

To: Program Review Chairs
From: Office of Academic Affairs
Date: August 19, 2003 (Revised June 9, 2008)
Subject: Best Practices in Program Review

The current program review process has now been active at IPFW since 1999. In that time, the Office of Academic Affairs has observed several “best practices” which seem to lead to a successful program review process. These practices are enumerated below for your information.

1. The process uses the department’s normal governance/committee structures to the extent feasible. The self-study process involves as many department members as possible. The department chair is actively engaged in the self-study process.
2. The department establishes and adheres to a reasonable work plan including timetables, consistent with OAA Memorandum 05-4, *Guidelines for Review of Academic Programs*.
3. The department identifies key questions that it would like to address in the self-study. While the questions are guided by the self-study topics in OAA 05-4, the process is most successful when the department also has its own questions and uses the review to answer them. If appropriate, the department identifies a focus for the self-study (Example: Should we develop a graduate program?).
4. Data from annual assessment reports are used to inform the self-study.
5. The IPFW Baccalaureate Framework is the guiding framework against which undergraduate curriculum evaluations and the department program goals should be made.
6. The department evaluates its curricula, distribution of faculty expertise, vision of the future, and other topics against appropriate standards such as those from accreditation boards and discipline-based professional associations, and by comparisons with similar departments at other institutions.
7. The department seeks advice and assistance from the OAA and the dean throughout the process.
8. All requests for new resources are supported by sufficient data and analysis from the self-study and guided by the IPFW Strategic Plan.
9. External reviewers are given the opportunity to work on their written report while still on campus to assist in assuring timely completion.
10. The department understands that the most important outcome of the self-study process is a focused and flexible multi-year set of goals to guide decisions and resource allocation over the next several years.