;
4. Should be submitted within two weeks of the site visit.

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**Suggested Format for the report from the Campus Review Team:**

**This report is written based on:**

1. The Self-Study Report;
2. Meetings with those in the center, department, institute, and its affiliates;
3. Meetings with the external reviewer;
4. The Report from the external reviewer.

**The report should include:**

1. An explanation of the procedures followed by the Campus Review Team;
2. An evaluation of the evidence included in the Self-Study Report;
3. The strengths and weaknesses of the center's research program(s) and activities;
4. Recommendations about scholarship, personnel, resources, and internal operations.

**Your report:**

1. Has a flexible format adapted to the unit being reviewed;
2. May be limited to five pages;
3. Includes the names and campus affiliations of the Campus Review Team;
4. Should be submitted within two weeks of receiving the report of the external reviewer.

**2007 – 2008 Executive Summary**  
**Academic Center Reviews of UM-St. Louis Departments and Centers\***

Units prepare and submit an executive summary of the Academic Center Review **by August 25, 2008**. This summary may include elements of observations and recommendations from the Campus Review Team and external reviewer and meetings with academic leaders.

**Unit:**

**College:**

**Identify the mission of the center and each of its research programs:**

**Summarize the strengths and distinguishing characteristics of the center and its activities:**

**Address how continuous improvement efforts ensure quality of scholarship and programs:**

**Describe procedures in place that provide evidence of quality outcomes in creative and scholarly activities for faculty associates, post doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students. Assess how those procedures are responsive to trends in the national and international scientific community. When appropriate, comment on employment and graduate school placements:**

**Summarize how the center contributes to the teaching and community service missions of the department, college, or campus:**

**Identify program accreditations and dates (if applicable):**

**Summarize the long-range goals and strategies included in the Five-Year Plan:**

This summary was revised in March 2003 and November 2006 to reflect changes in Executive Guideline 25 (see 20.035 Program Assessment and Viability Audit in the UM Collected Rules and Regulations).

*\*For uniformity, please limit the executive summary to 3 single-spaced pages written in the third person and use Times New Roman 12-pitch font. Submit electronically as a Word document to Associate Provost Judith Walker de Felix (jwdfelix@umsl.edu).*

## Appendix

### Quality Principles

Source: William Massy (2003). *Honoring the Trust: Quality and Cost Containment in Higher Education* (Bolton, MA: Anker Pub.)

**a) Define quality in terms of outcomes** Desired outcomes should relate to the unit's mission, not some abstract notion of mission. Exemplary units define the kinds of outcomes they want and then focus their efforts on achieving those outcomes. Do you have a mission statement for the unit? Do you consider it on an annual basis? What outcomes are important for the Unit to achieve and how does this Unit compare to others? How good are your programs? How good is the service the Unit provides?

**b) Focus on how things get done** Units should think carefully about how things are done and how they can support and integrate processes. They should search out impediments to achieving their goals and mitigate them to the extent possible.

**c) Work collaboratively** The unit should demonstrate collegiality in its effort to support teaching and research. Members should share information and help one another solve difficult problems because such teamwork makes the unit a "learning organization."

**d) Base decisions on evidence** What indicators do you use to track the quality of your programs and services? Who are your peer programs and what are you doing that is similar and unique to those peers? What peer programs can you reasonably expect to catch up with? Units should review the literature and consult with outside experts to identify trends in the field, and then ask how the trends are likely to impact their missions. They should marshal facts about their performance relative to peer units and use these facts to develop realistic goals and strategies

**e) Strive for coherence** Are the programs and services consistent with the abilities and interests of the faculty? Are they compatible with campus goals? Are they making good use of interdisciplinary resources? Units should view learning through the lens of the participants' entire experience. Programs should build upon one another to provide the desired depth and breadth.

**f) Learn from best practice** Leaders should identify and analyze good practices in comparable units and institutions, and then adapt the best to their own circumstances. They should compare good versus average or poor-performing practices within their own department, assess the causes of the differences, and seek ways to improve the lesser performers.

**g) Make continuous improvement a priority** Units should strive to improve the quality of their efforts on a regular basis. The unit should work with other related units to determine how they can improve their services and foster education and scholarship on campus. They should continuously check to see if their efforts match the institutional priorities.