

## Guidelines for Academic Reviews at USC

### I. Introduction

The Academic Review process consists of on-going, high quality, peer reviews of all academic units at USC. The purpose is to foster academic excellence at all levels, to determine how to raise quality to a higher level, and to provide guidance for administrative decisions in support of continued future improvement. Academic reviews are not an unrestrained opportunity to request additional resources.

Reviews are designed to comprehensively address the educational mission of each academic unit, and to acknowledge the inter-relatedness and mutual dependencies of educational provision across the academic unit's various programs -- undergraduate, master's-level, doctoral and professional programs and service teaching obligations. In practice, few academic units encompass educational programs at all these levels, and educational programming may span multiple departments. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate some flexibility in defining the scope of individual reviews. While the academic unit and all of its constituent educational programs is the target unit for UCAR reviews, interdepartmental programs may be reviewed separately.

Reviews will be conducted on individual academic units, interdisciplinary groups that cut across departmental or school lines. As Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Provost is responsible for choosing the academic units to be reviewed. Reviews will occur on a roughly ten-year cycle, though it is expected that units will undergo other reviews, either by accrediting organizations or through internal processes more frequently. The schedule of reviews and the specific configuration of the review will be set by the Provost in consultation with the appropriate Deans. Units that are separately accredited may request that the academic review occur at a time most convenient to the accreditation cycle. Funding for these reviews will be provided by the Provost.

The review process is intended to assist an academic unit in understanding its current status so that it can establish clear priorities for achieving excellence. Every unit to be reviewed will prepare a self-study containing a comprehensive plan for improvement over the next five years. A critique of each academic unit's plans for achieving excellence, and recommendations for constructive change, will be provided by a Review Committee consisting of external and internal faculty peers.

Academic reviews at USC have the following characteristics:

1. Reviews provide a concise, honest appraisal of an academic unit's strengths and weaknesses.
2. Reviews are forward looking. While assessment of a unit's current status is important, priorities for continued future improvement are of greatest concern.
3. Reviews are evaluative, not just descriptive. Plans for improvement require academic judgments about the quality of the faculty, academic program(s), students, curricula, resources and future directions.

4. Reviews incorporate expert assessment provided by prominent faculty in the field at other leading universities and by faculty from other units at USC.

## **II. Unit Self-Study and Responsibilities**

Broad faculty participation in all phases of the review is strongly encouraged. Unit reviews begin with a process leading to the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Head of the unit to be reviewed, the appropriate Dean(s) and the Provost or Provost's designee. The MOU will include the charge given to the Review Committee, which must be consistent with these guidelines, but may also include questions specifically relevant to the unit. The MOU also outlines the general composition of the Review Committee, including its size, the range of disciplines and/or sub-disciplines to be represented, and the collaborating units that might be included in the site visit. Although the MOU should be arrived at through a dialogue between the parties concerned, the Provost or the Provost's designee will make the final decision on the questions that will guide the review. It is not necessary for the MOU to include issues tailored to the unit under review, and the review itself may raise additional issues during the process of assessing the unit's strengths and weaknesses. Please see Appendix I of this document for the MOU template.

The unit's comprehensive self-study will serve as the basis for self-assessment and for identifying future directions and opportunities. The self-study must include a strategic plan for the next five years. It will follow the format established in these guidelines and will also address any additional questions raised in the MOU. The text of the self-study should not exceed 20 pages. Data and other descriptive material should be placed in appendices, which should not exceed 100 pages. Please see Appendix II and III of this document for a self-study checklist and a checklist for the appendix to the self-study respectively.

The self-study process is intended to assist the faculty of the unit under review in establishing priorities and identifying strategies for achieving the goal of academic excellence, including strategies for bringing about marked improvement in significant rankings. Deans and Heads of units under review should identify institutions against which they plan to benchmark the quality of their units and outline the sequence of steps the unit will follow to attain its desired improvement in reputation. The self-study is written by the faculty of the unit under review. The dean may supply an addendum providing further context, but is not expected to play an active role in shaping the self-study.

