

## **Faculty Senate Resolution #15-63**

Approved by the Faculty Senate: April 14, 2015

Approved by the Chancellor: May 12, 2015

### **East Carolina University Guidelines for Academic Program Review Fall 2015 Pilot**

#### **I. Purpose of Academic Program Review at ECU**

The purpose of the seven-year review of all undergraduate and graduate programs in a department/school is to engage faculty in a reflective process of thoughtful study and evaluation of program quality and alignment to [East Carolina University's values, mission, and commitments](#) in support of our students and the region. Program review is an integral part of the university's ongoing assessment and strategic planning processes designed to enhance the quality of all educational programs. Programs that are periodically reviewed by an external accrediting body are not part of the formal APR process described here. Rather, reports from these external accreditations satisfy program review reporting requirements and are archived by the SACSCOC liaison in Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Research (IPAR).

The review of programs without specialized accreditation is intended to help faculty and administrators gain an understanding of the following:

- Purpose and outcomes for each degree and certificate program being reviewed;
- Each program's effectiveness in achieving its purpose and outcomes, along with overall quality;
- The faculty's vision for each program and improvement actions taken as a result of institutional and assessment data; and
- Future programmatic improvements to the curriculum, pedagogy, and/or operational functions of the department.

Academic program review at ECU consists of two interrelated activities: on-site program review which occurs approximately every seven years for each program, and student learning outcomes assessment which is conducted on an ongoing basis. These two forms of reviews are interrelated in three ways: (1) analysis of what has been learned about program quality through assessment of student learning outcomes is an integral part of the seven-year review; (2) analysis of programmatic and operational outcomes beyond student learning provides the program an opportunity to examine and align its actions with priorities and strategic initiatives of the university and college; and (3) in both reviews, faculty report progress in implementing the action plan from the previous review and develop a new action plan.

