**Administration & Finance Program Reviews**

**Writing the Program Review Report**

**(Updated Summer 2023)**

(These instructions may be used in conjunction with the Program Review Report Templates and Sample Reports that can be found on the [A&F Program Review Website](https://www.jmu.edu/avphr/programreviewresources/index.shtml))

*Program Review reports are the most important way that the findings and recommendations of the program review process are communicated to the unit head, AVP, and to the Senior Vice President for Administration & Finance.*

*The report should be thorough enough to reflect the depth of work of the committee but should not be so lengthy as to be counterproductive.*

*The report should answer these basic questions:*

* *Specifically, how did the committee conduct research to complement the self-study?*
* *What findings/conclusions were drawn as a result of the research? (What appears to be true about the unit, particularly in relation to its mission, vision, and values?)*
* *What recommendations does the committee suggest in consultation with the unit head to improve the unit’s performance?*

Committees may review reports that were generated by previous program reviews, to see how the reports are structured, and to observe how research can be best targeted to obtain findings and recommendations.

**Elements of the Report**

**Section 1: Executive Summary**

*The executive summary should be written so that if a reader only read this section, he or she will understand how the program review was conducted and what changes are being recommended as a result.*

* Write a brief overview of the report process including a general introduction and a very brief summary of the research methodology.
* List the important/relevant findings and/or conclusions that came about as a result of the review of the self-study as well as the research conducted by the committee.
  + **Finding:** A statement of fact about the unit that appears to be true based on evidence. The findings can be positive statements such as, “Ninety percent of customers agree that the unit provides prompt service” or a statement reflecting a gap such as, “There is a high frequency of incoming phone calls going to voice mail.”
* Perhaps the most important part of the report consists of the recommendations. These include specific steps/initiatives/improvements that the committee feels should be considered based on research and findings to improve the unit’s performance.
  + **Recommendation**: A specific suggestion that, if carried out, would likely result in improved unit quality/performance
  + **Recommendations**:
    - Should be specific
    - Should not be focused on what funding might be available nor should the recommendation be avoided due to a perception that funding may not be available
    - Should be tied to and be a direct result of fact-based findings
    - Should address such issues as:
      * Additional budget requirements
      * Additional positions needed
      * A change in policies/procedures
      * A change in internal processes
      * Further study of an issue
      * And more…

**Section 2: Main Report**

*In the main report, the committee co-chairs should provide full details. The Main Report should include the following:*

* Introductory Statement
* Overview
  + Include a detailed description of the program review process including a description of the methodology and a summary of the key issues from the unit’s self-study.
  + Mission, vision, values of the unit
    - Since the mission, vision, and values of the unit provide a basis by which performance is measured in the program review, that information should be included in the report.
  + Key elements of the SWOT analysis
    - List the predominant strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as reported as a result of the SWOT analysis.
* Program Review Committee List (Include name, home department, committee role)
* Research – The purpose of the research section is to describe what research was compiled by the program review committee and how each research subcommittee completed its work.
  + Overview
  + Research Subcommittee #1
    - Description
  + Research Subcommittee #2
    - Description
  + Research Subcommittee #3
    - Description
  + Etc.
* Findings – If there are details of findings/conclusions that weren’t considered strong enough to include in the executive summary but are still considered important, those should be listed.
* Recommendations (arising from findings) – If there are additional recommendations that were not considered primary but the committee feels are worth consideration, they should be listed here.

**Section 3 – Appendix**

The appendix is where the reports from the individual subcommittees and the raw data should be included. The appendix may include any or all of the following:

* + Findings/Recommendations from Subcommittee #1
  + Findings/Recommendations from Subcommittee #2
  + Findings/Recommendations from Subcommittee #3
  + Etc.
  + External Reviewers Report
  + Raw data from Subcommittee #1
  + Raw data from Subcommittee #2
  + Raw data from Subcommittee #3
  + Etc.