Eight-year Program Review at the University of Connecticut

SELF-STUDY DOCUMENT

The cornerstone of the Program Review Process is a careful and thoughtful self-study of the faculty associated with the unit being reviewed. Such a review must extend beyond the description of the current status and operations of the unit to an analysis that is evaluative, diagnostic and prescriptive. The committee is interested in a self-study focusing on strengths, weaknesses and strategies for change and/or improvements and enhancement of quality. The objective of the review is to assist faculty in charting future directions and identifying appropriate performance objectives, and the ultimate goal is to guide the allocation of resources to those efforts that will most enhance the quality of the University's academic operations.

The focus of the Self-Study should be on answering these questions:
1) Who Are We?
2) What Are We Currently Doing?
3) What Are Our Goals, and How Do We Know Whether We Are Achieving Them?
4) What Can We Do to Improve our Program in the Future?

Format of Self-Study document

- Your report should be single spaced, formatted for standard (8.5" x 11") paper with one-inch margins, and the font size no smaller than 11.
- The report should include information on no more than the past 8 years, and should be a maximum of 25 pages in length, not including appendices for supporting data.
- The report should not include any unsolicited letters or appendices with grant proposals, reprints of publications, etc.

The outline and sections described below are intended as a *suggested framework* for your unit's self-study. It may not be detailed enough in some areas, while it may ask for information in other areas that does not apply to your unit. Your unit's Dean or Director may also request a focused framework or series of questions for the self-study. Answer each of the questions, as appropriate, in the context of your unit's Program Review Baseline Data (provided by OIR), which you should attach as Appendix I. In your responses, please be interpretive rather than duplicative and refer to supporting documents whenever possible. If possible, make comparisons between the unit's previous self-study and the current document.

Prior to the submission of the self-study document, the Program and Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) will both select three to four external reviewers, who will review the self-study and provide feedback. OIE will contact the reviewers, securing approximately three letters. After the letters have been received, they will be shared with the unit, the Dean/Director, and the University Program Review Committee. The Program Review Committee will review the entire dossier, providing a formal recommendation to the Provost. The Provost will provide periodic updates to the Board of Trustees. If significant challenges are identified, the Dean, Program Review Committee, or Provost may request an external team visit and review the department.

Executive Summary (2 pages max)

Highlight the most salient points of this self-study. Place particular emphasis on new directions and remediation of existing problems.

A. Unit Description, Mission, Goals, and Recent History (2-3 pages)

1) Describe briefly (with summary tables):
   a) the profile of full-time and part-time faculty, including adjuncts and graduate assistants in the teaching programs of the unit. Clarify the primary campus appointment of each instructor.
   b) the instructional offerings associated with the unit, including graduate and undergraduate degrees and certificates.
   c) the areas of scholarly productivity and creative performance associated with the unit.
   d) the outreach, service, public engagement, and clinical activities of the unit.
2) Describe the process for reviewing the unit's strategic plan and assessing its achievements and goals.
3) What peer units at other universities provide targets of aspiration for this unit?

B. Scholarly Productivity and Creative Performance (2-4 pages)

1) Include a list of intellectual contributions in an Appendix, covering the period of the self-study. Also present a summary table of intellectual contributions by individual faculty (e.g., columns with faculty names, and rows of counts of papers, patents, grants, etc., as appropriate – this can be created using HuskyDM taking the important items from PAR for the self-study duration).
2) Evaluate the level of scholarly activity in the unit. Address the quality and quantity of the unit's publications, keynote addresses and presentations at academic and/or professional forums, and performances, as appropriate.
3) Evaluate the level of internal and external (including collaborative) funding for research, performance, or creative activity in the unit. Is the unit competing effectively for external support?
4) Describe any significant research interactions with external entities (public or private) developed by the unit. What have been the benefits of these interactions and the drawbacks, if any? How do they contribute to the unit's research goals?
5) To the extent data is available, briefly describe how the research, performance, or creative activity in your unit compares nationally with respect to these activities.
6) Indicate what the unit does to encourage and develop research, performance, or creative activity?
7) Describe and evaluate the unit's participation, leadership, and influence in the academic profession through such avenues as professional associations, review panels, advisory groups, and service to the University (at all levels).
8) Describe the unit's potential for responding to changing directions and new external opportunities. What indicators show the level of morale, commitment, and sense of continuing self-improvement of the unit?