The process of writing the self-study process may raise further issues not considered at the time the MOU was developed. If, after completing the self-study, the Dean, the Head of the unit under review, or the Provost feels that a revision of the MOU is warranted, the unit under review will be asked to supply an addendum to the MOU that addresses the new issues raised. Faculty who have concerns about the self-study may address their concerns in writing to the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs who will protect the confidentiality of the communication.

### **III. The University Committee on Academic Review (UCAR)**

The University Committee on Academic Review (UCAR) oversees the academic review process. UCAR is a permanent, standing university committee appointed by the President. Recommendations for membership are solicited from a variety of sources, including academic Deans and the Executive Board of the Academic Senate. Each year, the Provost will appoint one member of the committee to serve as chair.

UCAR consists of roughly 18 members including faculty and ex-officio members and will:

1. Provide oversight for each academic unit review by reading and discussing the review documents and assessing the report of the Review Committee, which will be presented to UCAR by the internal Review Committee member. Any critiques arising from the review should be incorporated in the UCAR chair's memorandum that accompanies the transmittal of the report to the Provost.
2. Advising the Provost on any modifications to the Academic Review process that may prove necessary.
3. Receiving reports of other forms of academic unit evaluation at USC, including professional accreditation visits, internal school reviews, and advising the Provost of the outcomes.

### **IV. Review Committees**

For each unit to be reviewed, a Review Committee will be appointed by the Provost or Provost's designee upon recommendation of the chair of UCAR who may consult with members of UCAR as necessary. Each Review Committee is charged with conducting a comprehensive review of a specific academic unit and preparing a report for transmission to the Provost through UCAR. Senior members of the University faculty will serve as a pool of potential internal members of the Review Committee. Given the time-consuming nature of the review process, UCAR members would ordinarily not serve on a Review Committee, and University faculty members would ordinarily serve on a Review Committee only once in any two-year period.

1. Review Committees will include a combination of internal and external faculty. Each Review Committee will consist of one or more senior members of the USC faculty and three external consultants who are prominent faculty members at other universities. The number of internal faculty and external reviewers should be influenced, in part, by the breadth of the unit's scholarly focus, including its interdisciplinary breadth and methodological diversity, and the background and training of the reviewers. For example, when the unit under review uses various core methods or requires diverse core experiences, it might be appropriate to increase the number of internal faculty and/or to choose additional external reviewers to cover the unit's interests and activities. External reviewers will typically be from the discipline(s) represented by the unit being reviewed, but may occasionally be from a related academic discipline.
2. The internal member of the Review Committee is recommended by the Chair of UCAR.
  - a. No member of a unit under review may serve on the unit's Review Committee. This includes faculty with joint appointments of any percentage in the unit under review.

- b. No member of the university faculty who is currently teaching or working on a collaborative project with a member of the faculty from the unit under review may serve on the unit's Review Committee.
- 3. The internal member of the Review Committee, in consultation with the UCAR chair, will recommend external reviewers to the Provost or Provost's designee.
  - a. The Head of the unit under review and the appropriate Dean(s) will be asked for input, including a description of the subdisciplinary areas that need to be included and the institutions where clusters of strength exist in those subdisciplines.
  - b. **Faculty and Deans may not recommend specific external individuals for the Review Committee.**
  - c. The Head of the unit to be reviewed and the appropriate Dean(s) will receive in advance a list of potential Review Committee members and may recommend to strike from the list any potential invitees whose relationship with the unit or its faculty might hinder or compromise the review process. Striking names from the list should only be done with clear cause. Valid reasons for such exclusions would include conflicts of interest such as those described below.
  - d. Neither the Head of the unit nor the Dean(s) should approach potential Review Committee members in advance.
  - e. The Provost or the Provost's designee will invite external peers to participate in each review.
- 4. Efforts will be made to assure that external reviewers have sufficient independence from USC faculty and that visitors represent a balance of faculty in administrative and non-administrative positions. Individuals with the following potential conflicts of interest typically will be excluded from serving as the unit's external reviewers:
  - a. An individual from another university who now has or in the past five years has had a close collaborative relationship with a faculty member of the unit under review.
  - b. An individual who held a faculty appointment in the unit under review.
  - c. An individual associated with an organization or corporation that may benefit financially from, or sponsors, a research project that includes a faculty member from the unit under review, or similar conflicts of interest.
  - d. An individual associated with an organization or corporation in which a faculty member from the unit under review is currently a member of the board, a consultant, or has similar conflicts of interest.
  - e. An individual who has a relationship that may appear to be a conflict of interest, such as a former mentor or an individual who has a close personal relationship with the Dean or with other faculty members in the unit under review.

