# EXTERNAL REVIEWER GUIDELINES AND REPORT TEMPLATE

Thank you for agreeing to serve as an off-site external evaluator of the degree programs and/or stand- alone certificates for an academic unit at Louisiana State University (LSU). Your external review will provide useful feedback to the Institutional Effectiveness Council, an internal faculty panel, the provost, the dean, and the unit’s chair/director, thus helping to improve the quality of our programs in teaching, research, and service.

As an external reviewer, you will receive the unit’s self-study report and accompanying materials, including the following:

* + Action Plan from the previous Program Review;
	+ Organizational Chart;
	+ Strategic Planning – current unit strategic plan and three most recent three most recent planning cycles.
	+ Assessment of Student Learning – current assessment plan for each program, Program Impact Reports (PIRs) completed since the previous program review, and curriculum map, if applicable;
	+ General Education/ILC assessment reports for the last three years; and
	+ Any other information, as determined by the unit.

In reviewing and evaluating the self-study materials, you are also encouraged to review material presented on the departmental and college webpages. Attached to this document is an outline for your review. Please include the major categories in your report and address the specific questions, as appropriate, within each category. If you identify other issues or concerns during your review, please note those in the corresponding categories or as a separate entry.

Your review includes a mandatory online (e.g., Zoom) meeting with the department chair, which OIE will facilitate. In addition, the Dean may request a meeting, which OIE will coordinate, if requested. At your discretion and upon your request, online meetings with faculty, staff, and/or students may also be scheduled to assist with the review. Finally, upon the request of the internal review panel, an online meeting may be scheduled to discuss your report and/or any other questions regarding discipline-specific concerns.

For any questions or if additional information is needed to provide an effective and meaningful review, please contact Tara Rose (trose@lsu.edu), Director of Assessment for Institutional Effectiveness.

EXTERNAL REVIEW FOR EVALUATION OF AN ACADEMIC UNIT

Unit Name College/School Program Review

Academic Year (example: 2022 – 2023)

Date of Report Submission

**Prepared by: (Name, Institution) Date of Submission:**

**External Reviewer’s Summary** – Please provide a short (one-page) statement that identifies the major strengths and challenges for the unit’s teaching, research, and service programs.

# Major Categories for the Evaluation:

**PREVIOUS PROGRAM REVIEW ACTIONS**

* Did the unit indicate how the recommendations from the last Action Plan (formerly Memorandum of Agreement) were addressed?
* Did the unit provide evidence that it was successful in using the recommendations to make improvements?

# OVERVIEW OF THE ACADEMIC UNIT AND PROGRAM(S)

* Is the organizational structure of the academic unit appropriate and/or consistent with other similar academic units?
* For any significant changes identified since the last program, what impact have these changes had, or the potential to have, on the academic unit and program(s)?

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

* Does the unit’s strategic plan contribute to the goals of the [University Strategic Plan](https://www.lsu.edu/strategicplan/files/lsu_strategicplan_2025.pdf)?
* In reviewing the priorities identified in the unit’s strategic plan, are there additional priorities or opportunities for improvement that may be appropriate to consider?

# CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

* Do the assessment reports provide meaningful and useful analyses of student learning?
* If the unit offers online degree programs, does the unit provide evidence of assessing the student learning outcomes for the program? Are comparative analyses provided to examine the learning outcomes from the online program to its counterpart in the traditional face-to-face program?
* Has the unit used the annual assessment reports to improve its undergraduate and/or graduate program(s)?
* What suggestions can be offered to improve the assessment of student learning or the unit’s use of the assessment data?
* Does the unit provide general education courses? If so, does the unit provide evidence of assessing the student learning outcomes for the program? Are their opportunities to enhance assessment?
* Are there other curricula offerings that the unit should consider to pursue?
* What are any noteworthy innovations in teaching and learning that the unit has adopted?
* Should the unit consider initiating or expanding distance education courses or programs (distance education programs are those for which 50% or more of course work is delivered via distance)?

# FACULTY

* Are the faculty recognized by associations or societies for their contributions to their discipline(s)?
* Does the unit’s faculty receive recognition on campus (unit, college, university awards)?
* Does the unit have appropriate faculty to support its areas of specialization in the degree program(s) and research area(s)?
* Compared to other similar academic units, is the number and diversity of faculty consistent with, below expected, or better than expected?
* Has the unit been successful in replacing departed faculty or filling vacant faculty lines?
* Are faculty teaching loads and expectations appropriate in comparison to similar academic units?
* Are the approaches the unit has undertaken to assess teaching effectiveness appropriate and/or sufficient?

# STUDENTS

* Do students in the unit receive external and/or internal recognition from associations and/or societies?
* Are the unit’s efforts to support and enhance student advising adequate?
* Has the unit made progress in increasing student diversity in the undergraduate and/or graduate program(s)?
* Has the unit increased retention and graduation rates? Degrees awarded annually?
* Is enrollment sufficient to justify continued offering of the program(s)?
* If there are any anticipated changes in program size, are they justified?
* Based on undergraduate and/or graduate enrollment, which program(s) have capacity to increase enrollment and graduation rates?
* Is there an appropriate placement record for the program(s)? Is there a mechanism for tracking placement of graduates?

# RESEARCH

* For similar academic disciplines, is the number of publications per faculty member acceptable, below expectations, or outstanding?
* For similar academic disciplines, are the number of faculty grants and contracts awarded, and total restricted expenditures from sponsored programs (organized by source of funding) per year acceptable, below expectations, or outstanding?
* What suggestions can be offered for improving faculty productivity in terms to research and grants?
* Does the unit provide students with sufficient and/or appropriate research opportunities?

# OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

* Is the level of engagement similar to, below, or greater than that for units with similar academic programs?
* Is the level of partnerships similar to, below, or greater than that for units with similar academic programs?
* Has the unit developed new or expanded existing partnerships?
* Do the partnerships contribute to the mission/vision of the unit? Do they provide additional revenue streams to support the unit’s teaching and research?

# SUPPORTING RESOURCES

* Is the level of staff support sufficient for the size of the academic unit and program(s)?
* Are current facilities and capital equipment sufficient for program needs?
* Are the unit’s library resources adequate for meeting faculty and student needs?
* Are the unit’s technology resources adequate for supporting teaching and learning, research, and other needs?

# CURRENT OVERALL ANALYSIS

* Has the unit provided an analytical statement of the challenges and barriers experienced in the last five years?
* Has the unit identified meaningful and realistic actions to take to address the challenges and barriers?
* Are there other actions that the unit should consider in addressing the challenges and barriers?

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on your review and evaluation of the teaching, research, and service programs in the unit, provide specific recommendations that would improve these programs if adopted by the administration and faculty at LSU. Please consider and organize your recommendations into two broad categories: (1) Revenue Demanding Recommendations; and (2) Revenue Neutral Recommendations.

[Note: These should be concise statements (it’s not necessary to elaborate the recommendation because it should be based on information provided in the report). For example, each recommendation could be a focused, one-sentence statement (e.g., “It is recommended that…”).]