

## **REVIEW OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS (THE RAD)**

### **Guidebook**

#### **Contents**

Purpose of the RAD.....	2
THE SELF-STUDY.....	2
THE EXTERNAL REVIEW.....	2
THE USM REPORT.....	2
THE ACTION PLAN REPORT .....	2
Self-Study Outline .....	3
Selection of External Reviewers.....	6
External Review Expenses.....	6
The RAD Timeline.....	7

## Purpose of the RAD

The University System of Maryland (USM) requires system institutions to review all undergraduate and graduate degree programs on a seven-year cycle. The Vice Provost and the Director of Accreditation and Compliance Services support the academic departments in the administrative process, from beginning to end, including the selection and scheduling of the external reviewers who are not part of an accreditation review.

The USM requirements consist of: (1) a *self-study*, (2) an *external review*, and (3) a *USM report*. Each of these required documents must be reviewed successively at the department, college, graduate studies (for graduate programs), Office of the Provost, and, finally, USM. The review analyzes the performance and status of the department from the time of the last review, details any new programmatic directions, and articulates any proposed strategic initiatives.

[\*\*THE SELF-STUDY\*\*](#) serves as impetus for the department to reflect upon its most recent seven years, contextualize its present, and envision a strategic path for its next seven years.

[\*\*THE EXTERNAL REVIEW\*\*](#) includes analyses of program currency, identifies program strengths and challenges, describes relationship of the department and its programs, and provides recommendations for program and department improvements.

[\*\*THE USM REPORT\*\*](#) includes enrollment and awarded degrees information for each degree program in the department, summarizes major findings and recommendations of the internal self-study and external review, and articulates action plans to address recommendations. The USM Board of Regents reviews the findings of the report and approves the action plan formally (typically during its January meeting).

[\*\*THE ACTION PLAN REPORT\*\*](#) allows the department to gauge early progress toward goals of the action plan. The college dean, the dean for graduate studies (if relevant), and the Office of the Provost review the progress report approximately 18 months after USM approves the proposed action plan.

## Self-Study Outline

### I. Executive Summary (1 page)

A one-page executive summary assembled drawing excerpts from the completed self-study, normally written last.

### II. Introduction to the Department (2 pages)

An introduction to the department including its purpose, organization, brief history, and relationship to the college, division, and/or the university.

### III. Academic Programs of Study (3 pages)

A listing of all degree and certificate programs in a table. Please do not include minors in the table, as they are not included in the USM review. Indicate the program title, degree, mode of delivery, and, if relevant, accrediting body and year of affirmation.

Include “**Requirements for the Major**” and the “**Four-Year Plan of Study**” from the academic catalog as an appendix for each undergraduate program. List all degree requirements and courses offered for each graduate program, including online and off-site courses, as an appendix.

### IV. Faculty Profile (5 pages)

Include a description of the full-time and part-time faculty in the department over the last 5 years, including faculty hired, promoted, retired, or no longer with the department.

Include a table of average course units per FTE (see **Standard Data Set**), and detail how department needs are met by the mix of tenured/tenure-track faculty and non-tenured faculty teaching in the department.

Describe departmental efforts to achieve and support increased faculty diversity.

Describe faculty mentoring procedures you may have in place, and highlight what has been beneficial.

Attach CVs of all current full-time faculty (lecturers, visiting, clinical, tenured/tenure-track faculty) as an appendix.

## V. Student Profile (5 pages)

Describe the undergraduate students in each program (part-time students, full-time students, gender, race/ethnicity - see **Standard Data Set**). Describe enrolled students (part-time, full-time, gender, race/ethnicity) for graduate programs. Address how well the design of each program meets the needs of its students, and why. Include a table of "Annual Degrees" (see **Standard Data Set**), and explain how the information provided supports the evaluation of how well students are served by the program. Those departments serving other majors or the core curriculum may wish to elaborate on that contribution to the University using the provided student credit hour data (see **Standard Data Set**).

