SUPPORT UNIT REVIEW
PROCEDURES

As an important element of its commitment to quality assurance, Notre Dame de Namur University has implemented an effective, comprehensive, smooth-functioning, and high quality periodic review of administrative support units. This *Support Unit Review* process integrates rigorous assessment of unit effectiveness with ongoing strategic and budget planning processes. The procedures delineated in this document have as their primary purpose the institutionalization of a process that leads to improvement of institutional effectiveness in achieving NDNU's educational mission.

These reviews occur on a six-year cycle or more frequently as determined by the President, Vice President, or Senior Manager, given the results of previous support unit reviews or other circumstances that would warrant the initiation of earlier review. **(Appendix A,** *Schedule for Support Unit Program Reviews)*

Responsibilities

On behalf of the institution, the Provost has responsibility for initiating and monitoring the overall Support Unit Review process, for evaluating its effectiveness, and for archiving review materials as exhibits in accordance with accreditation standards. Only for compelling reasons does the Provost approve requests for the extension of time for completion of the support unit review.

The primary responsibility to ensure the conduct and completion of a quality support unit reviews rest with the vice president, senior budget manager, or president responsible for that unit.

In these procedures, the following definitions are employed:

"Program" or "Unit" is used generically for any administrative/organizational unit subject to support unit review.

"Program Head" refers to the immediate leader, manager, chair, or director of the entity being reviewed.

"Division Head" refers to the vice president, senior budget manager, or president of the program under review.

Phase 1—Preliminary Plan and Proposal for Program Review
Fall of Academic Year One

1. (September) At the beginning of each academic year, the Provost's Office conducts an orientation for Program Heads and the Division Heads whose programs are slated for program review that year in order to explain the process and required products, discuss data needed, and answer questions.

2. (October) In consultation with program staff and other program stakeholders, the Program Head develops a detailed plan for support unit review. This plan specifies responsible parties and includes timelines for meeting all approval and document completion deadlines. This plan also specifies the process and format for the program review. The uniqueness of each administrative unit does not allow for a single template that fits precisely for use to conduct the various support unit program reviews. However, each self study is expected to address common required elements. (**Appendix B,** *Support Unit Self Study Template***)**

   Several national organizations are helpful in establishing a methodology and benchmarks of best practices in specific support units. (**Appendix C,** *Organizations as Resources for Support Unit Reviews)*

   An internal review committee is established and is normally comprised of the unit staff and one or more campus members from outside of the unit. Depending on the function being reviewed, members may also include students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, or alumni.

3. (November) The preliminary plan is approved by the Division Head.

Phase 2—Self-study
Spring of Academic Year One

4. (January) The Program Head, in consultation with the internal review committee, conducts the self study.

5. (March) A draft of the self study is circulated to the internal review committee and the Division Head for review and recommendations for revision, if any.

6. (April) The Program Head completes the self study and proposes a set of recommendations for improvement; prepares a preliminary executive summary of the self study and its recommendations, and develops a prioritized list of recommended external reviewers, together with a brief rationale for each individual on the list, assuring that external reviewers meet the established criteria**. (Appendix D,** *External Reviewer Qualifications***)**

7. (April) The Division Head approves the self-study and associated materials [after determining that guidelines have been followed] and the list of external reviewers.

Phase 3—Plan for External Reviewers and Site Visit
Spring of Academic Year One

8. (April/May) The Program Head makes arrangements and schedules an on-site visit for two external reviewers, ensuring the availability of the Division Head and the President. The external reviewers are invited to visit campus at the same time and review the program jointly usually over a one or two-day period, depending on size of the program.

9. (April/May) The Program Head provides in advance to the external reviewers information about expectations, the program review process, a draft schedule, parking passes, and a copy of the final self study and associated materials for their review prior to the visit. The Program Head makes arrangements for refreshments and lunch. If overnight, dinner should also be considered. Program Head assists visitors with travel arrangements and other logistics as necessary.

   Prior to the campus visit, the Program Head, in consultation with the Division Head, provides questions or areas for special attention to the external reviewers as they prepare for the campus visit. The reviewers should have read the self study and should have consulted by phone with each other to develop questions or areas for further inquiry.