The internal member of the Review Committee and the Chair of UCAR will receive the draft of the self-study, documents related to the previous UCAR review (e.g., the reports of the Review Committee as well as the unit's response to the Committee's report), and the MOU. After reviewing the draft of the self-study the internal Review Committee member, the Chair of UCAR and the Provost's designees will comment on the draft in writing. The unit will revise the self-study in response to these comments. The final version (plus reports from the previous review) and the MOU will be sent to the entire Review Committee, including the external

reviewers, four weeks in advance of the site visit. These materials will also be made available to the Provost and the appropriate Dean(s).

## **V. Site Visit**

The Head of the unit under review is responsible for preparing an itinerary for the three-day visit in consultation with the internal member of the Review Committee, the Chair of UCAR, and the Provost's designees, six to eight weeks prior to the visit, and in a manner consistent with these guidelines. The Head of the unit should inform the faculty of the dates of the Review Committee's visit at least three months before the visit and request their participation. All relevant faculty members are expected to be available to meet with the Review Committee. The Provost's office will send the entire Review Committee and the Chair of UCAR a draft of the itinerary about three weeks in advance of the site visit in order to provide input on the schedule.

The Provost's office will provide the unit Head with an itinerary template which will adhere to the following basic format:

1. Review Committees dine together on the evening before the review, if possible, with the chair of UCAR and one or more representatives from the Provost's office.
2. The first meetings on Day One should be with the unit Head and the Dean, ideally in that order. Executive committees or other formal leadership groups should be scheduled early on Day One if possible.
3. Faculty meetings on Day's One and Two should be organized around disciplinary fields reflecting the unit's own internal organization. A separate meeting with untenured, tenure-track faculty is essential, and a separate meeting with non-tenure track faculty should be considered.
4. Students should meet with the Review Committee. Separate meetings for different student cohorts, as appropriate with regard to the goals of the review, are strongly encouraged and all appropriate academic programs should be represented.
5. Day Three, the final day of the site visit, will include time set aside for the Review Committee to draft its report prior to the exit interview. One of the external reviewers will chair the site visit and will lead the preparation of the Review Committee report. This draft may be revised after the visit as desired by the Review Committee, but the report must be submitted to the Provost's office in final form within two weeks. The internal Review Committee member should avoid unduly shaping the report but may draft portions either during or after the site visit.
6. The visit will conclude on the morning of Day Three with an exit interview as described below.

At the exit interview, members of the Review Committee are asked to provide an executive summary of their recommendations orally to Provost's representatives. The Review Committee will organize all recommendations into short-, medium-, and long-term priorities to help the academic unit effectively plan for immediate actions, phased improvements, and longer-range goals. The Head of the unit and the appropriate Dean(s) will be invited to hear the executive summary of the recommendations and to ask questions for the first portion of the exit interview.

They will then be excused to permit the Review Committee to complete its report to the Chair of UCAR and the Provost's representatives in private.

