

Program Reviews*

Purpose

The review is intended to be a periodic self-examination that will contribute to a strategic plan for the future. The primary goal of the review is to improve the program's effectiveness and quality. The objectives of the review are to provide a clear assessment of the program's strengths and weaknesses and to develop a guide for the program's future direction.

Mandates

The University of Nebraska is committed to providing the highest quality of post-secondary education for the citizens of Nebraska. The Board of Regents recognizes that periodic review coupled with coordinated, long-range strategic planning is essential to insure the quality of academic programming, both instructional and non-instructional.

The Nebraska State Constitution (Article VII, Section 14) authorizes the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (CCPE) to "... review, monitor, and approve or disapprove each public postsecondary educational institution's programs..." The CCPE does not evaluate research programs outside of an academic review context, but does maintain an inventory of Cooperative Extension programming.

The University of Nebraska's Regents Policies (RP-2.1.6) state that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) "...is the primary research and doctoral degree-granting institution in the state for fields outside the health professions and offers a broad range of undergraduate and graduate programs. UNL has primary statewide responsibility for the land-grant activities of the University of Nebraska which emphasize application and integration of knowledge and applied research in diverse areas. Scholarship at UNL should emphasize teaching and discovery but should also include the scholarship of integration and application."

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents has created multi-departmental academic centers for research, teaching and/or service. "Such multi-departmental organizational entities may organize faculty and programs for numerous purposes such as creation of partnerships with external organizations, enhanced university research and outreach programs, development of new funding patterns, addressing emerging multi-disciplinary educational needs, and other emerging problems and issues." The President of the University of Nebraska is required to periodically review Centers based, in part, on function, justification, relevance to the University's strategic plans, and evidence that the multi-departmental center will more effectively achieve stated academic objectives than traditional departmental, school, or college structures.

Review Team Expectations

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln expects the review team to submit a final written report within 30 days of the site visit. The report should be factual, succinct, and explicit. Review teams are asked to relate their comments to the program or college/Division strategic plans, all our Land-Grant missions (teaching, research, Extension, outreach, service), and to the core values of IANR and UNL. The Review Team is asked to keep in mind that many recommendations that would improve a given program might not be feasible because of the expense involved and the requirements of other programs within the University. The team is, therefore, encouraged to: 1) Respond to the specific questions posed by the unit and IANR/UNL administrators, 2) Focus recommendations on what can and should be done within existing resources, and 3) Make one or two suggestions for new investment that would have the greatest impact on program quality.

When a Center is being reviewed, the team report should also specifically determine and outline if: 1) There is a future need/value for the Center (review the Center's mission), 2) the Center structure allows it to more effectively achieve stated academic objectives than traditional departmental, school, or college structures, and 3) Center status should be retained. If applicable, the team should also provide specific guidance to improve the Center's operations, function(s), and mission.

*There are several sources for this text, including some quoted verbatim from existing policy documents.

Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska (<http://nebraska.edu/docs/board/bylaws.pdf>)

University of Nebraska Board of Regents Policies (<http://www.nebraska.edu/docs/board/RegentPolicies.pdf>)

Bylaws of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (<http://www.unl.edu/ucomm/chancldr/bylaws/>)

Academic Program Review Guidelines (2006) (http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/documents/apr_guidelines.pdf)

Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education (<http://www.ccpe.state.ne.us>)