



Unit Program Review

Finance and Support Services
Division

March 2015

Finance and Support Services Division Unit Program Review

Units in the Finance and Support Services Division will undergo a review every five years based on a comprehensive set of criteria. The review is intended to help the units assess their current performance levels and provide practical strategies for implementation to ensure high-quality performance and customer satisfaction. The review will cover four stages: 1) a self-evaluation addressing six criteria and concluding with an overview of proposed changes, 2) an onsite review team reviewing the unit's performance levels and proposed changes, 3) a written report from the review team consisting of feedback and recommended actions, and 4) the unit's response and plan of action.

Review Teams, typically three to four individuals, should consist of experienced senior officers carefully chosen by the unit supervisor and approved by the Vice President for Finance and Support Services (VPFSS). Care should be taken to ensure that the team is comprised of respected and knowledgeable peers from campuses with similar educational, financial, and physical characteristics.

The **self-evaluation** criteria are selected to help evaluators quickly focus on the real issues – quality and effectiveness. They are: 1) leadership, 2) strategic and operational planning, 3) customer focus and process improvement, 4) assessment and performance results, 5) staff quality and development, and 6) other considerations the VPFSS would like addressed. The conclusion of the self-evaluation report will provide an overview of proposed changes resulting from the unit's self-study findings.

The **site visit** provides an opportunity to clarify issues in the self-evaluation and talk firsthand to constituencies throughout the organization. An institutional representative will guide the review team and answer its inquiries. The review team should have a team leader who will work with the institutional representative to determine interview schedules and clarify aspects of the self-evaluation.

At the conclusion of the onsite visit, the team leader will share the team's assessment, based on the completion of the External Review Summary Sheet, in an oral report with the unit supervisor and direct reports. The oral report will assist in verifying facts, reinforcing their impressions, hearing reactions, and providing the unit group an idea of what the **written report** will contain. The written report should include detailed recommendations that, when implemented, will ensure high-quality performance and customer satisfaction.

After the written report is received by the unit supervisor, the unit will address each recommendation and develop a **plan of action** to be shared with the VPFSS.

The following is the schedule units in the Finance and Support Services Division will follow. Self-evaluations should begin in the calendar year noted.

2014 – Facilities

2015 – Financial Services with Budget and Treasurer

2015 – Human Resources

2016 – Auxiliary Services

2016 – Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management

2017 – Transportation Services

2017 – Vice President Office with Space Management and Real Estate

Self-Evaluation

The unit supervisor will appoint a Self-Evaluation Chair and staff as appropriate to serve as the Self-Evaluation Team. Designate particular members to oversee and write different parts of the self-study report.

The self-evaluation criteria selected to help evaluators quickly focus on the real issues – quality and effectiveness, are: 1) leadership, 2) strategic and operational planning, 3) customer focus and process improvement, 4) assessment and performance results, 5) staff quality and development, and 6) other considerations the VPFSS would like addressed.

The unit supervisor will request the VPFSS to provide additional questions to be addressed before the Self-Evaluation Team is brought together.

The final evaluation report should be organized with the following components:

- Cover Page – title, year of the self-evaluation, name of the unit(s) under review, name of unit supervisor, and names of the Self-Evaluation Team.
- Table of Contents
- Self-Study addressing the 6 self-evaluation criteria
- Conclusion - an overview of proposed changes resulting from the unit's self-study findings
- Appendix – data/evidence supporting the self-evaluation

When answering the self-evaluation questions, be concise and mindful of readers who may not be familiar with special language (i.e., jargon) or acronyms typically used in the unit(s) under review. All questions should be answered completely. There should be sufficient/relevant evidence to produce valid/reliable results.

Before bringing the Onsite Review Team (Review Team) to campus, the unit supervisor will provide a draft copy of the self-evaluation, with all appendices, to the VPFSS to review. Any feedback provided by the vice president should be included in the report and then be considered final. An electronic copy of the final self-evaluation report must be provided to the vice president's office for archiving.

It is recommended that a self-evaluation report be completed within three months.

Self-Evaluation Criteria

1.0 Leadership

- 1.1 Provide a brief introductory paragraph about the unit(s) and a copy of the organization chart(s).
- 1.2 Describe the roles and responsibilities of the head of unit and direct reports, including the decision-making structure for the unit and what is generally understood by internal and external stakeholders.
- 1.3 Describe the process by which the head of unit and direct reports in the unit conduct self-examination, receive feedback, and make improvements.
- 1.4 Describe how effective the leadership of the unit has been in establishing and sustaining internal and external communications plans that (a) educate the campus community on the unit's role in institution success; (b) promote customer and stakeholder feedback; and (c) reinforce the role of front-line staff in creating a positive public impression of the quality of organization services.
- 1.5 Describe leadership development and succession plans presently in place, if any, to ensure continuity of leadership.