If there is additional advice that the Provost should have, but is too sensitive to write in the report, the Review Committee should explain this information in the private portion of the exit interview and submit a confidential cover letter for the report that will *not* be shared with the unit. **The Provost will protect the confidentiality of this correspondence.**

Review Committee reports are normally fewer than ten pages in length and should thoroughly and candidly evaluate:

1. The mission and intellectual profile of the academic unit.
2. The reputation of the academic unit among peers in the discipline, including national rankings, and the extent to which the academic unit is regarded as a leader in the field.
3. The unit's strategies for improving the reputation and academic stature of the academic unit.
4. The stature of the faculty, and whether specific faculty members have been duly recognized in their field or by their peers for their accomplishments and promise.
5. The extent to which the academic unit under review contributes (or could contribute in the future) to interdisciplinary research and teaching, and whether there are interdisciplinary ties that currently are underdeveloped.
6. The extent to which the academic unit brings measurable value to its students through demonstrable learning gains and career outcomes.
7. The alignment between program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes along the progression from introductory to advanced levels.
8. The effectiveness of the academic unit's assessment plan to evaluate student learning and quality of teaching.
9. Improvements that are possible without the need for massive infusions of University resources.
10. Improvements that are possible only with additional resources.
11. Whether there are entrenched issues within the academic unit that constrain its effectiveness, and whether there might be more effective ways of working together.
12. Specific additional issues included in the MOU.

The Review Committee should avoid using individual faculty names in the report where contentious issues are raised, e.g., naming the junior faculty who may be concerned about the tenure process. As peers with collegial ties to some of the faculty in the unit under review, the university recognizes that internal committee members in particular may feel constrained against being frank and outspoken in a written report. External reviewers may also feel some inclination to advocate for their disciplines. The Provost will not benefit from the Review Committee's advice, or be able to act effectively, unless all reviewers are entirely honest in their assessment of the unit.

The final Review Committee report will be provided to the Head of the unit reviewed for distribution to the entire faculty, and it will be distributed to the appropriate Dean(s) by the Provost's office. This report will serve as an advisory document to the Dean of the academic unit and the Provost and will be considered, along with the other review-related documents, in the post-review planning process.

## **VI. Distribution and Discussion of the Review Committee's Report**

The Head of the unit will submit a response to the Review Committee's report to the Chair of UCAR and the Provost's office within four weeks after receipt of the report. A copy should be provided to the faculty of the unit and the appropriate Dean(s). The unit's response should address the substantive issues raised by the report. Responses, while detailed, should be as direct as possible and should be kept to 5-8 pages. While there is no particular format required, the response should:

1. Provide a general response by the unit's collective faculty of the Review Committee's report. Include information on how the unit solicited feedback from the faculty, arrived at its assessment, and whether or not there were areas of agreement/disagreement.
2. Comment on the assessments and recommendations of the report, outlining specific methods or approaches the unit will use to accomplish the stated goals and identifying recommendations which the unit will incorporate and for what reasons. Simply agreeing or disagreeing with specific statements in the report is not sufficient. Responses to particular recommendations should be as detailed as possible.
3. Discuss the ways in which the recommendations may or may not affect the unit's five-year plan.
4. Correct any factual errors reported by the Review Committee.
5. Clarify any policies, practices, or systems that presented confusion or misunderstanding for the Review Committee.

The Dean may also submit a separate response to the Chair of UCAR and the Provost's office within four weeks, if desired. The Dean's report can be used to inform the Provost of any disagreements with the Review Committee report or the unit's response, with special issues that should be considered, or with any other relevant input. Faculty who have concerns about the unit's response to the review committee report may address their concerns in writing to the Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs who will protect the confidentiality of the communication.

A UCAR meeting will be convened to discuss the review and will involve a presentation of the report by the internal member of the Review Committee followed by a general discussion of the review-related documents and the internal member's presentation by the full committee. The discussion will focus on highlighting key points that should be brought to the Provost's attention. Following the meeting, the Chair of UCAR will write a memo to the Provost that will serve as a summary of the key points and will transmit the report and the unit's response to the Provost.

