# Department/Program Curriculum Review Guidelines

The objective of the curriculum review is to verify the extent to which the Department and its programs (both graduate and undergraduate) enhance student learning, engagement, experience and outcomes. It also considers whether the disciplines represented in the department are adequately covered and match current theories and practices.

Your curriculum review may be guided by several drivers, for example:

* Changing nature of the discipline.
* To rationalize your offering, for example by avoiding duplicate provision or reducing the assessment burden for staff and students.
* Opportunities offered by new learning technologies.
* Increasing cohort size.
* Shifting student demographics.
* Trends in student retention, progression and achievement (including attainment gaps between students from different demographic groups).
* Trends in student course evaluations.
* Trends in recruitment.
* Changing expectations of professional statutory and regulatory bodies.
* Analysis of program information.
* Original aims and outcomes of the program having been lost through drift' over time.

Regardless of the drivers and the scale of the review, the process of curriculum review and enhancement can be a valuable developmental process for both individuals and program teams. It has the potential, if planned and executed well, to improve communication and collaboration between staff, leading to a stronger program team ethos and program identity.

**Note that this is a review of the department curricular offerings and not a review of faculty. Please do not include any personal information or comments on faculty work.**

Please see below the review scheduling plan

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | fall 2017 | fall 2018 | fall 2019 | fall 2020 | fall 2021 | fall 2022 | fall 2023 | fall 2024 | fall 2025 | fall 2026 | fall 2027 | fall 2028 | fall 2029 | fall 2030 |
| Art History and Fine Arts | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| Comparative Literature and English |  | X |  |  |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |
| Computer Science, Mathematics and Environmental Science |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |
| Economics |  |  |  | X |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| Film Studies |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |
| French Studies and Modern Languages |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |
| Global Communications | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| History | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |
| International and Comparative Politics | X |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  |
| International Business Administration |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |
| Psychology |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |  |  |  | X |  |

# CURRICULUM REVIEW TIMETABLE

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| PHASE | DUE DATE | ACTION/ITEM |
| Information collection and planning | By October 1 | Meeting of Chair with Dean and Provost  Background material available ([see appendix A](#APPENDIX_A)) |
| **FALL** | Ongoing conversations among members of the department ([see appendix A](#APPENDIX_A))   * Self study plan ([see appendix A](#APPENDIX_A)) * Identification of possible external consultants ([see appendix B](#APPENDIX_B)) * Alumni and Majors Surveys ([see appendix C](#APPENDIX_C))   You may also find useful some of the reference material in appendix I. |
| December 20 | Planning document to Dean and Provost, including external consultants proposal |
| Finalization of Curriculum Review Plan | January 15 | Consultation with Dean and Provost |
| January - February | Consultations with various constituencies, including, for example, Curriculum Committee and other standing committees, Registrar (is degree auditable?), Student affairs office, Admissions office, Advising, Internship and Careers office |
| February 15 | Analysis of alumni & senior surveys and planning of interviews ([see appendix C](#APPENDIX_C)) |
| February 28 | Final version of planning document to Dean and Provost |
| Curriculum Review | **SPRING** | Ongoing conversations among members of the ([see appendix D](#_APPENDIX_D:_OUTLINE)), students, faculty and staff at large. |
| March 30 | Report on revision of survey data and interviews with alumni and students ([see appendix C](#APPENDIX_C)) |
| May 15 –September 1 | External consultants receive self-study report and supporting materials (at least 30 days prior to visit) with copy to Dean and Provost ([see appendix F](#_APPENDIX_F:_CONSULTANTS’)) |
| May 15 –September 1 | Plan for external consultants’ visit to AUP |
| October 15 | External consultants’ visit must be completed |
| November 15 | External consultants’ report submitted to Dean, Provost and Chair |
| End November | Concluding meeting with Dean and Provost ([see appendix G](#_APPENDIX_G:_MEETING)) |
| Wrap-up | December 15 | Summary of action items (based on self-study report and reviewers input) to the Dean and Provost ([see appendix H](#APPENDIX H: CONCLUDING SUMMARY AND ASSESSMENT PLAN)) |
| February 15 | Meet with Dean to develop new assessment plan |
| May 15 | Submit new assessment plan as part of the departmental report |

# APPENDIX A: INFORMATION COLLECTION PHASE

## Background information available to department:

This information is made available to departments by the office of Assessment, Learning and Institutional Research by October 1st.

* Latest update of departmental mission as provided in departmental reports
* Program(s) assessment for the last three years
* List of course offerings for the last two years
* Most recent syllabi of the courses offered in the last two years
* Departmental dashboard (data about students, majors, courses, etc.)
* Departmental reports
* Last 5 years[[1]](#footnote-1) results from alumni and senior surveys of the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS) for majors in the department.
* Summary of internships taken by majors in the department
* List of study trips offered by the department in the last five years
* Self-designed majors and petitions (prerequisite waiving and substitutions) of majors in the department

## Guide to departmental discussion

Based on the information above and after discussions with members of the department/program on the following points, the Chair will complete the planning document:

* What are the most important issues you expect to consider during the review?
* What objectives and constraints will guide the curriculum review? E.g., academic excellence, student and faculty retention, student and faculty recruitment, cross-disciplinarity, faculty expertise, etc.
* What is the likely evolution of the discipline(s) represented in the department in the next five years?
* What type of curriculum other schools propose in those disciplines
* What sources of information and evidence do you have, or need, in order to examine your department/program?
* How the review process will include all faculty in the department?
* What is your expected outcome of the review? How do you know it has been successful?
* Five years down the line, what are our majors doing? What are we preparing students for? How does that affect the curriculum that is being offered? How does curriculum assist students to make career decisions?

