

## **Administrative Unit Review Overview**

Purpose: The overall purpose of the Unit Review is to foster administrative excellence; to assess a unit's quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of services; to consider the impact of current and emerging issues on services and structure; and to promote continuous improvement in support of the University's mission and priorities.

The review has two parts: 1) a unit self-study 2) an on-site review by an external committee, comprised of representatives with higher education and corporate experience. The unit self-study is provided as background to the external committee in advance of the on-site visit. The on-site visit will include interviews with key staff and stakeholders and direct observation.

The overall review is intended to promote constructive change and therefore requires an evaluative appraisal, not just descriptive. At the outset of the process, the oversight vice president, the unit leadership and Organizational Excellence will assist in sharpening the focus for the external committee.

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### **Review Timeline:**

- By August 14 – Self-study is provided to the External Review Committee
- Sept. 14 & 15 – Visit by the External Review Committee
- By Sept. 29 – External Review Committee report submitted (either individual or consolidated)
- Sept. 30- Oct 9 – Internal review and action planning

## **Self-Study – Administrative Unit Review**

Below is a guideline of components to be included in the self-study. The unit is encouraged to use charts, graphs, and web links as appropriate to supplement a succinct narrative. (25 pages maximum, including appendices)

### **I. Unit Overview** - This section provides background and facts about the unit.

Background – Provide a summary of the evolution of the current organization, highlighting any major changes in service and structure. (last 3-5 years)

Mission/Vision/Planning – Share the unit’s current mission/vision statement and planning documents (strategic and annual, if available)

Services – Briefly describe the services provided by the unit.

### **II. Resources**

Budget – Provide an overview of the unit’s budget sources and uses. Describe any significant changes over the last 3-5 years and goals for the future, if applicable.

Unit Personnel – Describe the current organizational staffing and include an organizational chart.

Service Delivery Model – What are the guiding service principles that inform the service framework? Describe general purchasing strategies, policies, processes, and technology enablement. What main activities are executed centrally and distributed? To the extent known, provide information about the number of staff throughout the institution engaged in function activities/processes. What services, if any, are delivered through formal or informal partnerships and/or outsourcing?

### **III. Measurement and Improvement**

Metrics - Describe the key metrics tracked to assess performance. Considering five years of data, what trends and insights can be drawn from the data. How are the data leveraged to inform decisions and service delivery?

Do you benchmark your performance against others? How do you select your benchmark partners and benchmark measures?

Improvement – How does planning and evaluation result in continuing improvements? How are data from various sources about effectiveness of services used to make decisions for improvement?

**IV. Current and Emerging Issues**

Describe current and emerging trends and issues over the next 3-5 years that have the potential to significantly impact the unit and its services. These should include both internal changes and pressures, as well as external matters. Are there ways in which you expect your unit to grow and why? Are there activities or services that you anticipate will be scaled back or discontinued in the future, and why?

**V. Customer Service and Communications**

Describe the unit's communication and customer service strategy. What communication channels are used and how often and for what types of messages? How is customer input obtained and leveraged? Please provide samples of communications and customer input collected (e.g. surveys, focus groups, etc.).

**VI. Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses**

Describe the unit's current strengths and weaknesses.

**VII. Other/Appendices**

Provide any other relevant information not captured above.

## External Committee Guide– Administrative Unit Review

The external committee should be comprised of 3-4 members who correspond with the following roles/experience: an oversight executive of the function in a higher education institution; a higher education quality professional; a unit director in higher education in the same or similar function recognized for outstanding performance; and a professional with corporate functional experience.

The external committee will be provided the unit’s self-study report and a guide for their final report. At the outset of the visit, the oversight vice president, the unit leadership and Organizational Excellence will assist in sharpening the focus for the external committee. The focus of the final report is a set of prioritized recommendations for change and improvement.

### **Process:**

Step 1: At least 2 weeks prior to the on-site visit, the unit self-study and materials are made available to the external review committee.

Step 2: The review committee will conduct a 1.5 day visit.

Step 3: Within 10 days of the on-site visit, each reviewer (or review team) will submit a written assessment of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to the Office of Organizational Excellence.

Step 4: If individual reviewer reports are submitted, they will be consolidated into a composite report that contains the full-text of each reviewer’s report. A copy of the report will be provided to the oversight vice president and the unit.

Step 5: The unit will discuss the report with the oversight vice president and Organizational Excellence and develop an action plan. The key findings and action plan will be shared with the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

The questions presented below are only examples of areas to be explored by the external committee:

### **I. Current State Assessment**

- Does the unit have operational processes, services, structure, and climate that align with its vision?
- Does the unit have the appropriate level of resources (staff, IT, funding, etc.) to carry out its mission? Are there resource gaps or redundancies?
- What are the unit’s strengths and weaknesses?
- Are services being delivered effectively and efficiently?

- Does the unit demonstrate a strong service orientation, an ongoing assessment of users' needs, and a responsiveness to those needs?
- Does the unit demonstrate a commitment to quality and continuous improvement?
- Has the unit demonstrated an ability to adapt to changes in service delivery, especially when services affect the skills required by staff?
- How has technology been integrated into services and processes?

**II. Metrics**

- Are the metrics tracked by the unit sufficient, meaningful, and appropriate?
- Do you have any comments on the unit's performance against these measures?
- Are there other resources or industry standards the unit should be using in developing its metrics?

**III. Future Plans**

- Do you feel the plans the unit has outlined for its future are aspirational, yet feasible?
- Is the unit accurately anticipating the impact that future trends might have on its operations?
- Would you recommend changes to the unit's services or the levels of emphasis on each service based on anticipated future trends?

**IV. Recommendations**

Based on your assessment, what areas do you deem most important for the unit to focus on for change and improvement in order to provide a higher level of service for the institution. (in priority order) Please consider the areas of special focus as identified.