## **VII. Post-Review Planning Process**

The success of Academic Reviews depends on timely follow-through by the Dean and the Provost or the Provost's designee, with primary emphasis on how the academic unit can be improved through the use and reallocation of its existing resources.

After the receipt of a report from the chair of UCAR, the Provost or the Provost's designee will convene a meeting as soon as possible, but within one month. This will typically include the following individuals, and may include others who are deemed appropriate:

- a) The Provost or Provost's designee
- b) The appropriate Dean(s)
- c) The Head of the unit
- d) Members of the Provost's leadership team selected by the Provost
- e) Members of the Dean's leadership team selected by the Dean.

The MOU, the unit's self-study, the Review Committee's report, the unit's response, and the Dean's response (if any) will serve as the basis for this meeting. Based on these discussions the Dean and Provost or the Provost's designee will forge a consensus on necessary next steps needed to address opportunities and concerns raised in the course of the review. The post-review process may also include additional meetings between the Provost's designees, the unit Head, the Dean and the Dean's leadership team. The consensus will be documented in a list of action items with a timeline for implementation. In addition, the Chair of UCAR, the Provost or the Provost's designee may ask for periodic updates on specific topics to be prepared by the unit Head. The timing of these updates will be agreed with the Provost's designee, the Dean and the unit Head.

**Appendix I**  
**Memorandum of Understanding to Guide the**  
**Academic Review of the \_\_\_\_\_**

Academic reviews consist of on-going, high quality, peer reviews of all the academic units at USC. The purpose is to foster academic excellence at all levels, to determine how to raise quality to a higher level, and to provide guidance for administrative decisions in support of continued future improvement. Academic reviews are not an unrestrained opportunity to request additional resources.

Reviews at USC have the following characteristics:

1. Reviews provide a concise, honest appraisal of an academic unit's strengths and weaknesses.
2. Reviews are forward looking. While assessment of an academic unit's current status is important, priorities for continual future improvement are of greatest concern.
3. Reviews are evaluative, not just descriptive. Plans for improvement require academic judgments about the quality of the faculty, program(s), students, curricula, resources and future directions.
4. Reviews incorporate expert assessment provided by reviewers from other high quality institutions.

Each review must include consideration of the issues described in the Guidelines for Academic Reviews. In particular, Section V of the Guidelines includes the topics for the Review Committee, consisting of internal and external members, to assess, and Appendix II provides an outline for the unit's self-study. Section V of the Guidelines states:

The Review Committee should thoroughly and candidly evaluate:

1. The mission and intellectual profile of the academic unit.
2. The reputation of the academic unit among peers in the discipline, including national rankings, and the extent to which the academic unit is regarded as a leader in the field.
3. The unit's strategies for improving the reputation and academic stature of the academic unit.
4. The stature of the faculty, and whether specific faculty members have been duly recognized in their field or by their peers for their accomplishments and promise.
5. The extent to which the academic unit under review contributes (or could contribute in the future) to interdisciplinary research and teaching, and whether there are interdisciplinary ties that currently are underdeveloped.
6. The extent to which the academic unit brings measurable value to its students through demonstrable learning gains and career outcomes.
7. The alignment between program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes along the progression from introductory to advanced levels.
8. The effectiveness of the academic unit's assessment plan to evaluate student learning and quality of teaching.
9. Improvements that are possible without the need for massive infusions of University resources.

- 10. Improvements that are possible only with additional resources.
- 11. Whether there are entrenched issues within the academic unit that constrain its effectiveness, and whether there might be more effective ways of working together.

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets forth additional issues that the Provost, the Dean, and the unit Head have identified as questions of particular importance for the unit under review. Please be aware that the additional issues are in addition to, and must not supplant, the specific areas for evaluation listed above. Both the unit, in its self-study, and the Review Committee should provide their analyses of these issues during the review process. We note that the review itself may raise additional issues during the process of assessing a unit’s strengths and weaknesses.