Describe student scholarship/research opportunities and support. Describe methods employed in recruiting, evaluating, admitting, and advising undergraduate and/or graduate students. Describe practices that have been successful, and unsuccessful, for recruiting or retaining students in undergraduate and/or graduate programs; provide analysis of what made the practices successful/unsuccessful. Analyze how successfully or unsuccessfully recruitment/retention practices support underrepresented students in the program.

## VI. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment of Academic Programs (10 pages)

Describe typical programs of study and specialties in the program for bachelor's, master's, doctoral degrees, and for post-baccalaureate certificates and/or certificates of advanced study.

Describe the sufficiency of student learning opportunities. Review annual academic program assessments, including summary evidence from student learning outcome assessment trends. Describe curricular and/or administrative changes made to improve the program, and provide assessment findings supporting each one. Describe how well each change contributed to improvement of each program.

Critique the currency of the curriculum of each academic program and its alignment with disciplinary trends. Provide evidence to support the critique.

## VII. Department Action Planning (10 pages)

Tie the past seven years to the goals for the department for the next seven years. Include summary of action plan from the last review. Provide narrative on actions taken since the last review, and elaborate on whether the intended programmatic and departmental trajectory(ies) continue to fit the program(s) and the department.

Provide an executive level summary of the new or updated goals for each academic program and strategic or long-range plans regarding teaching, research, or service. Give an outline of intended changes in the scope and/or direction of undergraduate or graduate programs and of how the department plans to make these changes.

Describe internal and/or external influences, if applicable, that might propel or inhibit the ability of the department to achieve its goals. Articulate an action plan for continuous improvement, in consultation with the department chair and college dean, that identifies the initiative(s) designed to help the department achieve its goals. For each initiative, identify a timeline and responsible parties who will coordinate and complete the initiative.

***Page counts are estimates. Please provide both a complete overview and analyses of the department and its academic programs.***

***Self-study reports should ideally be 30-40 pages, excluding appendices. The document needs to have normal margins, use a 12 pt. ADA compliant font (e.g., Arial, Helvetica, SansSerif), and be 1.5 line spaced. Reports must abide by these guidelines to be reviewed.***

## Selection of External Reviewers

Academic departments collaborate with the college dean to submit to the Vice Provost a list of no more than six potential external reviewers. The potential candidates should meet qualifications of disciplinary expertise and administrative experience that allow them to review the entirety of the department, its program(s) and all other specialties, functions, and aspects. The Vice Provost will select one or two reviewers from the proposed list.

## External Review Expenses

The Office of the Provost will fund honoraria up to \$1,000 per reviewer; the department/college should discuss any exceptions with the Vice Provost.

Additional to the honorarium, the Office of the Provost will fund reviewers' travel expenses up to \$500. Additional costs are the department's/college's responsibility. The Office of the Provost will remit honoraria and expenses following its receipt of the final external review report.

The Vice Provost is responsible for selecting the external consultants and submitting the necessary paperwork to hire and pay the external consultant (Honorarium Letter of Invitation, Honorarium Request Application, Miscellaneous Expense Voucher, and W-9 form). The decision to provide additional support from the Office of the Provost (including travel expenses) is the decision of the Vice Provost.

## The RAD Timeline

Completion of the RAD spans two calendar years, with department activity spanning eighteen months from January/February to June of the following year. Additional review outside the department occurs over the subsequent six months, culminating with USM action at its January meeting. The department provides a Departmental Progress Report and shares the report with the college dean, the Dean for Graduate Studies, Office of the Provost, and university governance eighteen months after the USM action.

### **Spring Term 1**

#### **Planning and Analysis / Begins: January/February**

Department representative meets with Vice Provost and the Director of Accreditation and Compliance Services to discuss the process at the beginning of the first spring semester. The standard data set<sup>1</sup> will be provided to the department representative at that time so that the department may begin its analyses, reflection, and discussion.