10. (April/May) The Program Head shall provide reviewers with the purpose of the site visit:

    ✓ To validate the self study: Are the findings of the visit in accord with the contents of the self study?
    ✓ To contribute to program quality: Please provide honest appraisal, commentary, observations, and recommendations based on reviewers' experience with best practices at other institutions and professional standards.
    ✓ To provide an evaluation of the adequacy of the self study: Is the self-study reflective and analytical (consider WASC requirements)? Are the data adequate to support the self study's conclusions and recommendations?
    ✓ To provide recommendations for enhancement of operations within existing resources (NDNU recognizes the need for increased staffing and resources across units).

Phase 4—External Review Campus Visit
Summer or Fall of Academic Year Two

11. (May through October) The external review team conducts its review.

12. Reviewers follow a schedule of meetings set by the Program Head, normally to include the following:

   ✓ Entrance meeting with the Program Head and Division Head (and President and Provost as appropriate). At this meeting the schedule is reviewed, the context for the review is set, pertinent questions confirmed for the reviewers to consider, and expectations for the final written report. **(Appendix E,** *Entrance Meeting with External Reviewers***)**

   ✓ Individual meetings with the Internal Review Committee, Staff in the Unit, Students served by the Unit, and Faculty served by the Unit.

   ✓ Other individual or group meetings, as appropriate, with those in the unit or those who interact frequently with the unit, such as Program Advisory Board, Alumni, Committees that have a specific relationship to or special understanding of the program, and other Program or Division Heads (including the Provost) (especially if the program supports other units).

   ✓ Break for visitors to convene with each other prior to exit interview.

   ✓ Exit Report: Reviewers have a private exit meeting at which they discuss their preliminary findings and recommendations with the Division Head and the President.   In the case of a Division Head who is a direct report to the President *and* also a Program Head, the Division Head would ***not*** attend the exit meeting.

   ✓ Closing Meeting: Reviewers have a closing meeting with Program Head and others as appropriate.

Phase 5—External Review Report
Fall of Academic Year Two

13. (September through November) After the campus visit, the reviewers submit a joint written evaluation of the program (External Review Report) to the Program Head with a copy to the Division Head within 2-3 weeks following the site visit. Typically, this is 5-10 pages in which they present their findings and recommendations.

14. (September through November) After receipt of the External Review Report, an IRS W-9 form, and any expense documentation, the Division Head initiates payment to the reviewers of a stipend which includes an honorarium and expense reimbursement. Coverage of the support unit review costs is the responsibility of the Division Head.

15. (December) The Program Head distributes the External Review Report to appropriate parties. Optionally, the Program Head may write a Response to the External Review Report for distribution with the External Review Report.

16.   (December) The Program Head, in consultation with the Division Head, prepares an Executive Summary, an Action Plan, and completes the Routing Sheet as indicated below:

- ✓ Executive Summary. Based on the preliminary executive summary, the Executive Summary includes a listing of the members of the internal and external review committees, a summary of findings of key elements of the study, and a list of recommendations that consolidates recommendations derived from the self study and the external reviewers. *(President's Council and to the Board of Trustees)*

- ✓ Action Plan. A cogent action plan identifies specific actions to be taken in response to internal and external recommendations for improvement, a timetable for the completion of each action, and the person responsible for completing the action. Any implications for planning and budgeting processes resulting from the support unit review are also described in the action plan. *(President's Council)*

- ✓ Routing Sheet. A signed routing sheet that includes signatures of those within the unit who have reviewed the document and a verification of approval by the Program Head and the Division Head.

17. (December) The Program Head submits the Internal Self Study, the External Review Report, the Executive Summary, the Action Plan, and the Routing Sheet to the Division Head for approval and concurrence that the materials have been completed thoroughly and in accordance with campus policy. Approval is signified by the Division Head's signature on the Routing Sheet. Optionally, the Division Head may write a Letter to the Provost commenting on the quality, context, or other issues pertinent to the review.

Phase 6– President's Council Review
Spring of Academic Year Two

18.   (January through April) The Division Head consults with the Provost to designate a President's Council meeting at which the Support Unit Review will be discussed. After receiving all documents from the Division Head at least one week in advance of the designated President's Council meeting, the Provost places the review on the agenda and posts the completed review and designated materials on the university's site for support unit reviews /SharePoint: NDNU Administration, Program Review, Administrative and Support Program Review/ **(Appendix F:** *Checklist of Documents for Support Unit Review* and **Appendix G:** *Routing Sheet for Support Unit Review)*

19. (January through April) The Program Head and Division Head present the support unit review to the President's Council for review and commentary.

