I. Purpose

Regular, periodic reviews of academic degree programs provide a formal process for thorough, fact-based documentation and evaluation of the programs, the infrastructure supporting them, and the plans for their growth and improvement. A distinctive feature of external reviews is that they include evaluation of the offering unit’s resources and how those resources are managed to promote the overall success of the degree program. Internal review of graduate programs is overseen by the Graduate School. Internal review of undergraduate programs is overseen by the Provost’s Office and the relevant dean’s office.

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1 Unit is defined as the department or school offering the program(s) being reviewed.
II. Review Cycle

Degree programs that are reviewed by an external professional accreditor (such as ABET, AACSB, SAF) will be reviewed by those accreditors according to the accreditor’s regular cycle. For those degree programs, the final report submitted by the external accreditor and the unit’s response to that report will constitute the unit’s Report of Results of Periodic Review that must be submitted to the provost and, for the case of degree programs within departments in a college, to the cognizant dean.

Degree programs that are not reviewed by professional accreditors but are within units that do have at least one professionally accredited program may be reviewed on a cycle that is of the same length as the professional accreditation or else on a six-year cycle (undergraduate) or a ten- to twelve-year cycle (graduate).

Degree programs within units where no programs are reviewed by professional accreditors will be externally reviewed on a six-year cycle (undergraduate) or a ten-to twelve-year cycle (graduate).

It is recommended that the undergraduate and graduate programs within a given unit be addressed as part of a single review process whenever possible. If the undergraduate programs in a unit are reviewed by an external professional accreditor that does not review graduate programs, it is recommended that the graduate programs be reviewed as soon as possible following the completion of the Report of Results of Periodic Review for the undergraduate programs. But, beyond the six-year undergraduate cycle (or ten- to twelve-year graduate cycle) or professional accreditation cycle length requirement, the scheduling of degree program reviews is at the discretion of the department/school that offers the degree program. Units may, then, choose to offset the review cycle of graduate programs by a number of years so that a regular staggering of graduate program review from undergraduate program review occurs.

The plan for upcoming reviews shall be reviewed annually by the academic deans and provost to accommodate changes in accrediting timelines, schedules, or cycles.

III. Responsibility and Locus of the Review

Units are responsible for ensuring that all degree program reviews are conducted at the specified times. Departments and schools are also responsible for preparation and submission of all documentation associated with the review process.
Degree programs reviewed within the context of professional accreditation follow the accreditors’ review guidelines.

Reviews of other degree programs are initiated by the provost through a memo to the cognizant dean(s). Deans will work with their school, or with the cognizant department chair(s)\(^2\), to establish a timeline, identify specific expectations for the review, and identify external and internal reviewers.

**IV. Schedule**

(see Table I which is below section text for visual summary)

Degree programs reviewed by a professional accreditor will follow the accreditor’s guidance for selection of reviewers, submission of self-study documents, on-site reviews, etc.

Degree programs (including graduate programs) that are not reviewed by an external professional accreditor will follow the schedule outlined here:

A. Units with a degree program to be reviewed will be notified by the provost by the end of Week 2 of the spring semester preceding the self-study year.

B. Commencing in the fall of the self-study year (the year preceding the external review), units will prepare their self-study documents. During the spring semester of the self-study year, the following deadlines will apply:
   - Units will identify potential reviewers by the end of Week 2.
   - The provost, or their designee (see Section VI.C), will formally invite reviewers by the end of Week 6.
   - Confirmation of reviewers is expected by the end of Week 10.
   - The self-study documents are due to the provost and the cognizant dean by the end of Week 14.

C. The provost will provide the self-study documents to the external and internal reviewers by June 1 of the summer preceding the review.

D. The campus visit by external reviewers will be completed by Week 9 of the fall semester of the external review year, and the draft reviewers’ report will be due to the provost by the end of Week 14 of that fall semester.

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\(^2\) In the case of reviews for departments within a college
• Copies of the report will be provided by the provost to the unit for fact checking.
• The unit’s response to the draft reviewers’ report is due by the end of Week 2 of the following spring semester.
• The final reviewers’ report is due to the provost by the end of Week 8 of spring semester.

E. The school dean and provost (for degree programs within schools) or the department chair and college dean (for departmental programs within a college) will meet with the faculty of the unit to discuss the reviewers’ report by the end of Week 10 of spring semester.

