ACADEMIC REVIEW GUIDELINES FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY MAJORS
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Purpose: The Academic Review (AR) process is intended to assess, promote, and support the fulfillment of the academic unit's mission and vision. The process provides the opportunity to reflect on the unit's identity and to engage in strategic planning, particularly with respect to (1) educational effectiveness, (2) research, scholarship, and creative endeavors, and (3) service on local to global scales.

In essence, ARs are an opportunity for academic units to reflect on their accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities to address such questions as: *How well are we preparing all of our students to meet and exceed the challenges they will experience upon graduation? How well are we supporting faculty and staff in the integration of their teaching, research, scholarship, and creative endeavors, and service? How well are we equipped to meet the emerging challenges and demands of our disciplines and their respective roles in our broader society?*

While meaningful and regular ARs are an explicit requirement of the California State University system and its Board of Trustees as well as for continued accreditation through the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), these guidelines are written in a manner that will affirm faculty's ability to focus on what they care about while providing evidence that can inform program, unit, and college-level decision-making.

Practice: Productive ARs provide an opportunity for thoughtful reflection, productive discussion, and intentional improvement. Thus, academic units are strongly encouraged to articulate an aspirational vision and to discuss recent accomplishments, plans, opportunities, and challenges in that context. Such an approach will facilitate connections to broader strategic planning and resource management at the college and university levels. To this end, a template for the AR Self Study and Site Visit Schedule are provided at the end of these Guidelines.

Outcome: The intended outcome of each AR is the collaborative development of an Action Plan among Academic Affairs, the College Dean, and the academic unit that will address identified challenges and opportunities for improvement, primarily with existing resources and secondarily on additional strategic investments.

1. Notification: Deans will be notified at least one semester ahead of the semester of their Academic Review (AR). To the extent possible, academic units are scheduled in logical groupings to facilitate college-level strategic planning. Deans are encouraged to develop and provide additional prompts, requests, and/or requirements for inclusion as additional components of an academic unit's Self Study. Chairs/Directors whose programs are undergoing AR will be provided with these Guidelines and may receive additional requests and/or prompts from their Dean for their Self Study. Conversely, Chairs/Directors are encouraged to develop any additional desirable review components that they deem appropriate and to confer with their Dean prior to incorporating these into their Self-Study. Department Chairs/Directors with questions regarding the Academic Review process may contact the Interim Associate Vice President for Curriculum, Assessment and Accreditation Madhavi McCall (mccall@sdsu.edu, 619-594-5050).

NOTE: Professionally accredited programs may propose a modified approach to their AR that leverages existing efforts and reduces redundancies, while still meeting the spirit and intent of the process with respect to institutional priorities. If a professionally-accredited program is interested in a modified AR approach, then they may arrange a meeting with their Dean to develop a modified AR process and Self-Study design.

2. Selection of Site Visit Dates and potential Review Team Members: Chairs/Directors should identify at least ten preferred one-day Site Visit blocks during the scheduled review semester that will maximize participation of their faculty, students, and staff. Any blocks that are particularly problematic (e.g., dates of discipline-focused national meetings, etc.) should also be identified. These preferred and to-be-avoided dates should be provided to Jonathan Florendo (jflorendo@sdsu.edu; 594-4167) by the deadline indicated on the initial notification.

The typical Review Team comprises two external members from aspirational academic programs and one internal SDSU faculty member from outside the program's college. This composition may be modified with approval of the Academic Affairs leadership team. Academic units shall submit Review Team nominations to   Jonathan Florendo (jflorendo@sdsu.edu; 594-4167) by the deadline indicated in the initial notification.

External Reviewers: The Chair/Director shall submit a list of no fewer than eight external faculty from aspirational academic programs whom they consider well-qualified to serve as reviewers.

Internal Reviewers: The Chair/Director shall also submit the names of four tenured SDSU faculty members with appointments outside the college whom they consider well-qualified to serve on the Review Team.

