
Internal Self-Study Report

Format: The Internal Self-Study Report must conform to the following outline. Writers may supplement the self-study with additional sections that focus on issues most relevant to the program. As appropriate, information should be provided for both the academic unit and the involved academic program in situations where an academic unit includes multiple academic programs (e.g. Department of Graduate Psychology). Some sections may be referenced in the university SACSCOC compliance certification or other reports.

If units are referring to the university's accreditation with SACSCOC, the following statement must be used exactly how it is written according to SACSCOC policy:

James Madison University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist and doctorate degrees. Questions about the accreditation of James Madison University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Length: The narrative should be no more than 55 pages.

Documentation: When gathering documentation, use a four- or eight-year retrospective as deemed appropriate. In some cases, the data may be more appropriate using an eight-year recall to show significant trends. In other cases, a four-year recall going back to the Interim Report may highlight the significance of the issue.

Timeline: See *Instructions and Guidelines* for all important dates and requirements for the April 15 and November 15 due dates.

Submission: Upload the following items to the program Microsoft Teams file:

1. MS Word of Internal Self-Study Report. The proposed external consultant list should **not** be included in the self-study document. Upload a separate file.
2. All documentation, organized by section number. All documentation must be saved in .pdf format, including hyperlinks, organized by section number.

Outline of the Internal Self-Study Report

I. Table of Contents

II. Executive Summary

III. Self-Study Report

Begin by developing an outline of the critical questions and specific areas for review by the external review team.

1. University, College and Academic Unit Structure; Mission; APR History; Strategic Plan

- Briefly describe where the academic unit and program fit into the organizational structure of the college, and university. Provide the current mission statement of the college, academic unit and program. Explain how the current academic unit's mission statement supports the college and university mission statements and the date of when each statement was adopted. Discuss the relationship to the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan (AASP) <https://www.jmu.edu/academic-affairs/aasp.shtml>.
- Discuss significant changes, if any, within the unit and program, since the previous APR.
- Compare the number of students currently served by the academic unit and individual major/program to the number since the previous APR. Use the following categories, as applicable: Undergraduate or graduate; minors, general education, pre-professional programs, elective courses, other.
- Present Strategic Plan/Initiatives and the APR objectives in the JMU STAR Tool.

Suggested Documentation: Number of declared majors and minors – a four or eight-year retrospective summary (provided by the Office of Academic Affairs Resources or academic unit records). Include TABLO of end of year data looking at the last 8 years; and data from OIR: <https://www.jmu.edu/oir/enrollment.shtml> - interactive data; Current program strategic plan; *the previous strategic plan to demonstrate when it was revised and how it has changed*; include previous APR External Report/Response; and APR Interim Report.

2. Academic Unit and Academic Program Goals and Objectives

- List the academic unit's goals and objectives, if appropriate. If the self-study is program specific, list instead the program's goals and objectives and discuss how they relate to the academic unit goals and objectives.
- Discuss how the unit determines appropriate measurable goals and outcomes for student achievement consistent with its mission.
- Identify and briefly describe the major activities that have supported efforts in achieving these goals and objectives.

Suggested Documentation: Links to undergraduate and/or graduate catalogs or other documentation.

3. Academic Program Structure

- Describe the program requirements and curriculum design. Describe the most recent curriculum revisions and when they were undertaken, and if the program is considering future curriculum changes.
- Discuss coherence and integrity of the curriculum when compared to standards of best practice as determined by regional and national learned societies. Discuss responsiveness of the curriculum to societal needs.

Suggested Documentation: Links to undergraduate and/or graduate catalogs; selected course descriptions; selection of key course syllabi from fall and spring semesters. Appropriate Curriculum & Instruction documents; Comparative data with peer institutions; State mandates providing curriculum requirements and/or guidelines, if appropriate; Program/professional Accreditation guidelines, if appropriate.

4. Program Viability and Resources

- Evaluate the viability of the program in terms of state, regional and national needs. State what is unique about the JMU program. If this is a professional program describe how the program addresses specific needs for training of graduates at the state, regional, or national level. Discuss this in terms of placement of students and demand for students with specific types of training.
- Discuss national benchmarks and/or discipline standards; discuss how the JMU program compares; discuss success rates of JMU graduates on any required or optional national exam e.g. PRAXIS, CHES, Athletic Training (BOCATC), etc. Set benchmarks and minimum targets for national exam scores, pass rates or internal exams (for external accreditation), as appropriate.
- Assess the size of the program regarding need for expansion or contraction. Discuss if the program is expecting increasing or decreasing demand. Discuss demand for the program and placement of majors in the employment market.
- Citing the enrollment figures in item 1 (University, College and Academic Unit Structure; Mission; APR History), discuss how resources have changed (increased, decreased or stayed the same) due to changes in enrollment. Discuss changes that have resulted from technology, for example, increase in classroom technology due to larger class sizes.

Suggested Documentation: National/state data sources, i.e., U.S. Dept. of Labor; professional associations.

5. Role of Program in the College and the University

- Discuss the relationship of the program to college and university-wide efforts, including undergraduate or graduate programs; minor offerings; cross disciplinary programs; pre-professional programs; and non-majors.
- If the program has a strong relationship to General Education, describe how the program fits within the General Education structure and the involvement of the program.
- Describe how faculty in the program contribute to other programs, specifically, Honors College, diversity, equity and inclusion, civic engagement, and Quality Enhancement Planning; discuss relevant resource considerations.