The additional questions identified as important to address during this review are the following:

- *To be discussed at the MOU meeting*

The MOU also outlines the general composition of the Review Committee, including its size, and the range of disciplines and/or sub-disciplines to be represented. The following provides guidance with regard to the composition of the Review Committee:

The Review Committee should include representatives from institutions with the following types of programs:

- *To be discussed at the MOU meeting*

Members selected for the Review Committee should represent the three sub-disciplines, as described in the table below.

<b>Sub-Discipline</b>	<b>Key Journals</b>	<b>Sample Areas</b>	<b>Methodology</b>

Institutions from which Review Committee members could be drawn:

- *To be discussed at the MOU meeting*

The internal member of the Review Committee might be drawn from the following academic units at USC:

- *To be discussed at the MOU meeting*

The following are collaborating units, centers, or groups of faculty that might be included in the site visit and/or particular groups within the collaborative partnership which should meet separately with the Review Committee:

- *To be discussed at the MOU meeting*

The self-study should be completed no later than \_\_\_\_\_. If the unit needs any information that is gathered centrally for use in its self-study, it should contact the Provost's office or the Dean's office for that information. During this time, the Provost's office will work with the UCAR Chair and members to select the appropriate internal reviewer and to invite external consultants to participate in the site visit.

Signed:

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Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs  
University Designee

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Dean

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Head of the Unit

## **Appendix II Self-Study Outline Checklist**

Please keep the self-study narrative to 20 pages or less not including the Table of Contents. If additional questions were raised in the MOU please ensure that the self-study addresses those issues. The narrative should also refrain from including data tables and charts, which can be placed in the appendices. Appendices should be submitted as a separate document.

### **I. Executive Summary of the Comprehensive Plan for Improvement**

### **II. Overview**

- a) Introduction to contemporary issues in the academic discipline or field.
- b) Current academic/intellectual profile of the unit, including how its profile compares to other programs in the field and what distinguishes it from other programs.
- c) Current stature, including national rankings and metrics of excellence.
- d) A statement of the unit's goals and objectives.
- e) A statement of how the unit's vision is responsive to the School's vision and the University's Strategic Vision.
- f) Recommendations of the previous UCAR review, and progress since that assessment.

### **III. Assessment of Quality**

- a) Stature of faculty/staff, including recent achievements, strengths, and service.
- b) Evaluation of educational programs and student learning, including quality of students, career outcomes, and placement of graduates.
- c) Evaluation of co-curricular program offerings (e.g., research and internship opportunities), advising, and student support.
- d) Evaluation of mentoring and supervision for graduate students, including opportunities for professional development and career exploration.
- e) Contributions to interdisciplinary learning and teaching in conjunction with other units at USC and/or elsewhere.
- f) Comparative strengths, weaknesses and distinctiveness. In what ways does your program provide a distinctive educational experience that differentiates it from comparable programs at peer institutions? What evidence or examples best illustrate the program's impact—on student learning, professional trajectories, or contributions to the discipline—that reflect the distinct value of this degree?

### **IV. Assessment of Resources**

- a) Briefly describe the relationships across programs within the unit, including the impact on instructional or other departmental resources. Explain the rationale utilized in the distribution of teaching loads among the faculty.
- b) Evaluation of the mentoring provided to faculty for promotion and tenure.
- c) Evaluation of financial support provided to graduate students in your unit and how it is allocated.

- d) Describe the distribution and rationale of teaching assignments among graduate students.
- e) Evaluation of staff support.
- f) Evaluation of the training and mentoring provided to postdoctoral scholars.
- g) Identify unit, school, and/or university issues that may pose as obstacles for academic excellence.

