



## Academic Program Review Overview and Events

### Timing and Scope of Review

- Units that have an academic program with a graduate degree component are reviewed at least once within a seven to ten-year period. The term “Unit” may refer to a single program or cluster of degree programs, or may span the offerings of an entire department, school or college. This allows for the range of organizational hierarchy, which may differ across the various colleges at Kent State University.
- Units containing programs that hold specialized program accreditation may choose to submit the most recent self-study, action letter(s) and final report(s) from the accrediting organization along with an abbreviated internal report in lieu of conducting a full academic program review.
- The Office of Accreditation, Assessment and Learning (AAL) determines the schedule of reviews and coordinates the academic program review process. AAL works in close consultation with deans, department chairs, school directors, and program directors/coordinators of that unit to ensure that all deadlines are met and the process flows as smoothly as possible.
- In general, the review process begins when the unit receives notification of an impending review from the Office of AAL. This notification takes place twelve to fifteen months prior to the anticipated campus visit.
- It is a best practice for units to keep the requirements of academic program reviews in mind throughout each year, given that the review requires ongoing data collection, tracking initiatives, and identifying and pursuing goals.

### Phase I: Planning and Preparation

- **Notification/Orientation Meeting**  
**Scheduled in July**  
After notifying units of an upcoming review, AAL schedules an orientation meeting with all representatives from all units that are up for a review that academic year. These representatives would include college deans, department chairs or school directors, program directors or coordinators, and any other relevant personnel. The purpose of this orientation meeting is to discuss the review process, funding, support, completing the self-study, and answer any other questions.
- **Information Request/Alumni survey** – As a review requirement, each unit will develop a self-study report. Some of the data needed to complete the self-study may be obtained from the

following areas: the Office of Institutional Research (IR), the Office of Institutional Advancement (IA), or Research and Sponsored Programs. As part of the orientation meeting, AAL staff will advise the unit under review of the particulars with regard to obtaining these data.

- The review committee consists of both internal (KSU) and external (non-KSU) faculty members. Including internal and external reviewers in the review process provides a valuable opportunity for the department/program to receive feedback from a variety of perspectives.

- **Potential External Reviewers**

**DUE APRIL 30**

The external portion of the review committee consists of two to three members. The unit under review is asked to prepare a list of ten or more potential external reviewers. This list includes faculty who have attained the rank of full professor and have expertise in relevant fields within the discipline at highly regarded peer and/or aspirant programs/institutions. The staff of AAL will supplement the list of potential external reviewers provided by the program with additional suitable candidates. Additionally, AAL will vet the potential external reviewer candidates for any potential conflicts of interest that could influence their judgment (e.g., formal collaborations with current program faculty, former employees or students of the university).

- The internal reviewer(s) of the review committee will be a full professor not affiliated with the program under review. The internal reviewer(s) is included to provide institutional and college context, and thus should be a faculty member from within the same college as the program under review, but should not be from the same department/school as that of the program under review. The exception to this is when all programs across an entire college are reviewed collectively (such as the College of Nursing or the College of Public Health). In that case, the internal reviewer must be selected from a different college. The dean of the college housing the unit under review is asked to recommend potential internal reviewer(s).
- The complete list of potential reviewers is discussed with the unit, and the final selection of the review team is the responsibility of the Office of Accreditation, Assessment and Learning.
- **Self-Study and Executive Summary**  
**DUE APRIL 30**  
Each unit will develop a self-study report. The self-study is a candid assessment of the program's strengths and areas of growth, and addresses seven key areas of questions as outlined in the self-study report template found on the AAL website. In addition to completing the Self-study report, a one to three-page executive summary is required to be submitted as a separate document but alongside the Self-study.

## Phase II: Site Visit Procedure

- Travel and lodging arrangements for the external team will be coordinated by AAL staff.
- **Site Visit Itinerary**  
**DUE at least 6 weeks prior to site visit**  
Arrangements for individual meetings during the site visit will be coordinated by the unit with assistance from AAL. Materials that can guide units in planning the site visit can be found on the AAL website.

- **External Reviewer Materials** - The staff of AAL will electronically share review materials that includes the self-study and other related information to the confirmed review committee.
- **Site Visit** - The campus site visit typically extends over a three-day period. Day one consists of travel to Kent, OH with an opening dinner including the dean of the college, representative(s) of the Office of the Provost and the external committee that evening. Day two is filled with scheduled meetings and work time. Day three has meetings scheduled for the morning, with a final exit meeting immediately following lunch and then return travel home.
- The unit under review is responsible for costs associated with the review process (including travel, lodging, meals and honorarium for each external reviewer).
- **Review Committee Report** - The review committee will generate a report within four weeks of the site visit. The report will be shared with key stakeholders (e.g., Provost, Senior Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, staff of Accreditation, Assessment and Learning, dean, department chair/school director). The format of the report should follow the "Review Committee Report Guidelines."
- **Fact-Check** - The dean and the unit will conduct a fact-check on the Review Committee report within a week of receiving it. If necessary, they may ask for corrections to factual errors.

### Phase III: Incorporating Results

- **Action Plan**  
**Fall Site Visit = DUE January 15**  
**Spring Site Visit = DUE May 30**  
 Once the external reviewer report and unit's response have been received, the Assistant Provost of AAL will schedule a post-review phone call with unit representatives. The purpose of this call is to consider the external reviewers' recommendations and establish mutually agreed upon timelines for the submission of a written action plan that includes actionable items for program improvement, based on reviewer feedback. The action plan template will be provided prior to the call and reviewed during the call.
- **Action Plan Meeting**  
**Fall Site Visit = Meeting scheduled in February**  
**Spring Site Visit = Meeting scheduled in June**  
 Once the action plan template has been submitted to AAL, the Senior Associate Provost, Assistant Provost of AAL, the Dean, and unit's representatives will meet to discuss the unit's action plan.
- **Follow-Up Report**  
**DUE October 1, three academic years post site visit**  
 Within three academic years of the review, the unit will provide AAL with a report regarding progress made toward improvements outlined in the action plan. The unit will be sent a reminder notification by AAL at the start of the academic year when the Follow-up report is due.