## II. Academic Program Review Process

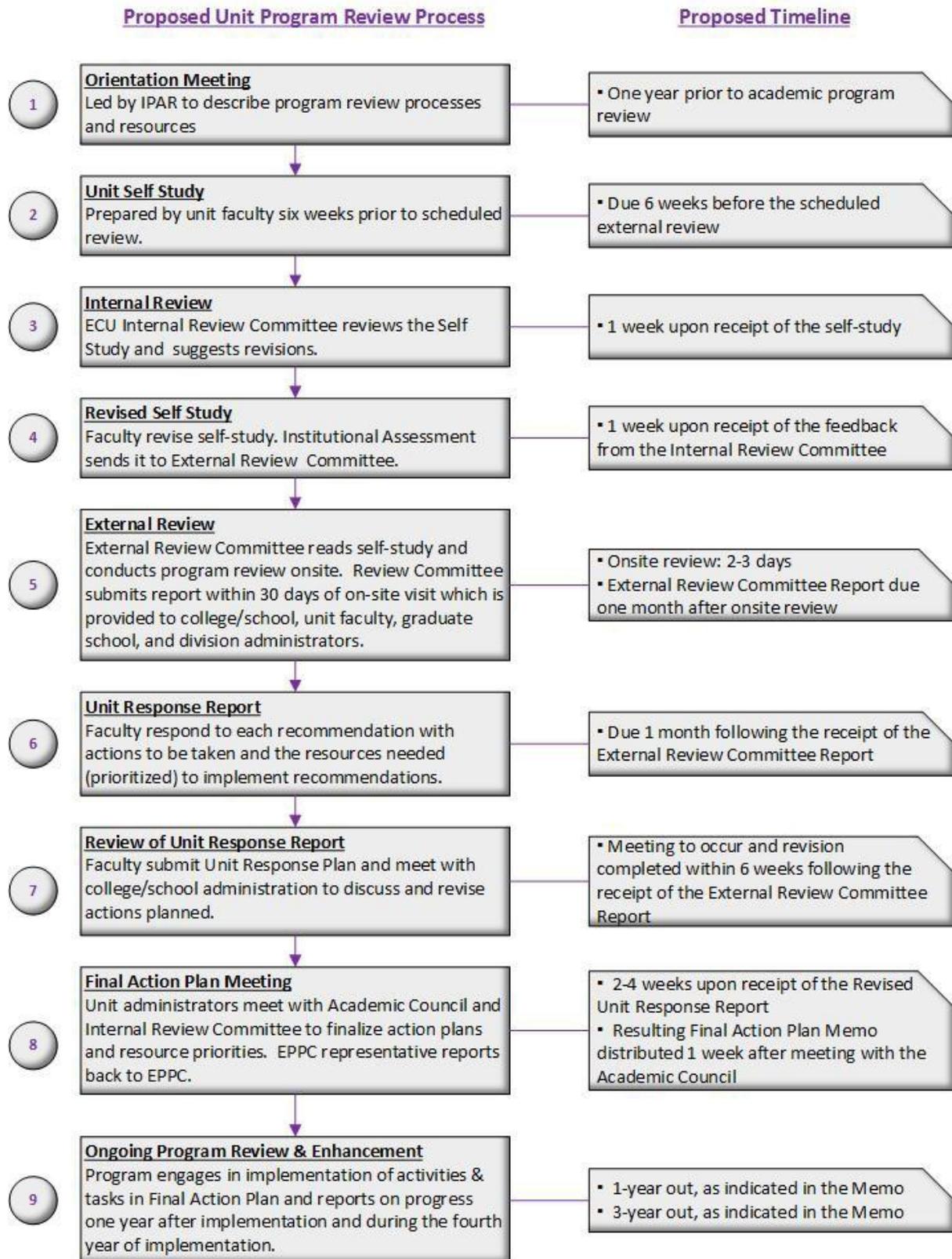
Academic program review focuses on program improvement, which is based on three products: 1) an internal self-study of the program by its faculty, 2) an on-site review conducted by an External Review Committee, and 3) a final action plan produced by faculty and supported by the Dean and the Academic Council. The Director of Institutional Assessment serves as the **Coordinator** of ECU's Program Review Processes.

The major steps in planning and conducting a formal review are outlined below:

1. Orientation to Academic Program Review
  - a. One year prior to the scheduled academic program review, unit faculty attend an orientation led by the Coordinator to go through the review processes and resources.
  - b. The unit faculty consult with the chair and select possible dates for the on-site review and propose names of external and internal reviewers.
  - c. External reviewers must be faculty from ECU's official institutions who are familiar with the discipline; internal reviewers are ECU faculty from a related campus-based discipline (see Appendix B and C for resources)
  - d. The Coordinator, in consultation with the Internal Review Committee, selects two external and one internal reviewer and invites them to serve on the upcoming External Review Committee. The Coordinator works with the unit chair and/or the unit undergraduate program coordinator and the unit graduate program coordinator to develop the 2-3 day itinerary for the on-site review meetings, which include meetings of the External Review Committee with the unit administrators, faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, college/school administrators, university and community constituents, dean of the Graduate School, and members of the Academic Council.
2. Unit Self-Study: The unit faculty prepares a Self-Study according to the guidelines provided on pages 7-10. Unless otherwise codified by either the program's faculty coordinating committee or the unit code, the unit undergraduate program coordinator, the unit graduate program coordinator, and/or unit chair coordinate the preparation of the Self-Study, but it is important to have broad-based input from the faculty. An electronic copy should be sent to the Coordinator for distribution to the Internal Review Committee six weeks before the on-site review.
3. Internal Review: the Internal Review Committee reviews the self-study for **accuracy, clarity, consistency, and completeness**. The Coordinator chairs the Internal Review Committee; members include the dean of the home college of the program(s) under review, a representative of the Educational Policies and Programs Committee (EPPC) of the Faculty Senate, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
4. Revision of Self-Study: Unit faculty revise the Self-Study based on input from the Internal Review Committee. The Coordinator distributes the revised Self-Study and supporting documents to the External Review Committee (one month prior to on-site review).

