OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE PROGRAM REVIEW
INTERNAL REVIEW PANEL GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION
This guide is supplemental to the information provided in the Student Life Program Review Guidelines Manual and contains information specific to the Internal Review Panel’s role and responsibilities in the program review process. In addition to these written guidelines, the Office of Student Life is available to answer any questions about the process. D’Arcy Oaks, Student Life Program Review Administrator, is available by phone at 614-247-7148 or by email at oaks.9@osu.edu.

Program reviews are an important source of external input regarding the strengths and limitations of units and serve as a constructive base for improvements. Reviews are also a catalyst for units to seek and implement change.

These reviews cumulatively inform university-wide priority setting. They are an essential means of communication – within a department, with the Senior Vice President for Student Life and with the central administration and trustees. Finally, Program Review is an important mechanism for accountability within the university.

The review process includes a self-study by the unit being reviewed; a comprehensive review by an internal university committee of Ohio State faculty, staff, students and, where appropriate, community members; and a two or three day site visit by field experts from outside the university. The External Review Panel will write a report and the Internal Review Panel will incorporate its own findings with those of the External Review Panel to compose a final report. This final report will be forwarded to the Student Life Program Review Administrator(s) for preliminary discussion before being presented to unit staff and the Senior Vice President for Student Life.

SELECTION OF INTERNAL REVIEWERS
The Internal Review Panel includes faculty, staff, students and community members. No staff members from the unit under review or, in most situations, from within the Office of Student Life are included on the panel. Members of the panel are not expected to have expertise in the area of the unit under review.

For each review, the Program Review Administrator(s), the Senior Vice President for Student Life and the unit under review develop a pool of prospective panel members. This pool is circulated to the senior vice president, the associate or assistant vice president responsible for the unit under review and the university’s Office of Institutional Research and Planning so that any concerns can be addressed.

From the list of approved names, the Office of Student Life selects five to eight individuals to serve on the panel.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERNAL REVIEW PANEL
The role of the Internal Review Panel is to provide input from the academic and administrative sides of the university. The variety of perspectives will give all panel members the chance to better appreciate the strengths weakness and needs of the
support unit and university as a whole.

Members of the Internal Review Panel are expected to make a commitment of time and effort throughout the program review process. Primary responsibilities of the Internal Review Panel’s members include:

- reading and evaluating materials submitted by the unit, including the self-study, organizational chart, previous annual budget reports and strategic plans, and using this information to identify areas of inquiry that will guide the review activities
- interviewing staff from the unit under review and customers and other key individuals who interface with or affect the work and performance of the unit
- attending and taking notes at Internal Review Panel meetings arranged by the Student Life Program Review Administrator(s) based on panel members’ availability and led by a designated panel chair
- drafting a preliminary findings and recommendations report for use by the External Review Panel
- meeting with the External Review Panel during their campus visit (note: members of the Internal Review Panel may contact external reviewers in advance of the campus visit to highlight key issues and questions and to provide expertise the external panel can use in their review activities)
- preparing the Unit Program Review Report, a concise assessment of the unit with recommendations for improvements

THE INTERNAL REVIEW PROCESS
In preparation for the review, panel members will meet with the Student Life Program Review Administrator to plan and prepare. During this orientation, the following materials are provided:

- Student Life Program Review Guidelines Manual
- Internal Review Panel Guide
- Secure website information
- External Review Panel contact information
- Unit under review’s self-study report and supporting documentation

The self-study report and supporting documentation are the basis for the Internal Review Panels activities. The panel carefully reads the self-study and determines the areas of inquiry that will be examined further.

Panel members will meet with the unit’s director, unit staff members and other individuals or groups (students, faculty, staff and community representatives) that the panel believes can provide valuable perspectives and key information related to the review. Throughout the internal review, panel members are encouraged to maintain contact with the External Review Panel to provide insights they might use in their portion of Program Review.
Panel members will have access to a BuckeyeBox folder and secure website, which will provide easy access to relevant documents including meeting notes and other materials. General information about Student Life Program Review is available at studentlife.osu.edu/programreview. Additionally, unit and other Student Life staff are available to provide staff, customer or student contact information; to assist in gathering additional data to support the review; and to arrange meetings when requested by the panel.

At the conclusion of the Internal Review Panel’s activities, the panel will draft a preliminary findings and recommendations report that will help inform the External Review Panel in preparation for their campus visit and throughout their review activities. The Internal Review Panel will also meet with the External Review Panel during the campus visit.

After the External Review Panel completes its visit, their findings and recommendations report is provided to the Internal Review Panel and incorporated into the final Unit Program Review Report.

THE UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT
The Internal Unit Review Panel is responsible for preparing the final Unit Program Review Report using information from the unit’s self-study, the Internal Review Panels findings and the External Review Panel’s findings. The report should be 12 to 15 pages long and provide a concise assessment of the unit under review and recommendations for improvements.

The Unit Program Review Report will include the following elements:

- **Evaluation of mission and key goals**: Briefly assesses the degree to which the unit’s mission and key goals support the university’s academic plan and Student Life goals and strategic initiatives; evaluates the unit’s success in achieving its mission and key goals
- **Customer perception of unit**: Summarizes customer feedback regarding the quality of services provided as obtained through customer surveys, interviews or focus groups; discusses additional services customers would like to receive from the unit and services customers believe can be discontinued; provides the unit’s perspective on their customers’ perceptions
- **Use of successful organization practices**: Assesses the effectiveness of the unit’s processes and capacity for building and sustaining performance excellence
- **Evaluation of resource usage**: Considering financial, human, space and equipment and technology support, provides commentary on the appropriateness of resource allocation and use given the unit’s mission and role in fulfilling the university’s academic plan and Student Life goals and strategic initiatives
- **Measuring of performance results**: Addresses how the successful the unit is in determining intended student learning and development outcomes and/or specific
business and service outcomes, user satisfaction, financial performance and other noteworthy performance results related to organizational effectiveness; discusses the relevance of key performance measure the unit uses to track results

- **Recommendations**: Discusses the strengths and limitations of the unit; discusses the key program and service, operational, resource and campus or community environment challenges the unit faces; provides concrete suggestions for improvement, including ways to build upon current strengths, overcome limitations and increase effectiveness and efficiency; offers specific strategies for addressing key challenges affecting the unit; recommends budget adjustments, providing the appropriate rationale

To avoid any factual errors in the Unit Program Review Report, the chair of the Internal Review Panel will share the report with the unit’s director. The unit director is advised not to discuss the report prior to submission.

The Unit Program Review Report, with the External Review Panel’s report attached as an addendum, is presented to the Program Review Administrator(s) for preliminary discussion before finally being presented to unit staff and the Senior Vice President for Student Life. The report is also submitted electronically to the Office of Student Life and shared with the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

Following consultation with the Senior Vice President for Student Life and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, a plan of action will be developed. This plan will include any budget adjustments based on matters raised during the program review process and included in the final report. One year after the implementation agreement is finalized, the Senior Vice President for Student Life will evaluate the unit’s progress.