Each nomination should include a single-paragraph bio, an academic home page URL, and an email address. Nominated reviewers may not have close professional or personal relationships

with faculty in the unit undergoing review; any potential conflicts of interest must be declared and discussed with the Dean's office prior to their nomination.

3. **Finalize Dates and Review Team:** As soon as possible after receiving potential dates and names of reviewers, the interim AVP-CAA will work with the College leadership to finalize the dates of the unit's academic review and the names of the review team. Review team members will be invited to participate by an email from either the interim AVP-CAA or the College Dean, depending on the College's preferred practice. The interim AVP-CAA will work with the Provost Office to secure Academic Affairs Leadership Team participation for the site visit.

4. **Production of the AR Documents:** The Self-Study is the centerpiece of the AR process, enabling programs to develop a deliberate and inclusive approach to its development. The Self-Study (1) provides context for the academic unit's mission, activities, ambitions, and priorities, (2) highlights recent achievements and progress, and (3) establishes future directions, opportunities, and challenges. This document provides a first impression of the academic unit to the Review Team, so it should be carefully developed and edited to provide a cohesive narrative with consistent voice, formatting, etc. The Site Visit Schedule may include sessions with faculty, staff, and students as appropriate, with at least one hour scheduled as a private work session for the Review Team.

Templates for the Self-Study and the Site Visit Schedule are appended to these Guidelines. Academic units are encouraged to confer with their Dean's office regarding any additional prompts, requests, or requirements for the Self-Study. **The Chair/Director shall provide final drafts of the Self-Study and Site Visit Schedule as Word files to their Dean's office at least seven weeks prior to the Site Visit. These materials will be reviewed by the Dean's office for completeness and any comments/suggestions/requests for revision shall be provided back to the Chair/Director within one week.**

5. **Distribution of Finalized AR Documents**: Following Dean's office approval of the Self-Study and Site Visit Schedule and at least four weeks prior to the Site Visit, the academic unit shall provide Word and pdf versions of the Self-Study and pdf version of any documents referred to in the Self-Study to Jonathan Florendo (jflorendo@sdsu.edu), who will share all finalized AR materials with relative parties across the campus and with members of the Review Team.

6. **Schedule and Conduct of the Site Visit:** The Site Visit is typically one day, beginning and ending with sessions between the Review Team and members of the Academic Affairs leadership team (i.e., Provost, VP of Research/Graduate Dean, and AVP - Academic Affairs, Student Achievement). Members of the unit are responsible for transporting out-of-town Review Team members to and from SDSU and other locations as well as planning and funding lunches and dinners. Hotel accommodations, travel reimbursements, and honoraria are arranged and covered by Academic Affairs.

7. **Production and Dissemination of the Review Team Report:** The Review Team will prepare a AR Report that represents their collective view of the strengths and weaknesses in

each area of the Self-Study as well as recommendations regarding current and future opportunities and challenges. The Review Team shall submit its AR Report electronically within five weeks of the completion of the Site Visit, whereupon it will be provided to the Academic Affairs leadership team, the College Dean's office, and the Chair/Director of the academic unit.

8. Response to Review Team Report: The Chair/Director of the academic unit may submit a written response to the AR Report within two weeks of receipt. The response may address each of the major findings and recommendations of the report as well as additional information.

9. Action Plan and Capstone Meeting: The Capstone Meeting between the academic unit's Chair/Director, the Dean, and the Academic Affairs leadership team will be scheduled within six weeks of receiving the report by the Review Team. The outcomes of this meeting will be summarized by the Dean in the form of a draft Action Plan for finalization and endorsement by the Dean, Academic Affairs leadership team, and Chair/Director as a representative for the academic unit. The Dean will be responsible for scheduling any follow-up meetings regarding progress on this Action Plan.

