

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Program Review

**SELF-STUDY**

The self-study document should address the issues in the list below approved by the unit administrator, dean, AC/GC program review committees, and provost. For ease of reference, the sections of the self-study response documents should be numbered to correspond to the issues in this list**. (Just enter answers on this Word document under each item)** The document should directly and succinctly address each issue, and should be only as long as necessary.

Each section of the self-study should review the current situation and suggest improvements to be implemented over the next ten years. The document should provide a comprehensive picture of the program(s) at all sites (Gulf Park, Hattiesburg, Keesler, etc.), and should draw attention to differences between sites when applicable. **Supporting evidence (data, documents, etc.) should be provided for all responses, so that the program strengths and challenges are clear. Thus, the document should provide the basis for future action.**

Attachments should be added where indicated and as you believe will enhance meaningfully the self-study. Address undergraduate #3 and graduate #4, unless you have only the undergraduate or graduate degree.

Questions that inform the institution’s responses to its accreditor, SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools – Commission on Colleges), are indicated by “**SACS**”and the principle number. (Eg. **SACS 4.1**)

Programs should contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with any questions about the program review process: 601-266-6775.

**If the program has an external accrediting agency**, the program should submit:

* List the degree program(s) accredited by the external accrediting agency. (Note: if one degree program is accredited by the external accrediting agency, but another program is not, the one not accredited by the external accrediting agency must go through the internal Program Review process. For example: if the undergraduate program is accredited by an external agency, but the graduate program is not, then the graduate program must go through the internal Program Review process).
* A copy of the last accreditation report from the external accrediting agency. (A copy of the self-study for the agency should be made available if requested by an Academic or Graduate Council member.)
* Additional items from the University Self-Study document (if the department chooses to respond).
* Any other relevant materials.

**Internal Program Review Self -Study format:**

1. School, department, or program goals for the review process: Briefly describe what each unit hopes to achieve with the review process. This is an opportunity to emphasize for the readers of the self-study the major issues that the review will address. Please indicate the process by which the Self-Study was created, including faculty program review committee members, other stakeholders involved, and the activities used to conduct the review.
2. Unit Mission, Goals, and Objectives: Provide a copy of the current mission, goals, and objectives (Attachment A), which should be found in the WEAVEonline assessment system. Be sure to articulate how the unit mission, goals, and objectives relate to those of the college and the university.

*(Please copy and paste ITEM 3 for each undergraduate program under review)*

1. Undergraduate Program (Program Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)
   1. Audience:
2. Is the program strategically oriented to serve ~~a~~ particular stakeholders (or audiences) and meet University objectives?
3. Does the program have a sound reputation for academic quality?
4. What evidence demonstrates sound reputation for academic quality (national rankings, employer feedback, alumni feedback, placement in graduate programs) (**SACS 4.1)**
   1. Curriculum:
5. Is the curriculum up-to-date and comparable to that of similar departments, schools, or programs at other schools that are considered strong and admirable?
6. Is the program’s length (hours in the major) appropriate for the discipline? (**SACS 4.4**)
7. Is the teaching of speaking and writing skills integrated into the curriculum?
8. Do upper-level courses have prerequisites appropriate for advanced study?
   1. Learning Outcomes:
9. Does the school’s or department’s assessment program show that students acquire core knowledge and skills appropriate to the discipline? If not, what changes to the curriculum should be considered?
10. What data are used to evaluate and measure learning outcomes?
    1. Effectiveness:
11. Is there evidence showing that students complete their degree with appropriate knowledge, skills, and professional accomplishments?
12. Does the program effectively prepare students for professional employment or graduate programs after graduation?
13. How many students graduate annually?
14. What evidence is used to evaluate effectiveness?
    1. Technology (**SACS 3.4.12):**
       1. What technologies are used by students in the program, and why?
       2. How does the use of these technologies enhance student learning and how is it appropriate for meeting objectives of the program?
       3. How is access to the technology and training in the use of the technology given?
    2. Student quality:
15. Are admissions to the major appropriately selective and are top applicants successfully recruited and retained?
16. If necessary, what steps could be taken to improve these measures?
    1. Independent Learning:
17. Do students have adequate opportunities for independent research/scholarly activity, internships, and service learning? If not, how could these opportunities be enhanced?
    1. Student satisfaction:
18. Are students pleased with their experiences in the program and with the opportunities it offers them?
    1. Honors:
19. Does the Honors College attract a reasonable level of student participation from your program and provide appropriately enriched experiences for Honors students?
20. What changes or enhancements might be proposed?
    1. Dual classes:
21. How many combined undergraduate/graduate courses are part of the required undergraduate curriculum in your unit? (**SACS 3.6.1)**
22. How are differences in research and independent learning addressed in combined classes? (**SACS 3.6.1)**
    1. Faculty credentials:
23. Do all faculty, adjuncts, and graduate student teaching assistants meet minimum SACS and other accrediting requirements of 18 graduate credit hours in area of teaching?
24. Are other standards applied in your unit? If so, what are those standards? (As graduate faculty credentials standards are higher than those in undergraduate programs, only faculty not approved for graduate faculty status need to be reviewed)

