



CHARGE TO THE EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Dear Committee Member:

The External Review Team (Team) is charged with evaluating the effectiveness of the academic unit (department, school or individual program), as well as the unit's contributions to George Mason University and to the discipline or field. The scope of the review is broad, encompassing the quality of the undergraduate and graduate programs, faculty and student satisfaction, and efforts to facilitate faculty progress toward tenure, promotion, and distinction in teaching, research and scholarship.

The Team is asked to prepare a written report of its findings and recommendations based on a thorough assessment of the unit's self-study report and interviews conducted during the Team's site visit. The final Team report is to be submitted to the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Matthew DeSantis, within three weeks of the scheduled the site visit. Below are key components of the Academic Program Review that the Team should endeavor to address. Sections or questions that are not germane to the unit under review may be excluded from the review team's final report. Equally, the Team is encouraged to address additional areas of relevance and import, particularly matter of diversity and equity that are addressed throughout multiple areas of the self-study, as well as other topics not indicated below that will help the unit to strengthen and advance it's mission and goals.

1. Unit

- a. Based on your understanding of this academic unit, and your knowledge of similar units in the discipline, please comment about the overall strength and weaknesses of the unit.
- b. In the team's judgment, how does the unit compare and contrast with top tier programs of its kind, as well as related programs at peer institutions?
- c. How does the unit contribute to the goals of the college and the strategic plans of the university?
- d. Are there areas in which collaborative efforts should be pursued more aggressively?
- e. How do you assess the administrative structure of the academic unit and the resources available to it?

2. Faculty

- a. Please comment on the appropriateness of the size and scope of the faculty, and its general productivity, in relation to the mission of the unit.
- b. To what extent are the faculty number and composition sufficient to support the research and educational mission of the unit?
- c. What effort is made by the unit to stay apprised of pedagogical best practices in the discipline/field?
- d. How does the unit support and mentor junior faculty? How does the unit support and facilitate its members' progress toward tenure, promotion and distinction in teaching, research and scholarship?



3. Academic Programs

- a. What is your assessment of the undergraduate and graduate curricula of the academic programs?
- b. Is the academic program shaped by appropriate and mission-supportive learning outcomes, and are these learning outcomes well served by the structure of the curriculum and degree requirements?
- c. How would you suggest improving the way student learning is assessed in the curricula?
- d. Comment on the size of the faculty in relation to the academic program?
- e. How effective is the program's advising of its students?
- f. Please comment on the characteristics of the program's undergraduate/graduate students, student support, mentoring of students and the time to degree.
- g. What strengths, weaknesses, issues, and opportunities for improvement do you perceive for each of the units' academic programs?

4. Goals

- a. Do you assess the goals the unit has outlined in its self-study as appropriate?
- b. Are the resource needs realistic?
- c. Are any changes or additions warranted?

5. Executive Summary and Recommendations

- a. Summarize the unit's major strengths and challenges.
- b. What recommendations do you have for unit?