F. The unit will provide the provost and the cognizant dean its Report of Results of Periodic Review (described below) by June 1 during the summer following the review. Each report should be preceded by a cover letter from the dean of the school or chair of the department that summarizes the review’s process and outcomes.

G. The provost will report the findings of the degree program review to the Board of Trustees in a timely fashion.

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Table I: The schedule for external reviews. Buffers are built in for certain steps. The “Wk #” shown indicates the task deadline based on a 14-week academic semester. Summer deadlines are given as calendar dates.
V. The Self-Study Document

Each unit with a degree program up for review undergoes a self-study to assess the strengths and limitations of the degree program within the context of the offering unit and its resources. The self-study should provide a comprehensive overview of the degree program that can guide the review team. For degree programs reviewed by professional accreditors, units should conduct the associated self-study following the accreditors’ guidelines. For all other degree programs, the unit should first consider whether a single review team can review all degree programs within the unit or if the diversity of degree programs calls for multiple review teams. If multiple review teams are needed/used, then a self-study document for each review team must be prepared. If a single review team is used for multiple degree programs, then it is left to the discretion of the unit as to whether a single self-study document is prepared or if multiple self-study documents (e.g., one for undergraduate programs and one for graduate programs, OR one for each undergraduate program and one for each graduate program, OR some combination thereof) are warranted. The principal author(s) of a self-study document may be an individual, such as the department chair/school dean, or may be a committee. The final document(s) should represent a departmental consensus whenever possible.

A. Data: The self-study shall contain, but not be limited to, the following information and analyses:

   • Departmental mission and vision statements and degree-program learning goals for each program covered by the study.
   • Quantitative data: Basic information that should include categories such as faculty (number, ranks, demographics) and staff (roles), with details on how advising is handled; facilities; budgets; students (number, degree programs, demographics); retention and degree completion; placement after graduation; and scholarship (publications, presentations, funding). Institutional Analysis will provide basic data using a uniform template. The department may provide additional data as needed.
   • Results of assessment of student learning outcomes, analyses of results, and evidence that results are used for continuous improvement.
   • Results of surveys of graduates and their employers, as appropriate.
   • Recent initiatives and their effects.
   • Goals for the future.
B. The self-study shall conclude with responses to the following questions:

- In what ways does the program support both the University’s and your college’s/school’s mission and vision statements?
- In what ways does the academic program align with the University’s strategic plan?
- In what ways is the program, or are the students, faculty, and staff associated with the program, contributing to an increase in state, national, and international awareness of the quality of Michigan Tech’s educational offerings and research capabilities?
- How do the research and scholarly activities of faculty (and staff as appropriate) enhance the learning experiences for students in the program?
- What are the principles that guide decisions regarding the allocation of resources for the program?
- Additional questions may be added by the cognizant dean, the dean of the Graduate School (for reviews of graduate programs), or the provost to gain information from reviewers that will support the University’s ongoing continual improvement processes.

- Appendices: additional information may be presented in appendices that are referred to in the main body of the self-study document.

VI. External and Internal Reviewers

A. Composition of review team:

- For degree programs reviewed by professional accreditors, units will follow the accreditors’ guidelines for the number and selection of external reviewers.
- For review of all other degree programs:
  - Traditionally the review team is composed of three reviewers: two external and one internal.
  1. Programs can recommend modifications to team size and composition by submitting a request to the appropriate dean and the Provost’s Office.
  2. In all cases, external reviewers will outnumber internal reviewers.
Participation of internal reviewers is intended to improve University-wide appreciation of the aspirations of each academic unit. Internal reviewers will also be able to assist external reviewers in accessing additional campus/unit information, which will improve the efficiency of the review process.

B. Qualifications of reviewers:
   • External reviewers should be senior academic faculty members, department chairs, deans, or individuals of similar professional stature. External reviewers should have experience with both undergraduate and graduate education in the disciplinary areas represented by the programs under review.
   • Internal reviewers must be tenured members of the graduate faculty at Michigan Tech and may not be affiliated with the unit offering the degree program under review. For the review of non-departmental or interdisciplinary programs, internal reviewers must not be affiliated with those programs.