5. External Review: The External Review Committee conducts its review of the undergraduate and graduate programs. A summary of major findings is given to the Unit, Dean, and the Academic Council on the second day of the review. Within 30 days of the completion of the on-site review, the External Review Committee sends an electronic copy and a signed hard copy of the final Review Committee Report to the Coordinator, who will distribute to the Unit, the Internal Review Committee, and the Academic Council.
6. Unit Response Report: In a Unit Response Report, faculty respond to each of the recommendations in the Review Committee Report, describing actions they will/will not take to implement the recommendations, who is responsible for the actions, and when they will occur. Faculty also prioritize the resource needs that emerge from the recommendations.
7. Review of Unit Response Report: Unit and college administrators meet to review the Unit Response Report and discuss the unit's top priorities, needs that can be addressed at the college level, and issues for discussion with the Academic Council. After this meeting, the unit faculty revise the Unit Response Report to reflect actions to be taken by the department, college/school, and those needed institutional support.
8. Final Action Plan with the Academic Council: Academic Council leads Action Plan meeting with unit administrators and Internal Review Committee. In this meeting, the unit chair summarizes the program faculty's responses and action plan; the college/school dean summarizes actions to be taken by the college/school; and the Academic Council provides further recommendations on the actions planned. The Coordinator records major decisions made at the meeting, to include revisions made or new actions added to the Unit Response Report. The Coordinator distributes the major decisions in form of a memorandum to unit faculty, Dean, the Internal Review Committee and the Academic Council. All program review related documentations is maintained by the Office of Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Research. The EPPC representative and the unit administrator report back to EPPC, which in turn makes a recommendation on the unit's final action plan.
9. Ongoing Program Review and Enhancement: The unit faculty and/or the unit chair report on progress one year after implementation of the action plan and during the third year of implementation.

The following is a flowchart and timeline for the Academic Program Review process.



### III. Roles of University Participants

#### Unit Faculty

1. Collaborate in writing the Self-Study, analyzing data, and reflecting on the strengths and weakness of the program
2. Revise the Self-Study after internal review
3. Propose names of internal and external reviewers and participate in onsite review
4. Address each recommendation in the External Review Report and develop Unit Response Report with an action plan
5. Working with the Dean and the Academic Council to refine and finalize the action plan, implement the plan, and report progress 1 year out and 3 years out

#### Dean of the College or School Having the Program Reviewed

1. Participates in the initial planning meeting for the program review
2. Serves on the Internal Review Committee
3. During on-site review
  - Participates in dinner meeting with the External Review Committee
  - Participates in faculty/staff debriefing with External Review Committee
  - Participates in Exit Meeting with External Review Committee and Academic Council
4. Conducts meeting of college/school and department leaders to revise Unit Response Report to identify actions to be taken at the college level
5. Participates in Final Action Plan meeting with Academic Council

#### Internal Review Committee

1. Includes the following people:
  - a. Director of Institutional Assessment, chair
  - b. Dean of the college
  - c. Dean of the graduate school
  - d. Educational Policies and Planning Committee (EPPC) Rep
2. Selects the External Review Committee members
3. Reviews the Self-Study and appendices for accuracy, clarity, consistency, and completeness
4. Meets with unit faculty and Academic Council to finalize action plans and resource priorities

#### External Review Committee

1. Reviews the Self-Study prior to arrival on campus
2. Meets with department faculty, staff, students, and other constituencies
3. Prepares a written report within 30 days of the on-site visit which is then shared with the college/school, unit faculty, graduate school, and division administrators

#### The Academic Council

1. Meets with External Review Committee on the first day of the on-site review to give the formal charge and on the second day to review major findings
2. Leads the final Action Plan meeting that includes the Internal Review Committee

