

The External Review and Report

Purpose of the external review: The purpose of the external review is to provide a mechanism for assessment by recognized peers from outside of Texas.

Selection of the external review team and the schedule for the review: Reviewer(s) should be recognized peers from distinguished programs at universities similar to UTPB and, where appropriate, from the professional sectors. For graduate programs institutions must engage an external reviewer with subject-matter expertise who is employed by an institution of higher education outside the state of Texas. If units are reviewing both an undergraduate and graduate program simultaneously they may engage a single reviewer who has expertise in both programs, but this person must be from a college or university outside of Texas.

The unit chair or coordinator will provide names of potential reviewers. Working from this slate of potential reviewers, the chair/coordinator, the dean, and the Provost/Vice President will come to agreement on a list of potential reviewers. All parties will be sensitive to issues of conflict of interest at all levels and external reviewers must affirm that they have no conflict of interest related to the program under review. For programs that are not administered through a college, the administrator to whom the program reports should perform the responsibilities identified herein as those of the dean.

The dean's office is responsible for scheduling the travel, and lodging arrangements for the external reviewers. Travel expenses will come from the College budget, unless otherwise approved by the Provost. Exit interviews with the Dean and the Provost (and possibly the President) will also be scheduled by the Dean. The unit being reviewed is responsible for scheduling and coordinating all other aspects of the external reviewers' visit. Opportunities should be arranged for team members to meet with faculty members of the discipline (individually, if possible), department chairs program coordinators, and a sampling of undergraduate and graduate students. The schedule should be arranged to accommodate the reviewers' need to have time to work individually and as a team. The length of time the team is on campus will vary with the size and complexity of the program; a two day maximum visit should be sufficient for a review of the programs included in most academic departments.

Materials, information, and questions provided to the review team: Well in advance of the scheduled visit, the dean will provide the following to each member of the review team. Copies of this material should be available to the unit undergoing the review.

1. The unit's self-study report
2. A preliminary schedule for the visit (with the understanding that the team may request additional or follow-up interviews or may otherwise choose to modify the proposed schedule)
3. An information sheet describing the expectations for the focus and content of the external reviewers' report (extracted from section E, below).

Focus of the external evaluation: The external review team should focus on the unit's goals and plans for achieving those goals within the context of all information provided in the self-study. In addition, the team should offer its observations and insights about how the unit contributes to the mission and plans of the college, other academic units, and the university as a whole. The Provost and dean have the final responsibility for assessing these aspects of the unit and its programs.

The team's recommendations should focus on improvements that can be made using institutional and extramural resources that currently are available to the program. If recommendations are made for changes that would require additional institutional resources, the need and priority for additional resources should be clearly specified.

External Review Report

External reviews should present their major findings and recommendations verbally during the exit interviews.

They will also submit a single report within two to three weeks of departure from UTPB. It is submitted to the Provost, who distributes the report to the Dean and the Unit. The unit should call factual errors to the attention of the Provost as soon as they are recognized.

The External Report should include:

- A brief statement naming the unit being reviewed, the dates of the visit, and a summary of the major events or scope of the visit.
- An evaluation of the completeness and adequacy of the self-study.
- An identification of strengths and weaknesses of the unit. Do the unit's teaching and research/creative efforts reflect appropriate degrees of specialization and comprehensiveness? Is there evidence of innovation in teaching and research/creative work?
- An evaluation of the productivity of the faculty in teaching, research and service. Are the faculty competitive on a national scale?
- An evaluation of the leadership, including the climate for work created by administrators.
- An evaluation of the unit's plans for the next seven years. Are unit's goals and mission clearly articulated and appropriate? Do these plans reflect creative insights into the potential of the unit to contribute to the discipline and the University? Are the goals of the unit current, realistic and creative, in both teaching and research/creative efforts? Additional findings and recommendations, particularly those that could improve the plan or increase its chances for successful implementation.