C. Selection of reviewers:
   • The unit offering the degree program being reviewed will recommend a slate of at least five potential external and at least five potential internal reviewers to the cognizant dean. The agreed-upon list will be forwarded to the provost.
     • After approval by the provost, potential reviewers will be contacted to determine their willingness to participate and availability.
     • Formal invitations will be sent to selected reviewers according to the timeline in Section IV. Schedule.
     • Responsibility for sending the invitations will be based on the type of review as follows:
       1. Graduate School dean, for reviews that involve only graduate programs.
       2. College dean, for undergraduate or combined undergraduate/graduate reviews in a college.
       3. Provost, for undergraduate or combined undergraduate/graduate reviews in a school.
• Reviewers who accept the provost's invitation to review must submit a copy of their curriculum vitae to the provost prior to conducting the review.

D. Reviewer responsibilities:
• One of the external reviewers will serve as the review team lead. This person will be responsible for submitting the reviewers' prepared reports to the provost.
• The reviewers are to read the self-study document prior to visiting the campus and conducting their on-site review.

E. Incentives:
• Travel expenses will be paid in accordance with university travel policy to external reviewers.
• An honorarium will be provided to both internal and external reviewers following completion of the review and submission of the final reviewers' report.
• When the honorarium is not paid according to the guidance of an external professional accreditor the following will apply:
  o External review team members will receive $1000.
  o Internal team members will receive $500.

VII. Process
For degree programs reviewed by professional accreditors, departments and schools should adhere to the accreditors’ guidelines for conducting reviews if those guidelines deviate from the process outlined below.

The reviewers will read the self-study prior to their on-campus visit and review.

Each review team visit will include meetings with the following parties:
• The unit’s chair/dean.
• The dean of the Graduate School (if graduate programs are involved).
• Unit faculty, staff, and students.
• Other parties as deemed appropriate (e.g., advisory board members, post-docs).
Each visit should include a tour of relevant facilities, including research and teaching laboratories, classrooms, and offices. It is expected that the external reviewers will be on campus for approximately two days to ensure a thorough review. The agenda for the visit will be set by the department/school after consulting with the external reviewers.

At the conclusion of their visit, the reviewers will prepare a draft report to be sent to the provost that is addressed to the chair or dean of the unit offering the program(s) under review. A standard set of questions\(^3\), which will be addressed in every review, will guide development of the reviewers’ draft report. The provost will distribute the draft reviewers’ report to the unit and cognizant dean for fact checking. The unit will prepare a response to the draft reviewers’ report and submit the response to the provost. The provost will deliver the response to the reviewers, and reviewers will consider the unit’s response in preparation of their final reviewers’ report.

The final reviewers’ report will be delivered by the review team lead to the provost and distributed as noted in Section IV. Schedule.

**VIII. Review Summary Report**

Following receipt of the final reviewers’ report, the department chair/school dean will prepare for the dean/provost and the dean of the Graduate School, if graduate programs are involved, a report (*Report of Results of Periodic Review*) that contains the following sections:

I. a one-page executive summary
II. the final reviewers’ report
III. a listing of the principal observations, comments, and recommendations made by the reviewers in their final report
IV. the department’s/school’s response to the reviewers’ final report
V. an action plan

The unit’s response should bring together everything that has been learned through the review and outline plans for the future. The action plan should include a timeline

\(^3\) These questions will be reviewed on an annual basis by the deans, associate provost(s), and provost and updated as necessary. School deans and/or department chairs may supplement the standard questions with additional queries, and the reviewers will be encouraged to comment on topics not specifically addressed by the provided questions and to make recommendations as needed in order to provide useful feedback to the unit offering the reviewed program.
for completion of specific actions and outline a strategy for aligning and/or reallocating resources (if necessary) to support completion of the specified actions.

IX. Dean’s Evaluation

If a graduate program has been reviewed, the dean of the Graduate School will provide the cognizant dean and the provost a letter containing a summary of the Graduate School dean’s analyses of the graduate program’s review process and outcomes.

The cognizant dean will provide the provost with a copy of the unit’s Report of Results of Periodic Review. The dean of the school or college will provide summary analyses of the review’s process and outcomes, incorporating input received from the dean of the Graduate School for review of graduate programs.

X. Provost’s Report

The provost will communicate the findings of the degree-program review to the Board of Trustees in a timely fashion.

XI. History of Revisions or Changes

08/25/2004 Initial Procedures Adopted
01/19/2016 Revised Procedures open for Review and Comment
03/01/2016 Revised Based on Comments
04/05/2016 Revised Based on Comments
05/19/2016 Revised Based on Comments
01/09/2017 Revisions from the Graduate School
02/03/2017 Revised Based on Comments and Revised Schedule for Fall Visit
04/17/2017 Revised Based on Comments
04/19/2017 Approved by Provost