#### The Educational Policies and Planning Committee (EPPC) Representative

1. Serves on the Internal Review Committee
2. Reports back to EPPC on the adequacy of the Unit Response Plan regarding each recommendation
3. Reports final EPPC recommendation decision to the Coordinator

#### Institutional Research

1. Maintains program review data package
2. Meets with department and faculty to review data and resources
3. Serves on the Internal Review Committee, as needed

#### Director, Institutional Assessment and/or Designee

1. Coordinates the review process, establishes the review schedule and facilitates all logistical arrangements
2. Chairs the Internal Review Committee
3. Receives and distributes all documents
4. Records the Final Action Plan and monitors the one-year and three-year progress reports
5. Provides a repository for self-studies, external review reports, unit response plans, final action plan memoranda, and progress reports

#### **IV. Components of the Self Study (Limit to 50 pages, excluding appendixes)**

**Executive Summary (3-5 pages):** Based on the information presented in the self-study, prepare an executive summary describing:

- a) the overall quality of each degree/certificate that has been reviewed and the indicators you used to assess the quality;
- b) strengths and weaknesses of the department (e.g., how effectively do faculty contribute to teaching, research and service mission of the department and its programs? How effective are the support staff?);
- c) major findings that resulted from the self-study; and
- d) significant actions or changes that have been planned as a result of the self-study.

##### **1. Program Purpose**

For each degree/certificate program without specialized accreditation in the department/school:

- 1.1 Provide a clear and concise statement of the program's purpose.
- 1.2 Describe how the program's purpose aligns to the University's mission and strategic initiatives.
- 1.3 Articulate specific and unique features of the program that distinguish it from others.
- 1.4 Describe the external factors that impact the program's enrollment and market demand of its graduates based on statewide, national and/or professional studies (e.g., enrollment growth or decline of major competitors as reported by IPEDS, market demand as determined by Bureau of Labor Statistics or NC Department of Commerce occupation projections, market forecast by professional organizations, etc. See APR Resources for potential data sources).

##### **2. Enrollment, Degrees and Student Success**

IPAR has provided an Institutional Data Package for each degree/certificate program without specialized accreditation. Review the data, collect additional data/information, and respond to the following questions for each program. NOTE: Departments will need to collect additional data on job placement and licensure exam pass rates.

###### **Enrollment and Degrees Analysis**

- 2.1 Describe the program's enrollment trend over the last seven years to include:
  - headcount enrollment (FT/PT ratio),
  - student diversity,
  - characteristics of incoming graduate students (in terms of undergraduate GPAs, admission test scores, number of complete applications, selectivity, and yield rates), and
  - characteristics of undergraduate majors (in terms of high school GPAs, SAT/ACT scores, and undergraduate GPAs).
- 2.2 Describe the trend regarding the number of degrees conferred each year.

- 2.3 For graduate programs, describe the trend regarding completion rates (3 and 5 years for master's; 7 and 10 years for doctoral programs) and time-to-degree of the students. What actions have been taken to improve degree completion and time-to-degree?
- 2.4 Regarding the program size, is there a justification for expansion or contraction? What actions have been taken that implement the University's/College's strategic initiatives regarding enrollment management?

#### **Student Success**

- 2.5 What is the 3-year trend regarding D/F/W rates in 1000- and 2000-level courses? Where appropriate, how do the D/F/W rates in face-to-face courses compare to those in online courses? What has the program done to address the courses with high D/F/W rates?
- 2.6 What is the job placement rate of the graduates? Does it meet faculty expectations?
- 2.7 If applicable, what is the licensure pass rate of the graduates? Does it meet faculty expectations?
- 2.8 What actions has the program taken over the past seven years to improve student success?

#### **Action Plans**

- 2.9 What actions does the program plan to take in the next seven years to increase enrollment and student success? What resources are needed?

### **3. Curriculum, Learning Outcomes and Student Satisfaction:**

Provide an interpretation of assessment findings and other relevant data about the curriculum and quality of student learning in each program being reviewed. Focus on interpretation of data, use of results, and program improvements.