C. Undergraduate Programs (2-4 pages) (If pertinent)

1) Show summary table of enrollments and credit hours by major, campus, etc. over the course of the self-study, as appropriate.
2) What proportion of these courses are taught by full-time faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students? How is the quality of general education instruction assessed? Where graduate assistants have a primary instructional role, how are they supervised?
3) With respect to the undergraduate major(s) curriculum and courses:
    a. How does the undergraduate major reflect the goals of the academic program? What evidence is available to compare the curriculum with that of similar programs nationally? Does an accrediting body prescribe any portion of the curriculum? If so, how?
    b. How are courses in the undergraduate major(s) coordinated? How do the courses in the major contribute to its student learning outcomes?
    c. What specific efforts are made to incorporate new knowledge and perspectives into the curriculum? What efforts are made to involve students actively in their learning through internships, research projects, seminars, independent study, studio courses, etc.? Describe any innovations added to instructional programs since the last review.
4) Concerning the undergraduate major cohort:
    a. Explain any significant changes in the undergraduate major enrollment and in degrees granted since the last review. What are the implications of the average lengths of time required for degree completion? What are the retention rates for the undergraduate majors? What efforts are underway to improve performance in these areas?
    b. What indicators does the unit utilize to monitor the success of its graduates? How does the quality of these graduates compare with student quality in this field nationwide? Describe any honors or awards received by the unit's graduates.
    c. Comment on the quality of the unit's efforts to attract, support, and graduate traditionally underrepresented groups. How does the proportion of degrees granted to underrepresented gender and minorities compare to the university as a whole and to the field nationwide? What specific plans and programs does the unit have in place for increasing the proportion of graduates from traditionally underrepresented groups? Include measures taken to provide special advice and support for such students while enrolled.
    d. What is the unit doing to serve nontraditional and part-time undergraduate students?
    e. Describe the process and structure of the undergraduate advising in the unit. What is the quality of advising for undergraduate majors? How has the advising process been evaluated?
5) Where are program graduates placed, or what do they do after graduation? How do graduates of the program view their experience, and how are their views solicited? What program modifications do these views suggest?

D. Graduate Programs (2-4 pages) (If pertinent)

Address each of the following topics for both the master's and doctoral levels, as appropriate for the graduate degrees offered.

1) Show summary table of enrollments by specialization, campus, etc., as appropriate.

2) Overview of the graduate program(s):
   a. Describe, in general terms, the graduate program(s) offered by the unit. How do the graduate programs reflect the basic goals of the academic program?
   b. What evidence is available concerning the quality of the unit's graduate program(s)? How is this information used to strengthen the graduate program(s)? Describe, in particular, extramural awards and grants for the purpose of graduate education, either to individual students or to the program.
   c. What changes in the program(s) have occurred since the last review? What changes (especially innovations) are now underway?

3) With respect to the graduate curriculum and courses:
   a. What evidence is there of sufficient offerings and balance among the unit's various specialties? Is there sufficient breadth of course offerings and sufficient depth for specialization? How are the courses in the graduate program coordinated? What plans are underway to modify the graduate curriculum in light of available information?
   b. What evidence is there of whether the courses meet student needs?
   c. In what ways besides individual thesis or dissertation research are students involved actively in their learning; for example, through internships, practica, and/or graduate assistantships?
   d. Do students have adequate resources to carry out their studies (e.g., library, office and lab space, supplies, equipment, travel, photocopying, etc.)?

4) Concerning the graduate student cohort:
   a. Assess the quality of the graduate student cohort, based on collective GRE/GMAT or other test scores, collective grade point averages, or other admissions criteria. How does the quality of students in the graduate program compare with student quality in other similar programs? How does the quality of current students compare to the students in the program since the last review? Base the answer on objective and anecdotal data.
   b. What is the current gender and race/ethnicity composition of the graduate student cohort? How do these figures compare with those for undergraduates within the unit and for similar graduate programs at other peer and aspirational schools? What efforts are underway to attract and retain well qualified students from underrepresented groups? What mechanisms are used to support these students?
   c. What is the current composition of the graduate student cohort with respect to geographic origin? How do these figures compare with figures for similar graduate programs at other peer and aspirational schools?
   d. What mechanisms are used to recruit students? Is the program competing well for top students?
   e. Are stipend levels adequate? Is stipend availability adequate? In addressing this, consider how many of the total number of graduate students have a teaching or research assistantship (both full and half). Also address other forms of support available to graduate students (i.e., pre-doctoral fellowships). What sources and amount of funding is available for summer support?
   f. What is the nature and quality of the advising for graduate students and how has advising been assessed? What is the average ratio of student/faculty during thesis and/or dissertation supervision?

g. What are the retention rates in the graduate program for both master's and doctoral students? What is the average time to degree completion? How do these figures compare with those from the last review?

h. Explain any significant changes in graduate student enrollment and in degrees granted since the last review. How do these figures compare to peer programs? What efforts are underway to improve performance in these areas?

i. Explain any doctoral programs that meet or are approaching the UConn Academic Plan's Sunset Policy. The Plan's sunset criteria (for doctoral programs in existence for at least six years) are the following: Annual entering cohort of students two or fewer (average of two or fewer over three years); Annual total enrollment six or fewer (average over last three consecutive years); No doctoral degree awarded in the last three consecutive years or less than a total of five doctoral degrees awarded in the last five years.