SUMMARY: SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC REVIEW TIMELINE

Stage	Component	Deadline
1	College deans, Chairs/Directors notified of AR scheduled and provided AR Guidelines	At least one semester prior to semester of AR
2	Chair/Director submits lists of five viable Site Visit dates and potential Review Team members (8 external reviewers and 4 internal reviewers)	Stated deadline in AR notification email
3	Interim AVP-CAA works with the College leadership to invite reviewers, finalize review team members and review dates	ASAP following submission of names and dates by Department
4	Chair/Director submits final drafts of Self-Study and Site Visit Schedule to Dean's office for review/revision	At least seven weeks prior to Site Visit
5	Academic unit uploads dean-approved Self-Study and other materials to shared drive	At least four weeks prior to Site Visit
6	**Site Visit**	
7	Review Team's Report submitted to interim AVP-CAA and distributed to Academic Affairs Leadership Team, College Dean's Office and Chair/Director of academic unit	Five weeks after completion of Site Visit
8	Academic unit submits written response to Review Team Report	Two weeks after receipt of Review Team Report
9	Capstone Meeting with Dean, Chair/Director, and Academic Affairs leadership team. Academic units should work with their Dean's office to develop an Action Plan based on the review that will be discussed at the capstone meeting.	Within six weeks of receiving Review Team's Report

Department of \<Name\>
Academic Review Site Visit
Schedule for Day One – \<Date\>

Time	Component	Location
TBD	Transport from Hotel	Hotel Lobby
8:30 – 9:30	Entrance Meeting with Academic Affairs Leadership Team	
9:30 – 10:00	Chair/Director (\<Name\>)	
10:00 – 10:30	Faculty Group (\<Name\>)	
10:30 – 11:30	Program Executive Committee	
11:30 – 1:00	Working Lunch Break for Reviewers	
1:00 – 2:00	Graduate/Undergraduate/Internship Advisors, Assessment and Curriculum Coordinators, (\<Names\>)	
2:00 – 2:30	Students	
2:30 – 4:00	Exit Meeting with Academic Affairs Leadership Team	
4:00 – 5:00	Review Team Work Session	
5:00 – 7:00	Social Event and Dinner	
7:30	Transport from dinner to hotel	

Self-Study for the Academic Review of

<Program Title> at

San Diego State University

<Dates of Academic Review>

Prepared by:

< Name, Title and/or Role within Unit, Unit Name>

< Name, Title and/or Role within Unit, Unit Name>

< Name, Title and/or Role within Unit, Unit Name>

< Name, Title and/or Role within Unit, Unit Name>

< Name, Title and/or Role within Unit, Unit Name>

Internally Reviewed and Approved by the

College of <XXX>

on [Insert Date]

Provided to the Academic Review Team:

<External Reviewer #1, Program, Institution>

<External Reviewer #2, Program, Institution>

<Internal Reviewer, Program, Institution>

A. Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Institutional Context: *The mission statement articulates the unit's purpose, its core activities, and how it serves its key stakeholders. The vision statement is a future-oriented declaration of aspirations, conveying what the units wants to become to best deliver on the mission. Mission and vision statements can be as short as a few sentences or a single paragraph each. The remainder of the section describes disciplinary and institutional context, including the unit's history and evolution, distinctive features, relationships to other teaching and research units on campus, and current degree offerings.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

B. Response to Previous Academic Review: *Describe the unit's response to major issues, challenges, and recommendations identified through the previous academic review (i.e., review team report, program response letter, and institutional summary letter; include these in the appendices). Summarize the effects of these actions, and how they influence the current work and priorities of the unit.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

C. Goals and Strategies: *State short- and long-term goals and outline strategies for achieving them. Goals must be prioritized, explicit and measurable, consistent with the unit's mission, and contribute to meeting the unit's vision. Outline current and proposed strategies for achieving each goal. Present relevant internal and external data that supports the selection of these goals and strategies and their prioritization.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

