NOTES FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS
(Revised, February 2017)
(also see "Checklist for Departments/Programs Undergoing External Review" available on Provost's website)

This document provides additional information related to the external team visit, guidelines for the self-study, and suggested elements for the self-study.

The Provost's office will:

1. Select and contact the team.
2. Select dates for visit. Visits are scheduled for the fall or spring semester.
3. Make lodging arrangements.
4. Arrange appointments on the calendar of the Provost.
   a. Welcome reception from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday
   b. Meeting with Provost from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. on Monday
   c. Exit meeting with Provost and Dean of Curriculum and Research from 11:00 am to 12 noon on Tuesday
5. Supply budget, enrollment, and grade information to the department or program.
6. Cover reasonable costs for the review.

The Program or Department Responsibilities:

1. By **April 1st**: Department Head/Program Chair should schedule a meeting with the Dean of Curriculum and Research to discuss the external review process and expectations.
2. By **May 1st**: a) Recommend review team members and any criteria you would like the team to meet (e.g., "at least one team member with expertise in _____"). Recommendations for team members should include a short description of their qualifications and should be sent to the Dean of Curriculum and Research. Preferential rank ordering of review team members is encouraged. b) Draft, in consultation with colleagues, a list of 6-8 guiding questions for the review and a process for drafting the self-study review.
3. By **May 15th**: a) Send dates that should not be considered for the visit to the Dean of Curriculum and Research. Dates during which multiple members of the department/ program are expected to be at a professional conference should not be considered as dates for the team visit. b) The Department or Program Chair meets with the Dean of Curriculum and Research to discuss the guiding questions for the self-study.
4. Write self-study
   a. Should involve input and review by all department/program members (or advisory committee members).

    b. Collect curriculum vitae for each faculty member in the department/program and anyone who regularly teaches in the department/program.

    c. Collect course syllabi for all courses.

5. **Approximately four months before the team visit**: The Dean of Curriculum and Research will provide information on review team membership and team visit dates. Department Head/Program Chair makes contact with team members.

6. **At least 3 months before the team visit**: A draft self-study including an executive summary should be sent to the Dean of Curriculum and Research. Comments and additional questions will be returned to the department/program.

7. **At least 6 weeks before the team visit**: Revised self-study should be sent to the Dean of Curriculum and Research for final approval.

8. **At least 6 weeks before the team visit**: Develop a tentative schedule for the visit. Send the tentative schedule for the visit to the Dean of Curriculum and Research for approval.

9. The schedule for the team visit should include the following information with locations for each:

    a. *Sunday*

        i. Anticipated time of arrival at the Lafayette Inn

        ii. Tour of department/program/campus facilities (typically scheduled before the Sunday afternoon reception)

        iii. Welcoming reception (5 to 6 p.m. on Sunday)

            • All members and staff in the department should be invited

            • Anyone who is meeting with the team during the team's visit (excluding students) should be invited.

            • If the anticipated attendance is less than 20, the reception should be omitted

        iv. Team dinner Sunday evening with department head/program chair and up to two additional members of department/program

    b. *Monday*

        i. Team picked up from Lafayette Inn by a department/program representative

        ii. Meeting with Provost and Dean of Curriculum and Research (9 to 10 a.m.)

        iii. Meetings

            • Faculty members (can be in groups)

            • Department Heads/Program Chairs of collaborating departments/programs

            • Students

        iv. Team dinner (team only) Monday evening

    c. *Tuesday*

        i.   Team work time Tuesday morning

        ii.   Exit meeting, Department Head/Program Chair (10 to 11 a.m.)

        iii.   Exit meeting, Office of the Provost (11 a.m. to noon)

        iv.   The schedule should note that box lunches will be available for the team members at the end of this meeting

10. **At least 4 weeks before the team visit**: Assemble materials for the review team and the Office of the Provost and make them available to team members.

    a.   It is suggested that the materials include:

        i.   List of team members, with contact information and short bios or curriculum vitae

        ii.   Tentative schedule for visit

        iii.   Self-study

        iv.   Supporting documents

- Syllabi
- Updated Faculty Curriculum Vitae
- Department/Program Budget
- Enrollment Data
- Grade Distribution Reports
- Most recent report prepared by the Office of Institutional Research for the department/program providing data on faculty count, number of graduates, number of advisees, and statistics on sizes of sections and subsections in the department.

    b.   The Department Head/Program Chair should invite the team to modify the schedule to meet the team's needs once they have reviewed the department's/program's materials.

11. Collect W-9 forms from team members when they are on campus and send to the Dean of Curriculum and Research.

12. When team members submit their receipts and mileage, complete an expense report for each team member and submit the report to the Dean of Curriculum and Research.

13. Costs: The department should keep documentation of all costs incurred for the evaluation. Once the visit is completed, a summary of the expenses with accompanying documentation should be submitted to the Dean of Curriculum and Research and a transfer of charges will be processed to reimburse the department.