## Planning Document for curricular review (3 - 5 pages)

The planning document should contain the following information:

1. **Objective** - In broad terms, what do you intend to achieve with the review
2. **Discussion** - What were the main outcomes of the preliminary discussion?
3. **People** - Who is responsible for: (1) Leading the review; (2) Being the main contact point for the Provost and Dean; (3) The day to day planning and coordination. Do you expect to involve students?
4. **Deliverables** - What structures will be created, e.g., working groups to lead on various strands of the work; what deliverables will they produce?
5. **Resources** - How much time do you expect various members of the department will dedicate to the review? Do they require training? Do you plan to apply for any of the available grants?
6. **Risks** - What could go wrong? How can you mitigate the risk?
7. **Timetable** - List of tasks with deadlines, deliverables, and responsible person. Remember to include communication tasks and to respect the overall calendar above.
8. **External consultants proposal** ([see appendix B](#APPENDIX_B))
9. **Alumni and majors surveys** ([see appendix C](#APPENDIX_C))

# APPENDIX B: EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS

This normally takes the form of a two-day visit to AUP by a team of two colleagues from other institutions or it may consist of a visit by several members of AUP’s department or program to other institutions. For either visit, you are asked consider the following:

1. **Criteria for Selection**: External consultants should be selected on the basis of their experience with excellent undergraduate programs and/or with a graduate program to which we would like to be able to send our students. A list of 3 to 5 possible consultants, together with a brief statement of their qualifications and CV’s should be submitted to the Dean and Provost, along with the Planning Document after the department has agreed on the choice of consultants.
2. **Budget**: AA will make all local travel, lodging, and meal arrangements for the consultants in collaboration with the Chair. These expenses may be charged against the curricular review account. The cost of the review, including €500 honoraria to the consultants and all local expenses, should not exceed the budgeted amount.
3. **Schedule for Visit**: Departments/programs should plan the consultants' schedule for the campus visit. Visits should allow time for consultants to meet with students as well as with members of the department or program. Many consultants will want to meet with faculty members from outside of the department/program as well. A joint meeting of the consultants with the Dean and the Provost should be included in the schedule.

**Sample schedule for visit:**

*Sunday*

* Arrive in Paris
* Kick off dinner

*Monday & Tuesday*

* Meet faculty who teach in the programs
* Meet with staff who support the programs in Academic Affairs, Admissions, Registrar’s Office,
* Library, etc.
* Meet students one-on-one and in small groups
* Visit classes

*Wednesday*

* Debrief with Provost and Vice President/Director of Enrollment Management
* Depart AUP

# APPENDIX C: SURVEY OF ALUMNI AND MAJORS

Please consider the answers of your students / alumni to questions included in the alumni and senior surveys of the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium (HEDS).

Consider both the quantitative analysis and the narrative comments as they may relate to the objectives and questions of your curriculum review.

Based on your findings, interview some students and alumni to explore further any item of interest for the curriculum review.

Produce a short report summarizing your findings to be included in section 6 of the curriculum review report ([see appendix D](#_APPENDIX_D:_OUTLINE)).

# APPENDIX D: OUTLINE FOR THE CURRICULUM REVIEW REPORT (10 - 20 pages)

This section provides the outline for the Curriculum Review Report. These questions are not intended to be comprehensive, but to stimulate critical self-reflection. Given the uniqueness of each program, you are invited to designate questions of your own as well. Please consider questions as appropriate, in relation to the department, the major(s), the minor(s), and the general education requirements in which the department/program participates. You are encouraged to utilize findings from your assessment reports and surveys of alumni/majors in your reflections. Summarize the discussions of the most important issues you are focusing on and refer back to your planning document and make those connections.

* 1. **Department/program(s) Mission and program(s) Learning Outcomes**: Explain the mission statement and student learning outcomes of your department/program and the rationale for these. You may want to consider how well do your mission and program(s):
     + - * reflect the current and future direction of the discipline?
         * respond to the needs of your students?
         * reflect the expertise of your faculty?
         * integrate effective practice as an intellectually rich subject of study?
         * support complex learning of problem-solving, communication, and interpersonal skills?
         * enhance the likelihood that knowledge will be retained and transferred to new situations?

* 1. **University Mission**: Discuss how your program’s mission and learning outcomes fit with the institutional mission, college-wide curriculum, graduate qualities, and other programs that support your majors. Review the program(s) assessment plan, are the LOs are still applicable or should they be reviewed? Is the Curriculum Alignment Matrix is still applicable or should it be reviewed?  
       