(January through April) Following presentation to the President's Council, the Program Head revises the action plan in response to the President's Council Review, as needed. The Division Head approves the final action plan.

20. (January through April) The President signifies that appropriate has taken place at the President's Council by signing the Routing Sheet. Similarly, the Provost and President signify their individual approvals by signing the Routing Sheet. Once all campus approvals are in place, the Provost places discussion of the Executive Summary on the agenda of the relevant Board of Trustees committee.

21. (January through April) Archiving: The following items should be archived electronically with the Provost's Office as soon as they are approved in final form:

- Self-Study
- Executive Summary
- External Reviewers' Report
- Final Action Plan
- Routing Sheet (Both intermediate and final versions should be archived)
- Optional documents, if any:
    o Program Head's Response to the External Review Report
    o Division Head's Letter to the Provost

Phase 7– Implementing the Action Plan

22. The Program Head works with the Division Head to monitor the implementation of the action plan, which may include a formal proposal to the Planning Council or Budget Council for prioritization and funding in accordance with the university's normal processes, as appropriate.

23. Any subsequent modifications must be agreed in writing by the Division Head and such modification aligned with planning and budgeting recommendations.

Improving the Support Unit Review Procedures
The overall effectiveness of the support unit review process occurs every six years after a complete cycle of review has been concluded. Additionally, at the conclusion of each support unit review, the Provost requests the Division and Program Heads to provide a brief evaluation of the effectiveness of the program review procedures and recommendations for improving the process. What worked well? What can be improved? Elements to consider include review criteria, internal and/or external review components, timeline, university review processes, relationship to planning and budgeting processes, and campus participation in the process, among others.

Appendix A

Schedule for Support Unit Program Reviews

SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW
Notre Dame de Namur University

Distribution of reviews by year of initiation:

2011/12	1
2012/13	5
2013/14	5
2014/15	7
2015/16	5
2016/17	6
TOTAL	*29*

Example of 6-year cycle:

- Under Review (2 years): 2009/10, 2010/11
- Implementation (4 years): 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15
- New Review Begins and Concludes: 2015/16, 2016/17

Note: To balance years, some unit reviews were rescheduled to alternative years.

Academic Affairs (5)

1.	Academic Success Center – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2015/16
2.	Early Learning Center	Scheduled to begin 2013/14
3.	Institutional Research	Scheduled to begin 2012/13
4.	Library – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2016/17
5.	Registrar – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2016/17

Enrollment Management (6)

1.	Admissions	Scheduled to begin 2011/12
2.	Athletics – Completed 2008/09	Scheduled to begin 2014/15
3.	Communications –Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2015/16
4.	Enrollment Marketing–Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2015/16
5.	Financial Aid	Scheduled to begin 2014/15
6.	International Students	Scheduled to begin 2016/17

Finance and Administration (6)

1.	Accounting	Scheduled to begin 2012/13
2.	Central Services	Scheduled to begin 2014/15
3.	Conferences and Events	Scheduled to begin 2013/14
4.	Facilities	Scheduled to begin 2014/15
5.	Information Technology	Scheduled to begin 2013/14
6.	Planning and Budgeting	Scheduled to begin 2012/13

Human Resources (2)

1.	Human Resources – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2016/17
2.	Payroll – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2016/17

Student Affairs (7)

1.	Career Services – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2015/16
2.	Spirituality	Scheduled to begin 2012/13
3.	Dorothy Stang Center	Scheduled to begin 2012/13
4.	Health and Wellness	Scheduled to begin 2013/14
5.	Public Safety (to be completed 2011)	Scheduled to begin 2016/17
6.	Psychological Counseling	Scheduled to begin 2013/14
7.	Student Life and Leadership – Completed 2010/11	Scheduled to begin 2015/16

   a.   Housing and Residential Life
   b.   Orientation
   c.   Student Activities
   d.   Student Leadership

University Advancement (3)

1.	Constituency Relations – Completed 2008/09	Scheduled to begin 2014/15
2.	Development – Completed 2008/09	Scheduled to begin 2014/15
3.	Planned Giving – Completed 2008/09	Scheduled to begin 2014/15

Appendix B

Support Unit Self-Study Template

SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW
Notre Dame de Namur University

The self study of the support unit review is expected to be analytical and reflective, not just description of functions. It is expected to demonstrate and evaluate the unit's effectiveness based on assessment such as institutional data sources, peer institutional comparisons, national benchmarks, among others appropriate to the unit. The narrative should consist primarily of a statement of the significance of the results of the self study and the implications for continuous improvement.