*(Please copy and paste ITEM 4 for each graduate program under review)*

1. Graduate Program (Program Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)
   1. Audience:
2. Is the program strategically oriented to serve a particular audience (or audiences) and meet University objectives?
3. Does the program have a sound reputation for academic quality?
4. What evidence demonstrates sound reputation for academic quality (national rankings, employer feedback, alumni feedback) **(SACS 4.1)**
   1. Curriculum:
5. Is the curriculum up-to-date and comparable to the curriculum of departments at other institutions that are considered strong and admirable? **(SACS 3.6.2)**
6. Does it provide an appropriate balance between formal courses and independent work? **(SACS 3.6.2)**
7. What evidence is used to support this?
   1. Effectiveness:
8. Is there evidence showing that students complete their degree with appropriate knowledge, skills, and professional accomplishments? (**SACS 3.6.1, 3.6.2)**
9. Does the program effectively prepare students for professional employment after graduation?
10. What evidence is used to evaluate effectiveness?
11. How many students graduate annually?
    1. Student quality:
12. Are admissions appropriately selective and are top applicants successfully recruited and retained?
13. If necessary, what steps could be taken to improve these measures?
    1. Learning outcomes:
14. Does the unit’s assessment program show that students acquire core knowledge and skills appropriate to the discipline? If not, what changes to the curriculum should be considered?
15. What data are reviewed to evaluate learning outcomes?
    1. Student satisfaction:
16. Are students pleased with their experiences in the program and with the opportunities it offers them?
    1. Independent learning:
17. Do theses, dissertations, and projects offer sufficient opportunities for independent scholarly/research activity? **(SACS 3.6.2)**
    1. Dual classes:
18. How many combined undergraduate/graduate courses are part of the required graduate curriculum in your unit? **(SACS 3.6.1)**
19. How are differences in research and independent learning addressed in combined classes? **(SACS 3.6.1)**
    1. Graduate Policies and Procedures:
20. Does your program have a published or online handbook which clearly outlines residency requirements, thesis and dissertation options, qualifying exams, fraternization policies, and grade requirements?
21. Are graduate students required to attend a departmental orientation that includes a review of policy?
    1. Faculty credentials:
22. Do all faculty teaching graduate level classes and who serve or chair master’s committees meet basic requirements set forth by the Graduate Faculty Credentials Committee in the Graduate Council?
23. How often are credentials reviewed in your unit?
24. Assessment Plans
    1. Results of assessment:
25. Is the unit’s mechanism for program assessment adequate?
26. Describe any changes in the program made in the past five years as a result of assessment.
    1. Improvements:
27. What steps are being planned to improve the assessment mechanism?
28. General Education Curriculum, and Honors Curriculum

All departments that have undergraduate degrees are part of the General Education Curriculum because they provide, at minimum, capstone courses. Therefore, all undergraduate programs MUST respond to this section.