### **Fall Term 1**

#### **Program Review Writing / Draft Due to College Dean: 3rd Monday in October**

#### **Revision Due: 3rd Monday in December**

The department delivers its self-study draft to the college dean (and the Dean for Graduate Studies, if relevant) by the 3rd Monday in October for the dean(s) to provide feedback within a month. The department revises the report and resubmits to the dean(s) for final review by the 3rd Monday in December. Self-study reports should be 30-40 pages, excluding appendices. The document must have normal margins, use 12 pt. ADA compliant font (e.g., Arial, Helvetica, SansSerif), and be 1.5 line spaced. Reports that do not abide by these guidelines will not be reviewed.

---

<sup>1</sup>The data set contains all necessary data for the self-study. If a department experiences a dramatic change in faculty headcount over the course of the self-study, then the department may choose to update the self-study in January of Spring Term 2 with data from the Departmental Profile available on the Office of Institutional Research website.

## **Spring Term 2**

### **External Review Logistics / Final Self-Study Due to Office of Provost: 3rd Monday in January**

#### **External Report Due: 1st Monday in May**

The Vice Provost selects the external reviewer(s) from a list provided by the department, with the dean, and arranges for the site visit of approximately two days to occur between mid-February and mid-April. The department provides the final self-study to the external reviewer and the Office of the Provost by the 3rd Monday in January. The external reviewer should submit the report to the department via email by the 1st Monday in May.

#### **USM Report / Drafting: May - June**

The USM Report includes the fall enrollments and degrees awarded for the most recent five years. The department summarizes the findings of the internal and external reviews. The department and college dean collaborate on the development of the action plan for continuous improvement. The department demonstrates its intent to address the findings of the self-study and the external review in the action plan report. The action plans identify strategies/initiatives, timelines for completion, and responsible entities. The USM Report follows a prescribed template.

#### **Submission of Documents / Due to College Dean: 3rd Monday in June**

The department submits the self-study, the external review, and the USM report to the college dean by the 3rd Monday in June. The college dean reviews the materials to confirm college support and approval.

#### **Submission of Documents / Due to the Office of Provost: 3rd Monday in July**

The college dean submits all three reports (self-study, external review, USM report) to the Office of the Provost by the third Monday in July. The Vice Provost, Vice Provost, and the Provost meet with the college dean and the chair, director, or coordinator to clarify the prioritization of action plans and to refine all materials to meet USM expectations through an iterative review process.

## Fall Term 2

### **Submission of USM Report / Due to USM: 1st Monday in October**

The Office of the Provost submits the draft USM Report to the USM Office of Academic Affairs for review by the 1st Monday in October. The USM Office of Academic Affairs provides feedback for any necessary revisions. The USM Committee on Education Policy and Student Life reviews and acts on the final USM Periodic Review Reports in January. The USM Board of Regents acts on the recommendation of the Committee in January.

## Spring Term 4

### **Departmental Progress Report / Due to Office of Provost: 3rd Monday in June**

The academic department provides a progress report on the initiatives of the action plan for continuous improvement and submits the report to the academic dean, the Graduate Studies Dean (if relevant), the Office of the Provost, and the University Senate Executive Committee by the 3rd Monday in June.

## **Standard Data Set for Review of Academic Department**

### Course Productivity Profile

- Five Year Student Credit Hours
- Five Year Undergraduate Class Size
- Five Year Undergraduate Course Evaluation
- Five Year Graduate Course Evaluation

### Faculty Productivity Profile

- Five Year Undergraduate Instructor Evaluation
- Five Year Graduate Instructor Evaluation
- Five Year Average Course Units per FTE
- Five Year Scholarship, Research, & Service

### Faculty Profile

- Five Year Faculty by Rank
- Five Year Faculty by Race/Ethnicity
- Five Year Faculty by Gender

### Financial Profile

- Five Year Departmental Expenditures

### Facilities Profile

- Description of Physical Facilities and Resources

### Student Profile by Program

- Five Year Enrollments Disaggregated by Race/Ethnicity, Gender, Level, Status
- Five Year Annual Degrees

### Undergraduate Program Graduating Senior Survey Results

- Results of Institutional Student Surveys regarding Program