Although resources and staffing are important elements for program effectiveness, the Support Unit Review should focus on unit effectiveness in terms of actions that can be accomplished within existing resources, as well as actions that may require additional investment in the unit.

While the methodology of the self study varies to reflect the wide range of administrative and support unit functions, each unit is expected to address the following components, regardless of the methodology used to conduct its support unit review.

Methodology
1. Summary of the methodology used to conduct program review and the rationale for its selection.

History and Current Status of the Support Unit
2. How does this unit fit within the organizational structure of the university?
3. What are the most significant functions of this unit?
4. Summary of the accomplishments of each item on the previous action plan.

Assessment of Unit Effectiveness and Continuous Improvement
5. In what specific ways does the unit encourage high quality services and outcomes?
6. What are the specific ways in which the unit demonstrates and evaluates its effectiveness; including institutional data sources, peer institutional comparisons, national benchmarks, among others appropriate to the unit?

Mission and Diversity
7. How does your unit align with the university's strategic plan?
8. In what specific ways do the unit's services contribute to and support student learning/student success?
9. In what specific ways and how effectively does the unit contribute to the university's mission and commitment to diversity?

<u>Viability and Sustainability of the Unit</u>

10. What is the profile of its staffing: number of staff, titles (no names), full/part-time status

11. How does the program evaluate and review its support needs for administrative operations?

12. Other than NDNU operating budget, what additional sources, if any, are obtained in support of unit operations? Please explain the impact on unit operations.

Appendix C

Organizations as Resources for Support Unit Review

SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW
Notre Dame de Namur University

Among others, the following organizations may be helpful in identifying criteria and performance indicators for support unit reviews.

The Baldrige National Quality Program has developed standards and procedures that are used by many organizations as the foundation of continuous quality improvement programs across a wide variety of organizational functions and processes.

Various specialized and professional organizations provide program review guidelines for their constituents. Examples include the following:

- Academic Affairs:
    - Institutional Research. Association for Institutional Research (AIR)
    - Library. American Library Association (ALA)
    - Registrar. American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)

- Advancement:
    - Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)
    - Association of Development Officers (ADO)

- Enrollment Management:
    - Admissions. American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
    - Graduate Admissions. National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP)
    - Athletics. National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)
    - National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC)
    - National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
    - Noel Levitz Higher Education Consultants for Enrollment and Student Success

- Finance and Administration:
    - National Association of Colleges and University Business Officers (NACUBO)
    - Western Association of Colleges and University Business Officers Association (WACUBO)

- Human Resources:
  - College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR)

- Student Affairs:
  - Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS)

Hanover Research issues research papers related to many elements of institutional effectiveness. One example is *Key Performance Indicators for Administrative Support Units.*

Peer institutions of higher education also conduct program reviews and may be a source of information.

NDNU's self-study template for Academic Self-Study Program Review, while not directly relevant to most administrative functions, may provide some useful ideas in some student and administrative support areas.

Appendix D

External Reviewer Qualifications

SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW
Notre Dame de Namur University

External reviewers are proposed by the Program Head and approved in advance by the Division Head.   The following criteria are considered in the approval process. A minimum of two approved external reviewers is required.

Required

- Hold appropriate professional qualifications and academic degrees to the particular support unit under review.

- A record of accomplishment in their profession.

- Current or past experience in an institution of higher education.

- No conflict of interest. Specifically, no previous employment by Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) for at least three years prior to serving as reviewers and cannot be employed by NDNU for at least one year subsequent to the review.

- Each reviewer from a different institution of higher education or agency.

Preferred

- Experience conducting or being the subject of an external review.

- Experience from institutions of similar size and mission. If the reviewer is from a larger university, previous experience in a small teaching university is desirable.

- Familiarity with NDNU teaching environment, mission, values, and Hallmarks as this is the framework within which all of NDNU's functions must be evaluated.

Appendix E

Entrance Meeting with External Reviewers

SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW
Notre Dame de Namur University

At the Entrance Meeting the visiting team may be asked by the lead NDNU representative to consider the following issues and generic questions as they conduct their visit.