     You may want to consider some of the following:
     + How does your department/program contribute to FirstBridge, writing- intensive courses, and other interdepartmental programs?
     + What opportunities does your department/program offer to non-majors to satisfy liberal arts core requirements?
     + Does your department/program receive and provide sufficient support to other majors?
  2. **The Structure of the Curriculum**: Describe the rationale for the current curricular structure of your program(s). You may want to consider additional areas such as:
     + How are theory and methodology of the discipline introduced?
     + How are theory and practice actively integrated throughout the curriculum?
     + Are there any aspects of the disciplines covered by the department/program which are either over or under represented within the curriculum?
     + What are the overall strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, and are there any aspects which might be improved?
     + Is the course sequencing appropriate and legible?
     + How are students introduced to the use of information literacy and technology in the discipline?
     + How does the structure prepare students for independent study?
     + How are students supported in interdisciplinary and alternative models of independent study?

* 1. **Students in Your Program**: Describe the intellectual community that your department/program creates for its students. For example:
     + How are students advised in your department/program?
     + How does advising address student goals and expectations?
     + How are students encouraged to integrate their education beyond disciplinary boundaries?
     + How does your department/program challenge your students?
     + How does your department/program meet the needs of less well-prepared students?
     + How are majors introduced to national or regional disciplinary organizations?
  2. **Resources to Achieve your Goals**: Evaluate the physical and human resources available to support your goals and how well they are being utilized. For example:
     + Is your use of resources optimal?
     + Do you have sufficient access to technology, equipment, physical space, databases, etc.?
     + Do you have sufficient professional and support staff?
     + Is there sufficient library and technology support for your department/program?
  3. **Assessment and Feedback Mechanisms**: Explain the methods of assessing student learning outcomes and the results of the department’s/program’s analysis. For example:
     + How have your assessment report findings changed or remained the same over time?
     + How have you changed your department/program curriculum or courses as a result of your analysis?
     + How have the findings from the majors and alumni surveys informed your understanding of the effectiveness of your curriculum?
  4. **Curricular Changes**: In light of the above, are there any changes that you would like to make to the mission, learning outcomes, curriculum of your department/program(s) ?

# APPENDIX F: CONSULTANTS’ REPORT

Consultants should receive materials in advance of the visit. They should receive the following information and documents, as well as other materials that the department/program deems relevant:

* + - The self-study document
    - Vitae of faculty in the department/program
    - A record of the number of majors in the last ten years
    - Semester course schedules for the last several years
    - Sample course syllabi
    - Departmental assessment reports for the last four years
    - Undergraduate Handbook
    - Relevant admissions materials
    - A list of representative departmental alumni including contact information and current occupation, if known

These materials should be submitted to each consultant electronically; no paper copies are necessary. In addition, one electronic copy should also be submitted to the Dean and Provost.

The consultants’ report should be sent to the Dean, Provost and Department Chair within one month of the on-campus visit.

# APPENDIX G: MEETING WITH DEAN AND PROVOST

At the end of the curriculum review the department has a concluding meeting with the Dean and Provost to discuss the report and the department/program's curricular plans. During this meeting, Dean and Provost will reflect with the department on questions, such as:

1. What were the most striking findings or conclusions the department found through the self-study?
2. How well are your student learning outcomes being met? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum?
3. Are the department learning outcomes aligned with current disciplinary and student needs? Do they need to be revised?
4. Does the department feel they are adequately supporting interdisciplinary learning, programs, and independent study?
5. Are there any structural changes to the curriculum that could facilitate student learning?
6. Are there any advising or supportive changes that could facilitate student learning and development in the major?
7. What reflections have developed from external consultants’ report? Are there any comments in the report that appear to stem from misunderstandings with the consultants?

# APPENDIX H: CONCLUDING SUMMARY AND ASSESSMENT PLAN

* **Concluding Summary and Action Items**

Based on the self-study process and report of the external reviewers, this brief document is a numerical list of the pertinent issues and a description of the actions planned.

* **Assessment Plan**

Through the process of the curriculum review, reflection on student learning and the current department/program learning outcomes can elucidate the usefulness of the current department/program assessment plan. Therefore, the department is asked to review and revise the current assessment plan, focusing on alignment with the curriculum and any changes from the action plan.

# APPENDIX I: REFERENCES

* University of Reading – Engage in Curriculum Review: a toolkit <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/curriculum-framework/EngageinCurriculumReview/ecr-home.aspx>
* Doing Curriculum Review in a Shared Governance Setting. This document has some really nice insights in the curriculum review process that, in part, complement the information provided in this guide. For example, Table 1.1, may be helpful to plan initial discussions in the department. <http://www.teaglefoundation.org/Teagle/media/GlobalMediaLibrary/documents/resources/Teagle_survival_guide_SFState.pdf?ext=.pdf>

1. The HEDS surveys were lunched by the office of Assessment, Learning and Institutional Research in 2018 therefore, until 2023, only fewer years will be available. During this years, results from the “next destination” survey will be made available to the departments to cover the years when HEDS surveys were not available. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)