Suggested Documentation: The service role of the academic unit – a four or eight-year retrospective of overall enrollments in service courses, General Education, honors, etc. including changes in student-faculty ratio as well as race/gender information provided by the Office of Academic Affairs and from academic unit records.

6. Role of Faculty in the Program

- Describe significant faculty achievements regarding teaching, advising, research and/or creative activity, service and support activities, outreach and civic engagement activities.
- Discuss responsibilities of full-time faculty, including faculty teaching load, research/artistic portfolio and service requirements. Include professional development for full- and part-time faculty.
- Describe the Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) responsiveness within your unit/department including how a diverse pool of faculty and portfolio of scholarly activity is encouraged, supported, and rewarded. Specifically address annual or multi-year demographic

targets and scholarship activity expectations. Discuss JEDI initiatives in faculty hiring and retention effort

- Discuss how faculty engage with the Office of Research and Scholarship, other units/departments, other colleges, and external collaborators in scholarly pursuits.

Suggested Documentation: External support and sponsored research – a four or eight -year retrospective (provided by Sponsored Programs); Faculty vitae or website profiles or summary of faculty information; Faculty Promotion and Tenure Guidelines

7. Assessment of Student Learning Objectives

- In conjunction with your academic unit assessment liaison and CARS assessment liaison, provide an interpretation of assessment findings about the quality of student learning in the program. Focus on interpretation of data and how the results were used.
- Discuss strengths and weaknesses of student progress on learning objectives.
- Discuss changes made, or being considered, to the program based on assessment results.
- Discuss the quality of the program's assessment activities, including strengths and weaknesses of assessment tools used by the program.
- Discuss best practices

Suggested Documentation: Curriculum map from the program's latest Assessment Progress Template (APT); Note: Do not include the curriculum map in the narrative; place in the documentation section; Published Best Practice documents – State/National professional/higher educational groups.

8. Role of Students and Alumni in the Program

- Students: Describe the involvement of students in program affairs including student organizations.
- Discuss student perception of the program.
- Describe the academic and pre-career advising system within the program. Discuss best practices
- Discuss diversity, equity and inclusion civic engagement efforts with students.
- Discuss Quality Enhancement Planning (QEP) involvement with students
- Alumni: Disseminate alumni survey. Using the results, describe the involvement of alumni in program affairs. Discuss alumni perception of the program, including program effectiveness. Undergraduate programs should contact the Office of Institutional Research for assistance with the Alumni Survey.

Suggested Documentation: Summaries of student evaluations, exit interviews, focus groups; alumni survey results, national exams, etc.; Published Best Practice documents – State/National professional/higher educational groups

9. Quality and Quantity of Academic and Administrative Support

- Discuss the level of support for the academic unit and program. Address the adequacy of the staffing level of the program using discipline norms and best practices for comparisons.
 - Consider classified and wage staff; graduate and teaching assistants; student assistants; advising support.
 - Consider the following full-time faculty; part-time faculty: How do the teaching loads of tenured faculty compare with national benchmarks and/or our peer group? What portion of undergraduate teaching is done by full-time faculty compared to our peer group?
- Additionally, evaluate the adequacy of the following resources in carrying out the mission of the academic unit and program:

- Library resources, indicating the levels and quality of access to information
- Technological support
- Non-personnel-based support (e.g. operating budget, grants, foundation money)
- Facilities in the academic unit and program including classrooms, labs, other instructional facilities and office space

Suggested Documentation: Other documentation should include the Academic Unit Budget Information – salary and non-salary as an 8-year retrospective summary. This should be more of a summary talking about trends, rather than providing extensive tables. For example, eight years ago the budget for technology was \$X; highlight budget increases, or budget infusions over the eight years and today the budget for technology is \$Y. Look at expenditures within categories in their budget do not just report a bottom line. Another example would be to show the trend of expenditures on faculty travel; Documentation demonstrating what professional/higher educational groups regard as appropriate and adequate library collections/resources/support including alignment of library/learning staff with programs.; Documentation demonstrating that students at off-campus sites and taking distance education courses are provided adequate support.

10. Potential Areas for Additional Review/Consulting and Recommended Consultants

- a. Based on the findings of the self-study, finalize two to three areas (in rank order) in which external consulting could benefit the program. These should not be generalities – the program must identify specific needs that will result in measurable outcomes. For example, the program may need assistance in developing a master’s program, managing enrollment or developing hybrid-type instruction. List the areas and provide a brief (two-three paragraphs) justification for each. Keep in mind that budget initiatives are the proper avenue for requesting resources (faculty lines, space, equipment, etc.) The external review should not be viewed as a process to request more resources. An external review team might suggest different ways of managing teaching loads, accommodating increased student demand, etc. that would result in resource neutral solutions.
- b. Considering the needs and areas for review identified in item a, list 3-5 critical questions for the external consultants to explore and respond to during the external review/site visit.
- c. Identify 6-10 consultants who have the expertise to provide substantive feedback related to one or more areas for review and critical questions. A team of 3-4 will be confirmed. See *External Consultant Selection on page 29*.