

PROGRAM REVIEW: OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

1. Assign self-study responsibilities

A critical decision in ensuring the success of the self-study process is selecting self-study team members. The department head and dean should select the self-study team, whose responsibilities will include conducting evaluation activities, analyzing data, and writing the report. In some cases, a department may assign primary responsibility to one faculty member. In others, a department may assign its entire faculty to designated review responsibilities. This decision is best made by individual departments, considering faculty skills, interests and workloads. Departments are encouraged to include students in the self-study process and may include them as members of a departmental team. OPEIR will work with faculty responsible for the self-study to provide data, assist with interpretation of guidelines, and offer staff support.

2. Receive data from OPEIR

OPEIR will provide departments with considerable information to assist in conducting the self-study, including the following: departmental profile information, enrollment data, survey data from enrolled students, internal and external grant awards, summer fellowships, faculty development awards, instructional excellence grants, Provost student research grants, student ratings of faculty, student and faculty profile information, budget and financial data. Please note that OPEIR is happy to dedicate staff resources to collecting, analyzing, and presenting departmental data. However, it is the academic department's responsibility to review and verify the accuracy of all information included in the self-study.

In some cases, departments will need additional information to assess departmental operations. For example, departments with few respondents to the university's student surveys (and graduate programs with no surveys) may need to conduct their own student surveys.

3. Conduct self-study and prepare written report

The self-study report is the basis for the entire program review process, so this document must be accurate, complete, and well-written. It is important that the report address all the questions in the self-study guide (Self-Study Guidelines, Section 2) unless they are clearly not applicable. It also is important that objective data be documented and used where possible in the report to justify conclusions and recommendations. Each section of the report should conclude with an assessment of strengths and weaknesses and include recommendations for change, if needed. If the report is written by several faculty members, one person will need to integrate the individual sections into a composite report that is consistent in format, style, etc.

4. Submit initial draft to dean and OPEIR

The department head submits the initial draft to his/her dean and to OPEIR. The dean and OPEIR will review the draft for completeness and for anticipation of questions/comments from external reviewers.

5. Submit nominees for external reviewers

Each program under review must have at least one external evaluator. The evaluator must be employed outside the State of Tennessee, must have current or prior experience at the level of department chair or higher, and should have prior experience relevant to the program review process. Their experiences should enable them to make judgments and recommendations about the quality of UTC programs compared to the "best practice" standards at comparable institutions. Other criteria for selecting external evaluators are shown in Section 4.

The department, after consultation with and approval from the dean, submits at least three external evaluator nominees (along with information on their credentials) to the Provost for approval (with a copy to OPEIR).

6. Receive feedback on initial draft from dean and OPEIR

The dean and OPEIR will review the self-study report and offer advice to the department regarding the report's completeness, accuracy, and style.

7. Revise self-study report based on feedback from dean and OPEIR

After receiving input from the dean and OPEIR, the department will be ready to prepare its final draft. This draft should represent a consensus of the faculty and agreement among the department head, dean, and OPEIR.

Note: The department should not plan to print and bind their reports at this time. Binding can be deferred until the conclusion of the program review process so that the external reviewer's reports and the final implementation plan and budget can be included.

8. Send copy of revised self-study report to administrative offices

After completing the revising process, send copies of the self-study report to the Provost and, for graduate programs, to the Dean of the Graduate School.

9. Schedule and make arrangements for site visit

After the dean and Provost approve the external evaluator, the department is ready to schedule and make arrangements for the site visit. External evaluators should plan to be on campus at least two full days (see Section 7 for a typical site visit agenda). UTC will pay the reviewer a \$600 honorarium and will cover their travel, lodging, and meal expenses. Section 7 provides additional details and procedures for reimbursable program review costs.

The department is responsible for sending the external reviewer the self-study document, supporting materials, THEC checklist, and guidelines for the external reviewer's report at least two weeks prior to the scheduled on-site visit. The department is also responsible for handling logistical issues for the evaluator while on campus (transportation, parking, access to computer, etc.).

Modest requests for additional funds to cover program review expenses will be considered based on the availability of funds. Such requests must be made by November 1.

10. Conduct site visit

During the site visit, evaluators should meet with faculty, students, alumni, the department head, the dean, the provost, and other individuals deemed appropriate (e.g., the Dean of Graduate Studies for graduate programs). The evaluators must have sufficient time to review records verifying information included in the self-study report. Before leaving campus, external evaluators must complete the following: (1) program review checklist required by THEC (see Section 6), (2) exit interviews with both department faculty and Academic Affairs administrators. The exit interviews will be oral reports summarizing the evaluator's judgments regarding the department's compliance with THEC criteria and advice for the department's future directions. Within two weeks of the site visit, the external reviewer must complete a brief narrative report (see guidelines in Section 5) and submit the report to the department head and Office of Planning, Evaluation, & Institutional Research.

11. Prepare improvement and implementation plan

After completing self-study activities and receiving the consultants' advice, the department should work closely with the Dean to prepare an improvement plan responding to concerns raised during the program review process. A plan and timetable for implementing each recommendation should be included. With agreement from the department head and dean, these plans will be submitted to the provost and chancellor for approval and consideration of resources that might be needed to facilitate their implementation.