Program Review – Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find information related to the Program Review Process?
Information is available on the Program Review information page. Resources are available on the Program Review Resources page.

What is the self-study?
The self-study is a comprehensive document examining quality, need/demand for the program, cost, relation to the institutional mission, relationship to other programs in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), student outcomes, and quality and adequacy of resources such as library materials, equipment, space, and non-academic services.

Units should use the self-study to highlight accomplishments, and to assess how a specific degree program can be improved. The review process serves to illuminate inefficiencies, bottlenecks, and other challenges that need attention, as well as to identify resources that may be necessary to maintain program success.

It is customary for the Chair or Director of the Program (hereafter referred to as Chair) to take the leadership in completing the self-study, while involving the faculty in the process. Chairs must communicate with their Deans to learn and understand the Dean’s expectations of the process.

Why is the program review important?
NSHE requires that each program is reviewed at least once every ten years. UNLV publishes an annual report describing the results of existing program evaluations, and a summary of the report is forwarded to the Chancellor’s Office and presented to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee every year.

The report is reviewed by the NSHE Board of Regents at the last meeting of each calendar year.

What data will the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Programs (VPAP) provide on the self-study template?
The Office of Decision Support provides the following program review data for the past 10 years (if applicable):
- Degrees conferred.
- Headcount enrollment per semester.
- Enrollment count per semester and per course level (100-, 200-, 400-level etc.).
- Undergraduate students graduating in less than six years (only includes first time, full time, freshmen students).
- Graduate students graduating in less than eight years.

Our program has many transfer and part time students. How should we include them in this review relevant to graduation rates?
You can describe in the document how your program tracks graduation rates, include the program’s own graduation data, and explain how and why these data differ from those provided by Decision Support.
Our program underwent a disciplinary accreditation recently. Must we participate in the program review process?
If a disciplinary accreditation has taken place within the past two years, the Chair may complete an abbreviated form of the self-study document. The final accreditation report and the evaluation must be included with the abbreviated final self-study document. It is important to emphasize that the accreditation report cannot replace the self-study document.

What information does the VPAP need in order to survey the program’s instructors?
Names and full email addresses (because some people do not use @unlv.edu addresses) of all instructors (ladder-rank faculty, FIrS, lecturers, visiting and part time instructors, and anyone else who teaches in the program, excluding the Chair and graduate assistants).

If more than one degree is being reviewed in the same program, please indicate which instructors teach in a given program (Master’s and/or Ph.D. programs, as opposed to only B.A./B.S. programs).

What information does the VPAP need in order to survey the program’s students?
The specific group of students to be surveyed. For example: in undergraduate programs, the Chair may wish to survey students only in the pre-major or the major, or only students with junior and senior status.

Grade Levels are:
- First year students.
- Sophomores.
- Juniors.
- Seniors.
- Master’s level students.
- Doctoral level students.

Please note that students who have selected the “Do Not Release” flag/indicator will not be surveyed due to strict Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) federal regulations.

Who gathers all the student data, and for how long will the surveys be active?
The VPAP will gather all student data from the Office of the Registrar, and administer the surveys via Qualtrics. Surveys will be active for at least 30 days for both faculty and students; reminders will be sent to participants who have not completed the survey after 15 calendar days.

Why are the surveys important?
The survey process is valuable, because it provides the program with feedback from both faculty and students. This valuable information should be used to determine how to improve the program. The undergraduate and graduate surveys will be recapped by the Faculty Senate Program Review Committee and by the Graduate College Program Review Committee, respectively. Recapped (anonymous) responses will be forwarded to the Chair.

How do I choose our external reviewers?
Potential external reviewers:
- Must be active in the same overall academic discipline.
- Must be from a comparable peer or aspirational public research institution.
- Must have current or recent experience in a similarly situated urban institution, i.e., large public, research-high or research-very high institution.
• Should preferably be from institutions in the western or central United States, to minimize their travel costs.
• Must be tenured, at the Professor rank, productive scholars with the appropriate terminal degree.
• Should not have close personal or professional ties with a faculty from the program being reviewed (e.g., a collaborator on publications or grant proposals, a former student, a former advisor, UNLV graduate), for those relationships may present a conflict of interest.
• Cannot be from any NSHE institution.
• Cannot be former UNLV or NSHE employees.

Please note that if a reviewer is not a U.S. citizen, payment of the honorarium may be delayed, and the reviewer will have to meet with the Nonresident Alien Tax Specialist during his/her campus visit.

What happens once I choose our (five) potential external reviewers?
Communicate with all of them, and ensure that each one is willing to serve as external reviewer for the program review.

The Chair provides the VPAP with:
• The complete address of the candidates’ current academic/professional affiliations.
• A brief explanation as to why each person would be an appropriate reviewer for the program.
• A complete curriculum vitae of each prospective reviewer.

The VPAP will select two reviewers from the list, and notify the Chair.

What will the external reviewer visit look like?
The Chair will work with the two approved reviewers to select dates for their campus visit. The reviewers must visit campus simultaneously, and submit one joint report.

The Chair will create an itinerary for the reviewers’ visit. A sample itinerary will be provided with the program review documents.

While on campus, external reviewers must complete the Independent Service Provider Contract, and be set up as Supplier/Vendor for payment in Workday, so that they can be paid their honoraria immediately after submitting their report.

External Reviewers must meet at a minimum with:
• Department Chair.
• Program faculty.
• Undergraduate and/or graduate students, as applicable.
• Academic advisors (if applicable).
• Dean.
• Vice Provost for Academic Programs, Dr. Javier Rodríguez; this should be the last meeting held; please contact Ashley Weckesser (ashley.weckesser@unlv.edu, 702-895-1267) to schedule this appointment.

At least seven days prior to the meeting day, please provide the VPAP with:
• The schedule of the visit of the external reviewers.
Each reviewer’s curriculum vitae.

At least four weeks prior to their arrival on campus, external reviewers must be provided with the:

- Completed self-study.
- Recaps of the faculty and student surveys.
- External reviewer’s packet (five documents) available at the Program Review Resources page.
- Schedule of their campus visit.

Following their visit, external reviewers have 30 working days to submit their report to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs, Dr. Javier Rodríguez, javier.rodriguez@unlv.edu.

**How do external reviewers receive their payment?**
The department will cover the external reviewers’ hotel, airfare, and other expenses, and will communicate with the external reviewers about this process.

The VPAP will provide a $1,000 honorarium to each reviewer, but the department is responsible for ensuring the checks are mailed after the reviewers submit their final report. The department will inform the reviewers that an IRS 1099 form will be sent to them to document the honorarium.

Please address all questions regarding the payment to the reviewers to Mary Brady (mary.brady@unlv.edu, 702-895-1558).

External reviewers are valued colleagues who are providing an extremely important service to the unit, the College, and to UNLV, and accordingly we must treat them with respect at all times.

**Once the external reviewer's report is submitted, what happens?**
The VPAP sends the report to:

- Chair.
- Dean of the College/School.
- Dean of the Graduate College (if applicable).

**How do I leave feedback regarding this process?**
The Vice Provost for Academic Programs is committed to engaging programs in a clear and useful program review process. To facilitate continuous improvement, we welcome feedback from programs and departments, external or internal reviewers and any other constituents of the process.

Use the Program Review Feedback form to share your thoughts anonymously.

Should you have any concerns or questions about this feedback process, please feel free to contact Nora Carroll by email at nora.carroll@unlv.edu or by phone at 702-895-1888.