

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT UNIT REVIEW PROCEDURES
GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
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RATIONALE

According to the Georgia State University Strategic Plan, the overarching goal of all university community members is to propel Georgia State University to a front-rank position among the nation's premier state-supported universities in an urban setting through excellence in instruction, research, and service. To meet this challenge, it is essential that all university units periodically assess their outcomes as part of a systematic review process. Systematic review of academic programs and of administrative and support units serves several purposes for an organization. It enhances the organization's knowledge of its market, its customers, and environmental changes; it ensures a feedback mechanism from customers and employees to organizational units; it links customer service and process improvement to strategic planning; and it increases the organization's awareness of innovations developed elsewhere.

In addition to providing a mechanism for honing the provision of services, a systematic review and assessment process generates information that serves several other purposes. Useful organizational strategic planning, decision-making, and policy development all depend upon the data generated through a comprehensive system of institutional evaluation.

As the nation's concern about the quality of education has increased, outcomes assessment programs have become more prevalent. The 2004 SACS Principles of Accreditation include the following requirement:

The institution identifies expected outcomes for its educational programs and its administrative and educational support services; assesses whether it achieves these outcomes; and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of those results.
(Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1)

In addition, the Board of Regents Policy (205 Institutional Effectiveness) specifies that ... each institution shall have a formal process by which systematic assessment of institutional effectiveness is conducted and the results of assessments are used to achieve institutional improvement. Assessment processes may differ from institution to institution, but each institution shall assess basic academic skills at entry, general education, degree programs, and academic and administrative support programs and/or functions.

This document provides the procedural outline for the systematic review of administrative and support units. Such a designation refers to units with no academic instructional responsibilities, although various unit staff may have faculty standing and instructional responsibilities. All units not covered by the Academic Program Review will be reviewed through the process described herein.

The Process

The following describes the review process for the administrative and support units (nonacademic units) at Georgia State University. In brief, the cyclical process includes a mandatory internal nonacademic self-study (including a survey of employees and customer feedback), comments by the appropriate vice president, an optional external review (at the discretion of the provost), review by the Administrative and Support Unit Review Committee (ASURC), and development and implementation of a unit action plan. The process is designed to integrate into the strategic planning of the reviewed unit, the division, and the university as a whole. Information obtained through the review process is meant to be used by the unit to determine its need for procedural changes, training programs, and other changes and resources required for effective performance.

REVIEW PROCEDURE

I. Parameters

- A. This plan covers the non-academic units of the university. These are administrative and support units with no academic instructional responsibilities, although various unit staff may have faculty standing and instructional responsibilities. They include all units not covered in the Academic Program Review.
- B. The assessment program will operate on a seven-year cycle, with each unit undergoing a complete review once during that period.
- C. The full review procedure for each unit will take less than one year.

II. Preparation

A. An Administrative and Support Unit Review Committee (ASURC) will be named by the provost after consultation with the vice presidents and deans. 9 committee members will serve staggered three-year terms, with a 3-3-3 rotation, 2 committee members will serve staggered two-year terms, and 3 committee members will serve one-year terms. The 9 committee members serving three-year terms will represent the following: one from IS&T, one from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, one from the Library, one from the University Senate Budget Committee, one from the University Senate Diversity Committee, one from the Enrollment Management Group, one from Student Services, and two from Finance and Administration. The 2 committee members serving two-year terms will represent academic support staff and will rotate among colleges in the following

order: AYSPS, Arts & Sciences, COE, CHHS, College of Law, and RCB. The 3 committee members who serve one-year terms will be drawn as follows: one from the Staff Council, one from the Student Government Association, and one from the University Planning and Development Committee, who will chair the ASURC Committee. A variable member will be appointed to each review subcommittee, that member to be nominated by the Chair of a University Senate Committee that is relevant to the unit being reviewed. Planning and Development will confirm the membership of ASURC. ASURC will work with the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness to coordinate the assessment process, facilitate unit self-studies, review unit self-studies and related documentation, and report its observations to the provost.

When a current committee member cannot complete their term of service, a replacement member will be nominated by the Provost in consultation with the VP or Dean of the unit from which the non-continuing member was selected. P&D will confirm the replacement appointment.

