

Guidelines for External Review of Departments and Programs at Kalamazoo College

Regular external review of departments and programs encourages self-study and planning and provides objective feedback on effectiveness in educating students and contributing to the College's mission. Thus, departments and programs should be reviewed approximately every ten years, or sooner as needed; a schedule of departmental reviews is available from Sue Gibson in the Provost's Office.

Suggested documents to be sent to reviewers before the campus visit

A. Departmental Self-Study and Assessment

- Narrative statement of what the department hopes to accomplish through the external review
- Description of the department, including faculty, students, major curriculum, departmental contributions to general education, and departmental budget and other resources.
- Department assessment plan
- Annual reports from carrying out assessment plan
- Description of successes of program, opportunities for improving the program, and problems facing the program, as well as an indication of priorities for addressing opportunities and problems if additional resources were available
- Copy of professional standards for the major (i.e., from the relevant professional organization) or a description of national patterns in the discipline, along with a description of how the department's major program relates to these external standards
- Any other internal documents that address the history or activities of the department (e.g., letters to alumni, faculty presentations, etc.)

B. Supplementary Documents

- Faculty CVs
- Course syllabi (also, identify courses that are cognates or prerequisites for courses in other departments)
- Departmental Web site
- Suggested program outline for majors
- Brochures describing the program to other constituencies
- Data for the past five years on enrollment, class size, and numbers of majors and minors (provided by the Office of Institutional Research)
- Sample SIPs
- List of sample internships/externships
- Information on immediate placements of graduating seniors for the past five years as well as information on the post-graduate experiences of department alumni over the past decade

C. Institutional Data

- AAUP salary ranges and starting salaries (from the Provost's Office)
- Description of sabbatical leave and other faculty development programs (Faculty Development Web site on the Intranet)
- Names and titles of relevant administrative officers
- Academic Catalogue (Provost's Office)

Guidelines for planning and conducting an external review

- The department chair usually coordinates the review
- The department should meet with the Assessment Committee to discuss self-study
- The department should meet with the Provost to discuss self-study
- There are generally two external reviewers, but departments may have need for a third reviewer (with permission from the Provost) depending on the complexity of the department (e.g., the Department of Math and Computer Science comprises two separate disciplines)
- Visits last two to three days
- Funds are provided by the Provost's Office, and the department should discuss plans for the visit with the Provost

During the visit, the reviewers should meet with ...

- The Provost, at the beginning and the end of the visit
- Department faculty individually
- The department as a whole two to three times during the visit, including one last time before the report is finalized
- A group of majors
- The Division Chair
- Faculty from other departments whose courses connect to those offered by the department being reviewed (e.g., if courses are prerequisites for courses in other departments)

Follow-up to the team report

- Copies of the report should be sent to the Provost, the Division Chair, the Assessment Committee, and to anyone else who participated in review process (e.g., faculty from other departments)
- The department should meet with the Provost to discuss recommendations in the report and how and/or when they will be implemented
- The Assessment Committee will check in with the department after some time has passed to discuss progress and/or needs in implementing recommendations