#### **Curriculum Analysis**

To support this section, a link to the degree requirements as published in the Catalog should be provided. Also include in the Appendix an updated curriculum map from TracDat that illustrates alignment of student learning outcomes to courses in the curriculum.

- 3.1 Based on degree requirements and the updated curriculum map, describe how course sequences, including prerequisites, are used to introduce and reinforce student learning prior to students being assessed.
- 3.2 Describe the process the program uses to ensure the curriculum is up-to-date. Describe any innovative approaches in the curriculum.

#### **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

To support this section, review program assessment reports from TracDat as well as other relevant data obtained since the last program review.

- 3.3 Based on learning outcomes assessment reports/data, what are the identified strengths and weaknesses in student learning outcomes?
- 3.4 Where applicable, are there any significant differences in student outcomes in face-to-face and online programs?

- 3.5 What decisions have been made and what changes have been instituted on the basis of on-going assessments (e.g., curricular or pedagogical changes, faculty, instructional facilities, student support, funding priorities, the assessment procedure – including objectives and outcomes and methods of gathering and analyzing data, etc.)?
- 3.6 How effective were the changes?

### **Student Satisfaction**

To support this section, review the student survey data such as the Graduating Senior Survey and Graduate Student Exit Survey, and program-level employer/alumni surveys.

- 3.7 How satisfied are graduating students with the program?
- 3.8 How do graduating students/alumni evaluate the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the program?
- 3.9 How do employers evaluate the graduates' knowledge and skills?
- 3.10 What actions has the program taken to improve student support, services, and satisfaction?

### **Action Plans**

- 3.11 Are there new curricular and pedagogical changes that the program plans to implement in the next seven years to improve student learning?
- 3.12 What will the program do to improve students' educational experience and overall satisfaction?
- 3.13 Describe any additional resources needed to implement those changes.

## **4. Strength of Faculty: Teaching, Research and Scholarship**

To support this section, include faculty bio sketches in Appendix (1-2 pages per faculty, template available through Sedona).

### **Faculty Resources**

Review department faculty data provided by IPAR and respond to the following:

- 4.1 Faculty Profile: describe the current faculty affiliated with the department (e.g., percent full-versus part-time, diversity, percent with terminal degree, tenure status, etc.).
- 4.2 Faculty Resources: Does the department have the number and type of faculty to achieve its goals?
- 4.3 What actions has the department taken to recruit and retain highly qualified, diverse faculty?

### **Analysis of Teaching**

- 4.4 Describe the trend in student credit hour production in the department over the past seven years, for both Distance Education and campus courses, highlighting the department's contribution to the Foundations Curriculum and other degree programs. Consider the trend of average credit hour production per instructional faculty FTE.
- 4.5 Based on the Delaware Study data, what is the general teaching load of the department faculty? What has the department done to adjust faculty teaching load?
- 4.6 Describe the direct contributions (course sections taught) and indirect contributions (grading, tutoring, etc.) of graduate teaching assistants to the department's teaching mission?

- 4.7 What are the major achievements of department faculty regarding teaching? What has the department done to support faculty teaching?

**Analysis of Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities**

- 4.8 What are the major achievements of the faculty regarding research, scholarship (including scholarship of engagement) and creative activities as documented in Sedona and/or RAMSeS?
- 4.9 What are the relative strengths and weaknesses as compared to departments at peer institutions or major competitors? When available, use Academic Analytics to demonstrate strengths and weakness. The department will need to collect additional data from comparable programs at ECU official peers or major competitors.
- 4.10 What has the department done to support faculty research, scholarship and creative activities?

**Analysis of Service and Outreach activities**

- 4.11 What major service and outreach initiatives have the faculty engaged in? What has the department done to support faculty service/outreach activities?