- B. The Provost, after consultation with the vice presidents, deans, and ASURC, will determine the final schedule of units to be assessed and the timing of the reviews within the given parameters. The Planning and Development Committee will confirm the schedule of assessments. (The seven-year cycle will require that several units be assessed concurrently.)
- C. Prior to initiating a review, the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will notify the relevant VP or division head of the units scheduled for review. Once the VP/division head has approved a review initiation, the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will conduct an orientation meeting with the unit head.
- D. ASURC will name a three-member Review Subcommittee of its members for each unit undergoing review. It will work with the unit and ASURC to resolve issues and questions that arise during the review process, ensure that the unit review adheres to schedule, and review unit self-studies and other documentation, and develop recommendations therefrom.
- E. A unit team will be constituted to develop the unit's self-study. The team will receive support in the process from Management and Staff Development Services and from the Office of Institutional Research.

III. Review Process

- A. **Unit Employee Survey:** The unit self-study team shall provide the Office of Institutional Research with a list of all unit employees. The Office of Institutional Research administers the employee questionnaire, oversees the data processing, and submits a report of the survey results to the self-study team. The unit will utilize the findings of the survey in its self-study and will attach a copy of the report from Institutional Research to the self-study report.
- B. **Customer Feedback:** With the help of Management and Staff Development Services and the Office of Institutional Research, the unit will obtain customer feedback (e.g., surveys, focus groups) on their needs, their expectations for, and their evaluation of, the unit's services and products. The unit will utilize the findings in its self-study and will attach a copy of the report from Institutional Research to the self-study report.
- C. **Self-Study:** The unit self-study team will conduct a self-study which addresses the questions and follows the format outlined in Appendix A (Self-Study Template) and incorporates the results of the employee survey and customer feedback. Prior to forwarding the self-study, the unit will send it to the Management and Staff Development Services which will provide feedback on content and organization to ensure that the document conforms to the Self-Study Template. Upon completing its final draft, the unit head will write a response to the team's self-study and then submit the self-study and letter electronically to the VP/division head.
- D. **Comments by the Relevant Vice President:** The relevant vice president will offer comments on the self-study assessment materials forwarded to her/him. This packet of materials, including the vice president's comments, will then be submitted to the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness for transmittal to ASURC.
- E. **External Assessment:** At the discretion of the Provost, and in consultation with the relevant vice president, a unit may undergo an external review as part of the assessment process. This decision may be made at any point in the assessment process. The relevant vice president and unit head will work together to recommend the External Review Committee members and their charge to the provost. (The External Review Committee members must be external to the university and may include professional peers, consultants, and/or professional association groups.) The Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will arrange the external review. The External Review Committee will conduct an assessment of the unit and submit a report with its recommendations to the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, who will forward copies to the unit head, the relevant vice president, and to ASURC.

- F. **Review Subcommittee Review and Report:** The Review Subcommittee will review the self-study, comments by the unit head and vice president/division head, and the external assessment (if conducted). The Subcommittee will prepare a draft report that will initially a) provide a unit profile; b) address the extent to which the questions outlined in Appendix B have been adequately addressed; and c) develop key observations based on the self-study. The Review Subcommittee will then forward its preliminary report to the unit head and arrange a meeting with the head to discuss the report. The Subcommittee may ask the unit for additional information or clarification as needed. After having made any changes resulting from this discussion, the Subcommittee will develop its action recommendations. The draft report, along with all materials generated in the review process (self-study, comments, external review where applicable) to the ASURC.

- G. **ASURC Review:** The ASURC will give feedback to the review subcommittees, and approve the final report. The committee will then send the report to the Planning and Development Committee and to the Staff Council, both of which will review the report and make comments on it. The committee will also send a copy of the report to the unit head, the relevant vice president, the Provost, University Senate Committee Chairs (Budget, Executive, FAC-P, Planning and Development), and the SC Executive Council. This will end the responsibility of the Review Subcommittee and the ASURC in this assessment cycle.

IV. Plan of Action

- A. After receiving the ASURC report, the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will be responsible for securing an action plan proposal from the unit. The action plan proposal should be developed through consultation among, at a minimum, the unit head, line managers, and the relevant vice president. The plan should include a description of the specific actions proposed to address the issues raised by the review, a time line for executing those actions, a budget for each year, and planned methods for evaluating the actions taken. The provost and the parties who developed the action plan will discuss the action plan proposal and the provost will issue the final action plan.

- B. The Provost's Action Plan commitments will be forwarded to the chairs of the University Senate Budget Committee and to FAC-P.

- C. The office of the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness will be responsible for the maintenance of all materials related to and generated by the review process.