D. Comparable and Aspirational Programs: *Describe four comparable and four aspirational academic units at other institutions and a brief explanation of why they were chosen. Summarize the following for each of the eight academic units in a table: i) degrees offered, ii) faculty headcount, and iii) undergraduate and graduate enrollments and degrees awarded. The Academic Unit may describe and include additional metrics that are meaningful to their discipline and aspirations. For each comparable and aspirational unit, describe the faculty research, scholarship, and creative activities, including any available illustrative data. Conclude with a discussion of how the unit's articulated vision, goals, and strategies align with those of the described aspirational units.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

E. Curricular Overview, Student Demographics, and Programmatic Assessment:

1. Curriculum: Overview the undergraduate and graduate curricula. Address how and by whom each is reviewed—internally and/or externally—as well as any changes driven by previous academic reviews (or professional accreditations). Include an appendix compilation of most recent versions of syllabi for major-required courses and major electives

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

2. Degree Learning Outcomes: State the established Degree Learning Outcomes (DLOs) for each undergraduate and graduate degree offered by the unit, including specific DLOs for emphases, certificates, etc. as appropriate.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

3. Curricular Maps: For each undergraduate degree and professional graduate degree, present the curricular map illustrating how the major-required courses and any additional required curricular components (e.g., study abroad, internships, practicums, field experiences, specific general education courses, and other required or supplemental out-of-classroom learning and development experiences) progressively build the capability for students to achieve the Degree Learning Outcomes.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

4. Accomplished Program Assessment for Student Learning and Development: Summarize the Measures, Findings, Targets, and Actions for each DLO since the last academic review. Discuss these assessment findings and actions within the broader goals of increasing program quality and student achievement (e.g., referring to goals that were written in Section C). Please provide an explanation for any DLO that has not been assessed since the last Academic Review.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

5. Planned Program Assessment for Degree Learning Outcomes: Overview plans for program assessment for the next five years, including specific DLOs of focus, approaches for assessing these DLOs, etc. as well as any broader program assessment goals (e.g., revision/addition of DLOs, incorporation or assessment of High Impact Practices). If plans will require institutional support via additional resources or campus expertise, please outline and explain these needs.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

6. High Impact Practices: Overview current requirements or opportunities for undergraduates to engage in "High Impact Practices" (e.g., first-year seminars, learning communities, writing intensive courses, undergraduate research, study abroad, service learning, community-based learning, internships, capstone courses/projects). Present relevant evidence-based assessment of these HIPs and their impact upon student engagement and achievement, and how this impact could be improved. Finally, include any opportunities to incorporate additional HIPs.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

7. International Components: Describe any international activities in the curriculum. For programs that have an international requirement, discuss how the requirements are reflected in the established Degree Learning Outcomes, and how assessment evidence of the international component is being used to improve student achievement?

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

8. Student, Alumni, and Employer Feedback: Provide any available survey feedback obtained from students, alumni and employers, and how this information has been used to improve the program.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

9. Professional Accreditation: If the program is subject to accreditation by a professional organization, summarize the results and recommendations of the last round of accreditation and the anticipated date of the next. Append any relevant documents.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

10. Academic Advising: Describe current academic advising structure and strategies, including the advising experience from a student perspective as they progress through the degree.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

11. Teaching Associates and Graduate Assistants: Present information on the TAs and GAs employed per semester, their preparation/mentoring/evaluation, and the nature and variations of their teaching loads and compensation (including benefits).

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

12. Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation Measures: Five-year degree-specific data for this section are derived from the SDSU Tableau Dashboard, provided to the academic unit along with these guidelines, and included in this section of the Self-Study. For assistance in the exploration of these data or to develop/obtain additional data of interest, academic units may confer as early as possible with the Assistant Vice President for Educational Effectiveness and the Director of Analytical Services and Institutional Research.