**Action Plans:**

- 4.12 What does the department plan to do to support the teaching, research and service activities of faculty? What resources will it need?

**5. Regional Transformation – Economic Development/Public Service**

- 5.1 Provide a summary of major activities the department faculty and students have participated in to support regional transformation over the last seven years.
- 5.2 What does the department plan to do to support regional transformation? What resources will it need?

**6. Resources**

- 6.1 Based on analysis of the operating budget and revenue sources supporting the department as well as annual expenditures, discuss the adequacy of the resources provided and required for maintaining program quality.
- 6.2 Describe the quality, scope, and projected needs for space to support the program.

**7. Other Operational or Programmatic Outcomes**

- 7.1 Describe other assessed outcomes that enable the program/department to achieve its objectives, e.g., academic advising, graduate student support, operational efficiency, structural re-organization, etc. Summarize strengths and weaknesses identified in the assessment and actions taken to improve these outcomes.
- 7.2 Action Plans: What does the department plan to do to improve these outcomes? What resources will it need?

**Signature Page** (embedded hyperlink to signature page)

## **Appendix A**

### **Institutional Data Package for Program Review**

There are three parts to this document: (1) a list of data elements for each undergraduate program and graduate program under review; (2) a list of data elements for faculty affiliated with the department; and (3) a list of ECU and external resources for additional data that may be used in program reviews.

#### **Undergraduate Programs**

- Unduplicated headcount in each program
  - Fall & spring terms, seven years of data broken out by new freshmen, new transfers, continuing, returning, & unclassified students
  - Fall-to-fall percent change in unduplicated headcount, seven years
- Student profile in each program
  - For students enrolled in fall term each of last seven years with declared major in program: by gender, age ranges (as reported in Factbook), IPEDS race/ethnicity category, and regional distribution
  - For each spring & fall term (last seven years, all declared majors in a program), mean, median, & mode for Cumulative GPA, High school GPA, SAT and ACT
- Number of degrees awarded annually in each program, last seven years as reported to IPEDS, total & broken out by race/ethnicity and gender
- Course grades distribution: Percentage of A (A,A-); B (B+,B,B-); C (C+,C,C-); D (D+,D,D-), F, I, N/A, and W grades for each 1000- and 2000-level course offered by the program over the past three years (fall and spring terms) with total course enrollment. An indicator will be included to distinguish online from face-to-face courses. (Note: Grade data will not include any grade changes made more than 30 days after the end of a term.)

#### **Graduate Programs**

- Admissions Data of last seven years
  - By academic year, number of students applied, admitted, and enrolled in a program with calculated acceptance rates and enrollment yields
  - By academic year, average undergraduate GPA's and admission test scores of students applied, admitted, and enrolled
- Unduplicated headcount in each program
  - Fall & spring terms, seven years of data broken out by new students, new transfers, continuing, returning, & unclassified students
  - Fall-to-fall percent change in unduplicated headcount, seven years
- Student profile in each program
  - For students enrolled in fall term each of last seven years with declared major in program, by gender, age ranges (as reported in Factbook), IPEDS race/ethnicity category, and regional distribution
- Number of degrees awarded annually in each program, last seven years as reported to IPEDS, total & broken out by race/ethnicity and gender

## Faculty

- Faculty roster—list of all persons coded as faculty affiliated with unit (department) under review from ECU’s Personnel Data File for most recent fall term (both full- and part-time) with rank, highest degree earned, and whether have terminal degree for discipline.
- Faculty profile—aggregate data for all faculty affiliated with a department for most recent fall term (full- versus part-time, tenure status, gender, race/ethnicity)
- Student credit hour production in each department (by term, last seven years, both DE and non-DE)

## Resources

### ECU Resources

- Sedona ([http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/ofe/evaluation\\_sedona.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/ofe/evaluation_sedona.cfm))
- RamSes (<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/osp/RAMSeS.cfm>)
- ECU graduate-level time-to-degree and completion rate data (ecuBIC report, contact the Graduate School)
- Space Utilization Report (produced by IPAR upon request)

Consult the IPAR *Program Review Data Resources How-to Guide* for information on what can be found in, and how to use, the additional IPAR and external resources.