- Welcome and extend appreciation

- Reaffirm expectations to visiting team
    - The quality of the Program or Department should be assessed according to the standards of the profession or discipline.
    - Focus is on the unit's effectiveness, not personnel. References should not be made to the performance of specific individuals within the unit.
    - We want an honest assessment of strengths and areas for improvement.
    - Emphasize program improvement within existing resources and any implications for budget/staffing to achieve recommended actions for improvement.
    - Importance of being prepared to report preliminary findings ready at the exit meeting.
    - Final Report: A single report jointly authored, normally about 5-10 pages; Delivery of report is normally 2-3 weeks.

- Review the Schedule
    - Answer any questions they have about the schedule and process.
    - Ask them to contact/call if they have further questions during or after leaving campus.

- Identify Key Areas for Investigation
    - Identify the areas the university has identified and those the reviews have identified after reviewing the self study.

Sample Guiding Questions for Evaluating and Validating the Self-Study (as appropriate to the unit and the methodology employed).

To what extent or level of quality…

1. Are the goals achievable?
2. Are appropriate service benchmarks established?
3. Are the defined outcomes appropriate?
4. Are departmental processes adequately delineated?
5. Are quality standards adequately defined?
6. Are assessment processes appropriate and adequate?
7. Are the appropriate measurements of the efficiency and outcomes of program process in place?
8. Are the appropriate data being collected to support these measurements?
9. Is there adequate attention to efficiency and high quality of service?
10. Are processes in place to support continuous improvement in efficiency and quality of outcomes?
11. Are the recommendations made in the self-study compatible with professional standards?
12. Are the data in the self-study adequate to support the recommendations?
13. Are departmental and institutional records and data collection methods adequate to support this program?
14. Are the unit's operations viable and sustainable?
15. Are there people who are not on the schedule that you think you should meet or interview?
16. Are there records that you would like to see that are not cited in the self study?
17. Are there any inconsistencies in the self study?
18. Are there key performance indicators, beyond any cited in the self-study, that you believe should be used to provide an early warning that something in the unit needs attention?
19. Is continuous improvement the appropriate recommendation for this unit or is significant change necessary?
20. Additional observations or comments based on your experience at other universities are welcomed.

Appendix F

Checklist of Documents

SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAM REVIEW
Notre Dame de Namur University

Prior to requesting the Support Unit Review for placement on the President's Council agenda, the Division Head should ensure the review is completed -- clear, comprehensive, and analytical/evidence-based.

The Division Head submits the documents to the provost for posting on SharePoint <u>at least one week prior to the scheduled President's Council</u>, thus allowing members sufficient time for review.

Please use this checklist to ensure the Support Unit Review is complete and ready for review:

1. Internal Self Study.

2. External Review Report.

3. Executive Summary. (See p5 of the support Unit Review Guidelines for a description.)

4. Action Plan. (See p5 of the support Unit Review Guidelines for a description.)

5. Routing Sheet. At this point, the routing sheet should include signatures of those within the unit who have reviewed the document and a verification of approval by the Program Head and the Division Head.

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Appendix G
ROUTING SHEET FOR SUPPORT UNIT REVIEW

_____
Department

PRINTED NAME/SIGNATURE:

_____
Staff   Title   Date

_____
                                                             Title   Date

_____
                                                             Title   Date

_____
                                                             Title   Date

_____
                                                             Title   Date

_____
                                                             Title   Date

_____
Program Head   Title   Date

_____
Division Head (Vice President, Senior Budget Manager, or President of Program under review)   Date

_____
President's Council   President   Date

_____
Provost   Date

_____
President   Date

_____
Board of Trustees (Executive Summary Only)   Date

10/18/11: DD: GW: rr Demetrulias file: SUR

SUPPORT UNIT REVIEW SCHEDULE
Notre Dame de Namur University

	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	Total
Academic Affairs		Institutional Research	Early Learning Center		Academic Success Center	Library / Registrar	5
Enrollment Management	Admissions			Athletics / Financial Aid	Communications / Enrollment Marketing	International Student	6
Finance And Administration		Accounting / Planning and Budgeting	Conferences and Events / Information Technology	Central Services / Facilities			6
Human Resources						Human Resources / Payroll	2
Student Affairs		Spirituality / Dorothy Stang Center	Health and Wellness / Psychological Counseling		Career Services / Student Life and Leadership	Public Safety	7
University Advancement				Constituency Relations / Development / Planned Giving			3
TOTAL	1	5	5	7	5	6	29

10/18/11: RR