5) Describe the extent to which this unit interacts programmatically with other units (both within and without the university) at the graduate level. Cite other units where students frequently take coursework or other program options in your unit. List courses in your unit that are frequently taken by students within other graduate degree programs.

6) Provide a list of all graduate students from the last three to eight years and indicate to the extent possible where they have been placed. How do graduates of the program view their experience, and how are their views solicited? What program modifications do these views suggest?

E. Student Outcomes Assessment (2-3 pages)

Answer the following questions for both the undergraduate and graduate cohorts, as appropriate:

1) Referring to the Learning Outcomes document, describe what the graduates of the program should know and be able to do when they leave the university, and how the unit measures or otherwise assesses actual student achievement.

2) Specify how student outcomes are aligned with the mission and goals of the unit, the college (if appropriate), and the university.

3) Describe measures of student learning used in the program.

4) How do you use assessment of student learning outcomes to make curricular offerings more effective at meeting the goals set for the students? How has it been used in formulating the unit's strategic plan?

5) How will the results of the student outcomes assessment be incorporated in strategic planning and curricular review process?

F. Outreach and Public Service (1-2 pages)

In this self-report, please describe your outreach and public service, specifically referring to educational efforts, leadership, and sharing of knowledge off-campus, for example in the local community and throughout the state and beyond.

1) Describe the nature of academic outreach and public service activities in the unit.

2) How do these activities reflect the goals of the university Academic Plan, and the particular needs of the state and region? What evidence is available to document the quality and effects of these activities?
3) Are students involved in activities that are outreach related, and are these activities aligned with the Academic Plan?

G. Collaboration with Other Units (1-2 pages, as appropriate)

1) What are the other departments, schools/colleges, and centers with which the members of the unit collaborate most frequently? Describe the nature of those efforts and an assessment of successes and disappointments.
2) In what ways (if any) do disciplinary or unit boundaries inhibit or enhance the ability of the unit to develop new approaches to research, grant competitions, teaching, or service?
3) Under ideal circumstances, what kinds of collaborations (e.g., research and teaching, grants, alumni programs) with other units would be desirable?
4) What opportunities are there for conducting interdisciplinary research projects with other units on campus or with other universities or agencies? How successful is the unit in accommodating these needs? How desirable are these kinds of interdisciplinary relationships?
5) Does the unit have any interdisciplinary academic programs? How are these aligned with the goals of the university's Academic Plan?

H. University-wide Support and Facilities Services (1-2 pages, as appropriate)

1) Describe and appraise the current institutional support services and facilities for the unit's:
   a. teaching programs;
   b. research, creative production, or other scholarly activities;
   c. recruiting of students, faculty, and staff;
   d. outreach, including professional and community service;
   e. administration.
2) Has the unit engaged in any entrepreneurial activities, through grants or fundraising, to augment institutional support?

I. Conclusions and Future Directions (1-2 pages, as appropriate)

1) Summarize the major strengths and weaknesses of the unit and the problems it faces in the foreseeable future.
2) The quality of an academic unit can be assessed in many ways. In terms of the three criteria below, describe the overall quality of the unit.
   a. Resource criteria (e.g., student selectivity or demand; faculty prestige, training, and teaching loads; grants and contracts; library; equipment; and support staff).
   b. Reputational criteria (e.g., national or international ranking, or other judgments of the program's students, faculty, resources, and productivity).
   c. Outcomes criteria (e.g., faculty scholarly productivity, awards and honors, research contributions, teaching performance, service to state and nation; student gains in knowledge, students' professional achievements, personal placement/or career development, program alumni opinion).

3) In what areas has the unit improved or changed since the last review? Describe the evidence used to support the conclusions.
4) Describe new directions in curriculum, resources, research, reorganization, staffing or student clientele planned for the next few years aimed at strengthening the unit, in conjunction with your strategic plan.
5) What plans are underway to capitalize on individual faculty strengths and to overcome weaknesses?
6) Are there new ways that the unit can enhance programs for undergraduate and graduate students, for research, service, and University operations?

Appendices:

Provided by OIR:

1) Program Review Baseline Data;
2) Faculty intellectual contributions from HuskyDM (PAR Department Summary format – delete rows that are not relevant);

Provided by Program/Department:

1) List the names and titles of the faculty and professional staff of the unit.
2) Department CVs, including publications
3) External Grants and Awards
4) Intramural Support
5) Peers/Aspirants: Data from NRC or other appropriate ranking
6) Online SET Department Summary Reports
7) Awards and recognitions to faculty/graduates/undergraduates, if available