### Additional IPAR Resources

- ECU data for the Delaware Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity (<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/ipar/research/DelawareStudy.cfm>)
- ECU’s Official Peers <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/ipar/customcf/DL/Peers/ECUPeers.pdf>
- ECU Student Achievement Metrics <http://www2.ecu.edu/sacs/StudentAchievementMetrics.pdf>

### External Resources

- IPEDS Data Center (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>)
- NC Tower (<http://nctower.com/>)
- United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://www.bls.gov/>)
- North Carolina Department of Labor (<http://www.nclabor.com/>)

## **Appendix B**

### **Selecting the External Review Team**

An important task is for the unit to develop a list of five potential external reviewers and two to three internal reviewers. These external reviewers are to be nominated from institutions identified as official peers of East Carolina University and should be professionally prominent individuals, usually nationally recognized in their field. The potential internal reviewers are ECU faculty from a related campus-based discipline. The unit should contact potential reviewers to ascertain availability and interest before nominating them and forwarding the list to the Coordinator.

The list of potential reviewers is submitted to the Coordinator via a memorandum that contains the following information (see Appendix C for template):

- Name of university
- Complete job title/rank and name of a reviewer's unit
- Primary area of scholarly activity (related to unit being reviewed)
- Contact information (full mailing address, e-mail, and telephone number)

Nominees from the list provided by the unit will be discussed by the Internal Review Committee and the official team members will be selected according to the following criteria:

- Two reviewers external to East Carolina University.
- One internal reviewer from a related campus-based discipline.
- External reviewers must be part of a program that is recognized for excellence in the discipline and able to benchmark the unit's programs based on discipline-specific rankings and other publically available comparisons.
- External Review Committee is a diverse group with experience in both undergraduate and graduate programs as well as with the appropriate teaching, research and service components of the discipline.
- Reviewers must affirm that there exists no conflict of interest related to the unit under review.

**Appendix C**  
**Charges to the External Team**

**East Carolina University**  
**Academic Program Review**

**Charge to the External Review Committee**  
**Unit Name**

The purpose of Academic Program Review (APR) at East Carolina University is to engage faculty in a reflective process of thoughtful study and evaluation of program quality and alignment to East Carolina University's value, mission, and commitments in support of our students and the region. Program review is an integral part of the university's on-going assessment and strategic planning processes designed to enhance the quality of all educational programs and we sincerely thank you for assisting us. This letter provides you with the charge to the external review team.

**External Review Committee Charge**

Please make an objective evaluation of the unit's efficiency and effectiveness in achieving its programs' purpose, and make recommendations that will help in planning improvements. Your resources are a Self-Study report prepared by the unit, copies of the Final Action Plan and Progress Reports from the previous review (if applicable), information you gain through interactions while onsite at ECU, and any additional information requested by you. Within the broad charge of recommending ways that the unit can continue to improve, here are some overarching questions that we would like you to address:

- Based on the information/data provided in the Self-Study or gathered by the external review committee, what are the unit's overall strengths and weaknesses?
- What major improvements (including student learning and faculty development) has the unit made since the previous program review or within the last seven years?
- What is the professional benchmark and how does this program compare?
- What specific recommendations could improve the unit's performance?
- In addition, you may be asked to focus on program-specific questions during your on-site review of the program.

We look forward to meeting you during your time on campus. If you have any questions or require additional information prior to your visit, contact Dr. Susan Beck-Frazier, Director of Institutional Assessment and Coordinator of Program Reviews at [beckfraziers@ecu.edu](mailto:beckfraziers@ecu.edu) or Ms. Barbara Little, Executive Assistance IPAR at [littleb@ecu.edu](mailto:littleb@ecu.edu). Thank you.