- *Applications, admissions, admission rate, and yield for first-time full-time freshman and transfer students*
- *Academic preparation of admitted first-time full-time freshman (i.e., HS GPA and SAT), transfer students (i.e., CC GPA), and graduate students (e.g., Undergraduate GPA and GRE)*
- *1st, 2nd, 3rd-year retention and 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates for first-year full-time freshman, disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and local/resident/non-resident/international*
- *1st and 2nd-year retention and 2-, 3-, and 4-year graduation rates for transfer students disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and local/resident/non-resident/international*
- *Completion rates and time-to-degree for graduate students disaggregated by gender, ethnicity, and local/resident/non-resident/international*
- *Any available information about students' preparation for their selected degree pathway*
- *Any available information about postgraduate trajectories, pathways, etc.*

Based on the above data, discuss trends, areas of concern, and related plans to improve student success, including recent efforts or opportunities to improve retention and graduation rates while maintaining quality of learning and development. Also discuss the relative importance of such traditional degree-at-matriculation-based metrics in light of student migration into and out of the degree(s) (see Program Migration dashboard in Tableau and include such visualizations as appropriate to narrative).

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

F. Faculty Composition, Achievements, and Career Advancement:

1. Faculty Roster: Provide a table with one line per faculty member, with name, rank, field, terminal degree date, and SDSU start date.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

2. Faculty Achievements: For each faculty member, report on research and/or scholarly works of faculty over the last five years, including discipline-appropriate indices of each faculty member's achievements (e.g. publications and their impact, extramural support, and significant honors received). For each faculty member, also report on graduate student supervision (theses and/or dissertations served on and chaired) and undergraduate supervision (honors theses chaired and other supervisory roles).

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

3. Assessment of Faculty Achievements, Productivity, and Workload: Summarize the policies and mechanisms for tenure, promotion, and post-tenure reviews. Describe how useful these have been for your academic unit in assuring that faculty meet unit-, college-, and university-level expectations with respect to Teaching Effectiveness, Professional Development, and Service.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

4. Faculty Mentorship: Describe the unit's practices for mentoring tenure-track faculty members in RTP with respect to Teaching Effectiveness, Professional Development, and Service.

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

G. Resources: *Assess how well current resources (human, institutional budget, grants, philanthropic, other) are being used to support current strategies in service of the unit's mission, vision, goals, and strategies. Identify priorities for additional critical resources and articulate how these would support current goals and the way in which those goals are prioritized.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

H. Shared Governance: *The SDSU University Senate and President have endorsed three key principles of shared governance: Respect, Communication, and Responsibility (see https://shared-governance.sdsu.edu/trust-a-vision-for-shared-governance). Describe how the faculty and staff associated with the program currently makes decisions about the curriculum, staffing, resource management, etc. in light of these principles. Discuss any opportunities to improve communication, processes, etc. in light of these principles. Provide links to, or provide as appendices, any local policy documents.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

I. Development: *Describe any recent or ongoing efforts to support the mission, vision, and goals of the program through philanthropic and/or corporate giving in collaboration with University Relations and Development. Discuss how these efforts could be improved and what future opportunities might be pursued.*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

J. Areas of Distinction and Improvement: *In light of the findings of this Self-Study, present, in prioritized bulleted paragraphs, (1) some specific areas of distinction and (2) some specific areas for improvement. For the latter, propose potential improvement plans that could be pursued primarily by existing resources and secondarily by additional strategic investments. Note that areas of improvement could also identify issues and opportunities beyond the academic unit and in other areas of the University (e.g., Admissions, Career Services, International Student Center, etc.).*

<Unit Response – Double-spacing>

K. Appendices*: Include the following appendices and refer to information within these appendices as appropriate within the body of the Self-Study. Academic units may include additional relevant appendices as appropriate and referenced within the Self-Study.*
- *Appendix 1. Review Team report from previous Academic Reviews*
- *Appendix 2. Unit's formal written response to the previous Review Team report*
- *Appendix 3. Action Plan from previous review (if produced)*
- *Appendix 4. Most recent versions of syllabi for major required courses and major electives*
- *Appendix 5. Full CVs for each faculty member*