2.0 Strategic and Operational Planning

- 2.1 Provide a copy of the unit mission and vision and describe how the unit aligns its mission and vision with those of the division and university.
- 2.2 Describe the process used to develop the strategic plan and the process to ensure the goals and strategies are periodically reviewed.
- 2.3 Describe current strategies to ensure continuity of functions in the event of staff turnover or other unanticipated disruptions.
- 2.4 Describe the process used to develop a budget that supports the unit's goals and strategies.
- 2.5 Describe any significant plans or new initiatives that will be undertaken in the next three years.
- 2.6 Describe what challenges exist to make your unit more effective and how you will respond.

3.0 Customer Focus and Process Improvement

- 3.1 Describe how the needs and expectations of both internal and external customers are identified.
- 3.2 Describe the processes available to customers that encourage them to provide feedback on results and/or perceptions of quality and value.
- 3.3 Since the previous Self-Study and Peer Review, what significant changes have occurred that impact the services of this unit?
- 3.4 List the services/processes the unit does well. List the services/processes that are in need of improvement.

3.5 Briefly describe the software systems in use by the unit. Describe the process used to ensure that hardware and software systems are effective, user friendly, secure, reliable, and up to date.

4.0 Assessment and Performance Results

4.1 Describe the methods used for evaluating operational effectiveness and the quality of service to users. Provide copies of recent assessments implemented, such as surveys and focus groups.

4.2 Describe changes you have implemented as a result of the feedback you received from the various assessments.

4.3 Describe how those changes impacted your customers/stakeholders and how you know.

5.0 Staff Quality and Development

5.1 Describe the process used to identify and develop position responsibilities, determine competencies required and develop job descriptions to ensure these align with the unit.

5.2 Describe the process used by the unit for orienting new employees so they can successfully fulfill their responsibilities.

5.3 Describe how work performance and attendance expectations are reviewed and the process used to communicate such information to employees.

5.4 Describe how staff maintain an adequate level of professional competence through participation in professional organizations, institutional training programs or other development activities.

5.5 Describe employee recognition programs and practices and how they are used to encourage, recognize, and reward improved performance.

6.0 Other Considerations

At the request of the Vice President for Finance and Support Services, this section would include any items or subjects that are not covered by the criteria in sections 1 through 5. These items may include those things that are specific to the unit.

Conclusion

Describe what was learned by addressing the responses to each of the self-evaluation criteria. This should include any changes you want to make to improve your unit's 1) leadership effectiveness, 2) strategic and operating planning performance, 3) customer focus and process improvement, 4) assessment and performance results, 5) staff quality and development, and 6) other considerations requested by the Vice President for Finance and Support Services.

Appendix

Evidence is a crucial element for the findings and conclusions in your report. Please include all evidence that supports your report in an appendix. Clearly label your evidence and identify its relevance to the report.

Onsite Review Team and Written Report

The Onsite Review Team (Review Team) will be identified by the unit supervisor and approved by the Vice President for Finance and Support Services before being contacted. The team will include individuals external to the unit(s) under review from peer or other appropriate institutions of higher education in the same disciplinary field and may include individuals at Texas State whose role provides them with a perspective that will result in constructive analysis and recommendations for future planning and improvements.

The Review Team will:

- Review the self-evaluation prior to the site visit. Materials should be delivered at least 4 weeks before the scheduled visit.
- Participate in a pre-visit conference call with the Vice President for Finance and Support Services to identify key issues or specific concerns with the self-evaluation and site visit.
- Participate in a site visit to meet with faculty, students, staff and/or senior administrators as appropriate.
- Complete an external review report within two weeks of the site visit.

The site visit provides an opportunity to clarify issues in the self-evaluation and talk firsthand to faculty, staff, students, and senior administrators throughout the organization. An institutional representative will guide the Review Team and answer its inquiries. The Review Team should have a team leader. The team leader will work with the institutional representative to determine interview schedules and clarify aspects of the self-evaluation.

The Review Team should meet, at a minimum, with the Vice President for Finance and Support Services, the Self-Evaluation Team, a group of faculty familiar with the unit, a group of students, and a group of staff and/or senior administrators familiar with the unit. Time should be allowed for the Review Team to meet and consolidate their thoughts and recommendations before debriefing the unit supervisor and direct reports.

At the conclusion of the visit, the team leader of the Review Team will share the team's assessment in an oral report with the unit supervisor and the direct reports. The oral report will assist in verifying facts, reinforcing their impressions, hearing reactions, and providing the unit group an idea of what the written report will contain.

The written report should identify strengths/achievements and weaknesses/concerns along with the evidence that supports the claim. The written report should include detailed recommendations that, when implemented, will ensure high-quality performance and customer satisfaction.

Plan of Action

After the written report is received by the unit supervisor, the unit will address each recommendation and develop a plan of action for future improvements to be shared with the Vice President for Finance and Support Services.

The plan of action should include a detailed list of the required resources to make these changes and identification of the necessary sources of funding. The vice president will identify which changes he endorses, those changes he endorses contingent upon funding availability and those changes he does not endorse along with his rationale.

Progress updates on the agreed upon action items should be integrated into the unit's annual reporting. The unit leader is responsible for ensuring that progress is made and monitored.