* 1. Contributions to the GEC:

1. What have been the unit’s contributions to the general education curriculum over the past eight years?
2. Are those contributions adequate or could other contributions be made?
3. Does your unit have an adequate budget to teach GEC courses?
4. How are written and oral communication skills addressed in GEC courses that your unit offers?
5. Of the essential skills (writing, math, and oral communication), and the other areas (1) acquisition and integration of knowledge, (2) aesthetic understanding, (3) development of logical and critical thinking, and (4) responsibility, self and society areas incorporated in the GEC, which do your courses cover?
6. How are learning outcomes assessed in each of these areas addressed in your unit? How have they improved because of assessment?
   1. GEC class size distribution:
7. Do the class sizes in the GEC make the most effective use of faculty resources in your unit while maintaining high quality in these classes?
   1. Adequacy of the GEC:
8. How is the general education curriculum addressing the needs of students in your programs?
9. If the GEC is not addressing students’ needs, how do you provide feedback to the GEC committee?
10. How do students meet the writing and speaking requirements specified within the GEC?
11. How are degree plans monitored to insure that GEC requirements are met?
    1. Faculty credentials:
12. How many faculty in your unit have completed the Quality Enhancement Program (QEP)?
13. Special Programs
    1. Contributions to special credit only programs:
14. What have been your unit’s contributions to special programs such as co-ops, summer graduate education, and study abroad over the last eight years?
15. How are teaching loads and budgetary requirements met to cover these programs?
    1. Contributions to non-credit special programs:
16. What have been your unit’s contributions to non-credit programs such as workshops, camps, science fair, REUs (Research Experiences for Undergraduates) over the last eight years?
17. How are teaching loads and budgetary requirements met to cover these programs?
    1. Honors courses:
18. What have been the unit’s contributions to honors sections over the past five years?
19. Are those contributions adequate or could other contributions be made?
20. Instructional Productivity, Class Sizes, and On-Line/Non-Traditional Teaching
    1. Productivity:
21. Are the unit’s FTE, SCHs and other measures of instructional productivity (number of majors, graduation rates, graduate enrollments, etc.) acceptable in comparison with other units in the University and with similar units elsewhere given department commitments to honors sections, writing intensive and speaking intensive classes and other classes where caps on enrollments are low to control for quality? If these numbers are low, what steps can be taken to improve them?
    1. Class size distribution:
22. Does the distribution of class sizes make the most effective use of faculty resources, consistent with the demands of the discipline and received appropriate approvals?
23. Are there opportunities to adjust class sizes, eliminate unproductive offerings, or achieve other economies while maintaining academic quality?
    1. Innovative learning:
       1. Has innovative teaching and learning been introduced to the program(s) in the past eight years?
       2. Is innovative teaching and learning encouraged and supported?
       3. What have been the results of innovative learning, and how has that information been used to improve the program?
    2. Online, hybrid, and other non-traditional format courses:
24. Has the department or school made appropriate use of distance learning technology?
25. Is the number of non-traditional course offerings in the major or program appropriate to the discipline?
26. How are issues of academic integrity addressed in non-traditional formats?
    1. Adjunct and Graduate Student Credit Hours:
       1. What percentage of student credit hours is generated by adjunct and graduate teaching assistants in your units? (staffing analysis formulae) (**SACS 2.8)**
    2. Advising:
       1. How is advising of students handled in your program?
       2. Do you assess your advising process? If so, how?
       3. How is advising figured into faculty teaching loads?
    3. Special Problems Courses:
       1. Do faculty teach one-on-one, for example Special Problems, dissertation hours, or project hours, where they work with students individually? What is the department’s policy on these?
       2. Are these courses handled differently during the summer?
       3. How do these factor into the teaching load?
    4. Faculty credentials:
27. How do faculty attain the skills and credentials to teach online and other non-traditional format classes (workshops, certification)?
28. External Partnerships
    1. Advisory Board:
29. Does the unit have an external advisory board or similar body? If so, how does it function? If not, should one be established?
    1. Local connections:
30. Does the unit have appropriate connections with local agencies and corporations that facilitate research interactions, internships for students, and local economic development?
31. Could such connections be established or improved?
    1. National and International connections:
32. Does the unit have connections with national and international corporations and agencies that facilitate research interactions or internships for students?
33. Could such connections be established or improved?
    1. Alumni relations:
34. What efforts have been made to cultivate alumni and friends, and to seek financial contributions for departmental programs?
35. How effective are those efforts and how might they be improved?
36. Scholarly Productivity and Professional Development
    1. Research, scholarship, or creative activity:
37. What have been the accomplishments of tenured and tenure-track faculty over the past five years and are reasonable expectations in this area being met? Consider such measures as the percentage of faculty who regularly published, displayed, or performed their work (as appropriate), the quality of the venues in which their work has appeared, recognition in the form of awards, prizes, editorial appointments, professional society involvement, etc. Note: Faculty vitas will be attached to the self study so only a summary of accomplishments with notable highlights is necessary in this section.
    1. External support:
38. Does the school or department have an appropriate level of external support via grants and contracts, given funding opportunities in the discipline and the accomplishments of the faculty?
39. Are there unexplored avenues for external support that should be explored?
    1. Technology transfer:
40. Has the faculty pursued opportunities in the development of intellectual property and in technology transfer?
41. Are such opportunities available that should be explored?
    1. Faculty development and workload flexibility:
42. Does the unit have a program for faculty development that encourages the establishment of strong programs of research, scholarship, or creative activity and guidelines for workload assignments that require alternative contributions for faculty without such programs?
43. Are criteria for reappointment, tenure, and promotion clear and understood among the faculty?
44. Do new faculty receive adequate start-up funds to begin research or creative activities?
45. Do faculty have opportunities for sabbatical leaves?
    1. Mentoring of junior faculty:
46. Are junior faculty given appropriate guidance in instruction and professional development, including clear guidelines for tenure and promotion and regular written feedback on their work by the appropriate personnel option?
47. If the unit does not have a formal mentoring program, should one be established?
48. Administration of the School, Department, or Program
    1. Governance document:
49. Does the unit have a written instrument of governance or similar document sufficient to ensure that faculty and staff understand how important decisions are made? If not, is such a document needed?
    1. Unit administration:
50. Are the roles of director, chair, coordinators, and other faculty members holding administrative appointments clearly specified?
51. Are such appointments properly compensated (by salary and/or release time)?
    1. Multiple Sites:
       1. How does the program address resources and faculty needs at different sites?
    2. Communication
52. Are communications between the director, chair, or coordinator and the faculty, staff, and students effective?
53. Describe the means and frequency of communication and suggest enhancements.
54. Are communications by the director, chair, or coordinator effective within the college, the university, and the community?
55. Is the director, chair, or coordinator effectively communicating and encouraging faculty to collaborate with others in the college and across the university?
    1. Staff support:
56. Are sufficient staff assigned to the unit to support the essential activities of faculty and students? If not, what are the highest priorities for new positions?
    1. Administrative credentials:

a. Do directors, chairs, and coordinators hold the highest terminal degrees in their areas?

* 1. Supervision and training of graduate teaching assistants:

1. Do GTAs receive special training (or take particular courses) to acquire good teaching skills?
2. Who observes and mentors GTAs in classroom/lab situations?

12. Resources

12.1 Operating budget:

1. Is the operating budget of the unit sufficient to support its essential activities? If not, what are the highest priorities for an increase in operating funds?

12.2 Tenure-track faculty positions:

1. Does the unit have sufficient tenure-track faculty positions? If not, what would justify a request for additional positions and to what areas should those positions be allocated?

12.3 Non-tenure track positions:

1. Does the department have an appropriate allocation of continuing non-tenure track instructor positions and funds to hire part-time lecturers?
2. Should plans be made to convert vacated non-tenure track positions to tenure-track lines?

12.4 Physical facilities:

1. Are the unit’s physical facilities (offices, computers, laboratories) adequate to support its essential operations? If not, what modifications or additions should be considered?

12.5 Library: (Be sure to address different needs with undergraduate and graduate programs.)

1. In consultation with the Library’s collection development coordinator, specify how your program library needs have been assessed and addressed.
2. Are university library resources sufficient for programs in your unit?
3. How are funds provided for library resources?

12.6 Graduate assistantship stipends:

1. Is support available for graduate students sufficient for the graduate program to be competitive regionally or nationally as appropriate to its goals?
2. Do you have enough GAs to meet the unit’s mission and goals?
   1. Other resources
   2. What are the other resources that impact the program?
   3. Is access to those resources adequate to support the program? How could access be improved, if necessary?