14. **As soon as possible after team and visit are finalized:**

    a.   Post external review materials to the Spaces site dedicated for your department/program's external review. Contact Jason Alley (ITS) if you have questions about access to the Spaces site (alleyj@lafayette.edu; x5884)

    b.   Contact Janemarie Duh (ITS) to arrange for external review team members to have electronic access to the review materials on Spaces (duhj@lafayette.edu, X5609)

c. Make room reservations and arrangements for the following:
    i. Sunday welcome reception (the Clay Ketcham Room or Wilson Room are common options).
        - Appetizers
        - Wine bar
        - Name tags for everyone attending
    ii. Dinner reservations for Sunday and Monday night (Sogo and River Grille are common options)
    iii. For Monday night dinner, prepare detailed directions and dinner reservation information for the team. Include a contact number for someone, in case the team has a problem.
    iv. Lunch w/students, if applicable.
    v. Location for team to conduct interviews w/faculty.
        - It is most efficient for the team to remain in one room and have people come to them. This room should be reserved for the day if possible, depending on the number of interviews to be conducted. It is common to schedule appointments in one-hour increments with 15 minutes between each interview.
        - You may want to provide refreshments (water and coffee) in room for the team.
    vi. Box lunches to be available to team at noon on Tuesday.

Guidelines for Self-Study

The external review begins with a self-study by the program or department that states the department's mission, goals, and objectives and how they align with the mission of Lafayette College. The self-study also analyzes the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of the department or program. At the beginning of the process of writing the self-study, the Office of the Provost will work with the department/program to construct a list of questions that should be answered by the review process. Examples of the sort of questions that might arise include:

1. How does the department or program incorporate issues of diversity in the curriculum, recruitment and retention of students, student advising and mentoring, etc.?
2. How is the use of the library integrated into courses and the major?
3. How is the use of technology integrated into courses and the major?
4. How does the existing curriculum compare to national norms or to innovative curricula at other institutions?
5. What pedagogical or curricular approaches should the department or program

consider? What resources (faculty specialization, equipment, space, etc.) would make such approaches feasible?

6. Is the program's assessment plan sufficient to produce useful information for ongoing program review and revision? Are there other models that might be considered?

7. Does the range of faculty specialization serve well the mission of the department? With the mission of Lafayette College? How does it compare with programs at comparable institutions?

8. What areas of faculty specialization are not represented by the program that may be essential to an undergraduate major?

9. What types of individualized instruction/research opportunities are offered to undergraduate students and how may these be enhanced?

10. Are there ways that the program might better integrate with scholarly or curricular efforts across the campus?

11. How is faculty mentoring incorporated within the department or program?

This initial list of questions is intended to help constrain what can become an unwieldy process. After the self-study has been drafted, the Provost and the Dean of Curriculum and Research will review the draft, offering comments and adding focus to the initial list of questions. The department or program will then finalize the self-study.

The self-study ideally should be written as a narrative and begin with an executive summary. To assist the department in its self-study, the Provost's office has prepared the following list of suggested items that should be addressed in the narrative, as appropriate to the program or department and the questions being directly considered as part of this review. Of increasing importance is the self-study's discussion of student learning outcomes and the assessment process for program level student learning outcomes.

Suggested Elements in a Self-Study

Curriculum and Pedagogy

1. Summary information about course offerings, including:
   a. The standard cycle of courses (how often each is offered, and how many sections).
   b. The rationale for rotation of courses and for special topics.
   c. The rationale for offering particular courses outside of the standard core for the field.
   d. The rationale for the class sizes across the department/program offerings.
   e. A description of how courses are assigned to individual members of the department/program.

2. What pedagogical strategies does the department/program employ? How does this vary from course to course or instructor to instructor?

3. How active is the department/program in internships, independent study, and mentoring student research including Excel Scholars and honors theses?
4. Summary information about advising, including:
    a. Distribution of pre-declaration advising across the department/major.
    b. Distribution of major advising across the department/major.
5. How do department/program courses contribute to interdisciplinary majors or minors?
6. How does the department/program participate in the First-Year Seminar program or support other courses that are outside of department/program offerings?

Outcomes Assessment
1. What are the student learning outcomes of the courses in the department/program?
2. What evidence is collected for program level student learning outcomes?
3. How does the department/program conduct reviews of the evidence collected for program level student learning outcomes?
4. How has the department/program improved courses and/or programs based on the student learning outcome assessment process?

Staffing
1. Describe the existing range of faculty specialization.
2. How is the teaching load calculated in this department/program? Are teaching loads equitable within the department/program? How are labs calculated for teaching load credits? Is the faculty member the principal instructor in the lab? What is the role of the lab assistant (whether faculty or student)?
3. What is the ratio of faculty to students in this department/program?
4. What is the faculty/student advising ratio? Do all faculty participate in advising majors? In advising first-year students? Double majors? Minors? How does the department/program help faculty advise first-year students?
5. Are part-time instructors employed by the department/program? If so, for which courses? What is the rationale for using part-time instructors? (e.g., enrollments beyond staffing capacity, specializations/expertise of part-time instructors, etc.)
6. What efforts has the department/program made to recruit faculty from underrepresented groups? What have been the results? What efforts does it plan to make?

Scholarship and Creative Activity
1. Summary information about scholarly interests and departmental or programmatic productivity.
2. Are there particular strengths within the department/program?
3. How does the range of expertise and productivity compare to programs or departments at peer institutions?

4. Describe the ways in which the department or program supports research and creative activity.

Facilities and Equipment
1. An overview of the existing facilities and equipment.
2. To what degree are current facilities and equipment used to their maximum potential?
3. Does the department/program have a long-range plan for replacement and upgrading of equipment?