V. **Comprehensive Plan for the Future**

- a) Prepare a detailed action plan for improvement over the upcoming five-year period to increase the unit's stature.
- b) List core objectives and priorities clearly and the sequence of actions to be taken for each.
- c) Consider where the academic discipline is likely to be headed in the next five years. Indicate how the unit will position itself in the changing context.
- d) Consider what opportunities exist to extend current strengths.
- e) Explain what internal improvements are possible *through reallocation of existing resources*.
- f) Explain improvements that can only be addressed through additional resources.

### **Appendix III Appendices Outline Checklist**

Please keep the appendices to 100 pages or less. To the extent that it is possible, the appendices included in the self-study should use data already collected on a regular basis by the unit under review.

The following types of data should be included in the appendices, however units may include additional materials to support the analysis of specific issues:

- I. **Table of Contents** (with bookmarks in the PDF)
  
- II. **Appendix for Overview**
  - a) Organizational Chart
  - b) Mission statement
  - c) National rankings and metrics of excellence
  - d) List tenured, tenure-track, and RTPC faculty (including part-time faculty) by rank, tenure status, and major areas of expertise
  - e) Headcount and turnover analysis of faculty in the past ten years
  - f) List of associate chairs, divisional directors, and chairs of major committees
  
- III. **Appendix for Quality**

*Faculty*

  - a) Faculty awards, honors, academy memberships or other indications of national recognition
  - b) Faculty external funding
    - a. Total awards in the past five years (indicating principal investigator, amount, dates)
    - b. Major awards
  - c) Faculty workload with respect to teaching, advisement and mentoring
  - d) Description of the unit's approach to assessing faculty teaching excellence and research productivity
  - e) Comparative data (with department-identified peers) on department size, teaching load, research productivity, and other metrics.

## ***Degree Programs***

### Bachelor's

#### **Data provided by the Office of Institutional Research**

- a) Headcount by major
- b) Demographics by residency status
- c) Student quality and performance data
- d) Graduation rates and time-to-degree
- e) Enrollments in undergraduate courses

#### **Data and information provided by the unit**

- a) Provide a brief program description and learning outcomes
- b) Curriculum requirements for each program
- c) Curricular map articulating the alignment between program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes and demonstrating the progression from introductory and advanced levels
- d) Methods used to monitor and evaluate student progress for each degree program. Provide a link to student handbooks, if applicable.
- e) Evidence of teaching effectiveness (e.g., student evaluations, student engagement surveys, alumni surveys; assessment of student work)
- f) Composition of faculty teaching in the program (number of adjunct, RTPC FT, RTPC PT, TT/T)
- g) Previous UCAR review committee report

### Master's

#### **Data provided by the Office of Institutional Research**

- a) Headcount by program
- b) Demographics by residency status
- c) Student quality and performance data
- d) Graduation rates and time-to-degree
- e) Enrollments in master's courses
- f) Student Loan Debt (Contact Donna Garcia to obtain a report from Financial Aid)

#### **Data and information provided by the unit**

- a) Admissions data (number of applicants, admission offers, new admit yield rates), last 5 years
- b) Provide a brief program description, learning outcomes, and student success measures
- c) Curriculum requirements for each program
- d) Total units, expected average duration of the program (in months), average total tuition and fees (for entire degree program)

- e) Curricular map articulating the alignment between program learning outcomes and course learning outcomes and demonstrating the progression from introductory and advanced levels
- f) Summary of career placement data for each program, last 2 years
- g) Average annual salary of graduates
- h) Methods used to monitor and evaluate student progress for each degree program. Provide a link to student handbooks, if applicable.
- i) Evidence of teaching effectiveness (e.g., student evaluations, student engagement surveys, alumni surveys; assessment of student work)
- j) Composition of faculty teaching in the program (number of adjunct, RTPC FT, RTPC PT, TT/T)
- k) Previous UCAR review committee report

### Doctoral

#### **Data provided by the Office of Institutional Research**

*For professional doctorates only:*

- a) Headcount by program
- b) Demographics by residency status
- c) Student quality data
- d) Graduation rates and time-to-degree
- e) Enrollments in doctoral courses

#### **Data and information provided by the unit**

- a) Admissions data (number of applicants, admission offers, new admit yield rates), last 5 years
- b) Provide the 5-year summary page of the PhD Progress Portal Data
- c) Doctoral student funding – Fellowship awards, Training Grants, and other sources of financial support
- d) Number of graduate students and postdocs by faculty member
- e) Provide a brief description and curriculum requirements for each program
- f) Methods used to monitor and evaluate student progress for each degree program. Provide a link to student handbooks, if applicable.
- g) Doctoral student placement data, last 5 years; provide the Special PhD Alumni Achievement Report from the PhD Progress Portal Data
- h) Average annual salary of graduates
- i) Evidence of teaching effectiveness (e.g., student evaluations, student engagement surveys, alumni surveys; assessment of student work)
- j) Composition of faculty teaching in the program (number of adjunct, RTPC FT, RTPC PT, TT/T)
- k) Previous UCAR review committee report

**IV. Appendix for Resources**

- a) Endowments, fellowships and other sources of funds
- b) Headcount of all instructional resources
- c) List all the support staff
- d) Headcount of Postdoctoral Scholars
- e) Facilities and space
- f) Computers, libraries, and other learning resources

**V. Appendix for Comprehensive Plan for the Future**

- a) Implementation plan of top priorities
- b) Faculty hiring plans, including intellectual goals
- c) Budget reallocation (e.g., funds freed by retirements, reduction or closure of lower priority units, etc.)
- d) New funds needed to accomplish some priorities

**VI. Faculty CV's**

Provide faculty CV's sorted by TT/T, RTPC FT, and RTPC PT. Please send a file to [ucar@usc.edu](mailto:ucar@usc.edu), via USC Google Drive.

## **Appendix IV Unit Review Cycle**

The responsibility for scheduling academic reviews rests with the Provost and will typically follow this timetable as closely as possible:

- Month 1: The Provost notifies the unit selected for review of the timing of that review and the review process.
- Month 2: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is prepared.
- The Provost's office provides the unit with any data gathered centrally, for use in preparing the self-study
- Month 3: The chair of UCAR and the Provost's designee invite a senior member of the University faculty to serve as the internal member of the Review Committee. The unit under review should be afforded the opportunity to comment on the internal candidates before the decision is made. Once in place, the internal Review Committee member works in consultation with the chair of UCAR and the Provost's designee to select and invite external members to serve on the Review Committee.
- Month 3-12: The unit under review drafts its self-study and prepares an itinerary for the site visit. If, after completing the self-study, the Dean and Head of the unit under review or the Provost feel that a revision of the MOU is warranted a meeting will be scheduled to create an addendum to the MOU to address the issues raised.
- Month 13: The unit submits its draft self-study to the Provost's office. The internal member of the Review Committee and the Chair of UCAR provide comments, and the unit revises the draft, if requested. A self-study update will be submitted six weeks prior to the visit, if necessary.
- Month 14-16: The site visit should occur sometime during this period.
- The Review Committee's report should be submitted to the Provost's office within two weeks of the end of the site visit, and the unit should submit a written response to that report within four weeks of its receipt. A separate response from the Dean, if desired, should also be submitted within four weeks.
- Month 17: UCAR should meet to discuss the Review Committee report and the unit's response as soon as possible. Ideally, this meeting should occur within one month of receiving the report. The report should be submitted to the Provost shortly thereafter.
- Month 18: The post-review meeting should occur within a month after the final report is submitted to the Provost. The unit will provide periodic updates on a mutually

agreed-upon timeline to report progress on the issues identified in the review. In addition, the Chair of UCAR, the Provost or the Provost's designee may ask for periodic updates on specific topics to be prepared by the unit Head.