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Date: Oct 24, 2006

To: Vancouver Senate

From: Senate Academic Policy Committee

Re: **Procedures for the Review of Administrative Units**

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Senate approved a policy on *Reviews of Administrative Units* in 1977 (<http://www.students.ubc.ca/senate/policies.cfm?ID=8>) which was slightly amended in 1983, and in December 1997 referred to the Academic Policy Committee the task of “consulting with Deans, Heads and Directors, reviewing and revising as appropriate, Senate's Statement of Policy on the Reviews of Administrative Units”. The current policy contains two clauses of particular relevance:

- “3. Faculties are authorized and encouraged to design and approve statements of policies and procedures for the conduct of reviews of departments and other administrative units or programs within their responsibility.
4. Faculties' statements of policies and procedures for reviews should be submitted to the Senate for approval.”

A few Faculties have developed procedures but they are not well known to Senate. In May 2005 Senate heard a report on the SHINE 2010 initiative, adopted by the Board of Governors as a means for advancement of the quality of teaching and learning at UBC. One of the SHINE 2010 strategies is the development of mechanisms to ensure “better assessment of teaching and learning in all periodic reviews of academic units and programs”. Consequently the Office of the AVP Academic Programs set up a Working Group to consider and develop recommendations regarding procedures for the review of academic units. The members were:

Dr. Sheldon Cherry, Faculty of Applied Science  
Dr. John Gilbert, College of Health Disciplines  
Dr. Robert Tierney, Faculty of Education  
Dr. Peter Ward, Faculty of Arts (Chair)

The Working Group report was discussed at the Committee of Deans and amended in response to comments received. Then the report was brought to the Senate Academic Policy Committee where further changes were introduced, mainly in the guidelines for the preparation of documents for the review committee. The report consists of a description of the processes and two appendices, one with guidelines for compiling the dossier of information for the review committee and a second with terms of reference for

the review committee. The intention of the report is to ensure that academic units make thoughtful preparation for a review and that the information provided will assist the review committee to meet its mandate.

Note that although the policy is titled the *Reviews of Administrative Units*, the focus here is on *academic* administrative units in accordance with the direction to this Committee from Senate. Accordingly, the Academic Policy Committee recommends:

*That the title of the Senate policy be changed from the Reviews of Administrative Units to the Reviews of Academic Administrative Units.*

And

*That Senate approve the attached Procedures for the Review of Academic Administrative Units with appendices as the minimum standards for processes to be used in and contents of reviews of academic units other than faculties, and that each faculty be required to abide by these standards unless or until Senate otherwise provides specific procedures for those academic units within a faculty on that faculty's recommendation.*

Respectfully submitted,

Paul G. Harrison  
Chair  
Academic Policy Committee

**UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA - VANCOUVER**  
**PROCEDURES FOR THE REVIEW OF ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATIVE**  
**UNITS**

16 October, 2006

This document is applicable to all academic administrative units other than Faculties.

**PURPOSE AND FREQUENCY**

The main aim of the external review is to appraise the scholarly, pedagogical, and other engagements of the academic administrative unit in order to provide guidance to the unit, responsible administrators and the Senate. The review allows for effective departmental and institutional planning and resource allocation. It offers the academic administrative unit periodic in-depth analyses of its programmes and aspirations. Reviews need not be initiated by a prescribed timetable but may be occasioned by accreditation requirements established by professional organizations; by anticipation of the completion of the term of office of a head or director; by considerations to reform curriculum, enter into initiatives with other academic units and redeploy resources. While reviews are normally conducted every five years, the time interval between reviews must not exceed ten years.

**FUNDING**

The President's Office currently bears 50% of the cost of bringing in external reviewers.

**REVIEW PROCESS**

1. The Dean in consultation with the Vice-President Academic and following Senate guidelines of September 1977, initiates the review and informs the academic administrative unit of the form it will take.
2. Submissions of the unit under review
  - a) the head of the unit is asked by the Dean or Associate Dean to prepare a Unit Dossier.
  - b) Faculty members, including instructors and sessional lecturers, and students are also invited to submit statements.

(see Appendix I for the detailed guidelines to be used to compile the dossier supplied to the head and available to faculty and students).
3. Role and Composition of the Review Committee

- a) A review committee is struck by the Dean in consultation with the Vice-President Academic. (See Appendix II for a sample set of the committee's terms of reference).
- b) The Committee normally consists of at least two external reviewers and at least one senior UBC faculty (i.e., tenured and normally at the rank of full professor or who are not on leave; faculty in other ranks with extensive university experience may also serve) from outside the Faculty in which the review is held.
- c) Early in the review process the head of the unit will meet with a designated Associate Dean to draw up a list of persons from whom the external reviewers will be selected. One of the External Reviewers will be designated as Chair with the task of co-ordinating the final draft of the Review Report, circulating it to Committee members and submitting it to the Dean.
- d) External reviewers are selected by the Dean in consultation with the designated Associate Dean drawing on recommendations from the department. They should be senior academics with wide recognition in their fields, familiar with both undergraduate and graduate programmes and the North American university system. At least one should have administrative experience. They should have no close prior connections with the department as faculty or collaborators.
- e) The Associate Dean determines the availability of the outside reviewers and they are formally invited to participate in the review by the Dean.
- f) The Dean informs the unit of the names of the external reviewers.
- g) The Review Committee will visit the academic administrative unit as a team for two or three days. Its itinerary will be drawn up by the Associate Dean to include at least the following: meetings with the Vice President Academic or his/her designate, the Dean, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the unit head, and appropriate departmental advisors. It may meet with the President. The Committee will meet collectively or individually with faculty (including sessional instructors) and graduate and undergraduate students in the unit and with faculty from other departments whose work intersects with that of the unit being reviewed. Members of the unit who are not able to meet the Committee will have the opportunity to submit written comments. The itinerary will include time to draw up a first draft of a Review Report.
- h) Copies of the Final Report should be submitted to the appropriate Dean within 30 days. The Dean will provide copies to members of the academic

administrative unit, the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Vice President Academic, and by Senate regulation, the Secretary of Senate.

#### **FOLLOW-UP**

- a) The administrative academic unit is given the opportunity to comment in writing on the Review Committee's report.
- b) The Dean meets with the administrative academic unit following receipt of the unit's comments to discuss its response to the Review's recommendations.
- c) The Dean submits the Report and unit comments to the University administrators [as noted in section h) above].
- d) Within two years from the receipt of the Review Committee's Report, the academic unit submits a statement to the Dean with a copy to the Vice-President Academic setting out developments that resulted from the review.

**APPENDIX I****GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT  
REVIEW DOCUMENTS****Unit under review:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

The primary goal of a review is to assess the academic standing and future development of an academic administrative unit. A review should enable the members of a department or program, as well as those who hold administrative responsibility for it, to identify both goals and processes for their achievement that will improve its scholarly and pedagogical activity.

The Review Committee requests your cooperation in providing the following by \_\_\_\_\_. The material is to be submitted in a 3-ring binder or binders, or in an easily-accessible digital format. There should be one copy provided for each reviewer, in addition to a copy for the Dean's Office. The materials should be as concise as possible.

**PART I**

Information to be supplied by the Head/Dean of the following academic administrative unit, \_\_\_\_\_, with the cooperation of its members. Material submitted under Part I will be available for inspection in the academic unit's office.

**A. Previous review**

Include the previous unit review and all formal responses to it, with an analysis of the changes in budget, facilities, faculty, programs, pedagogical resources and academic policies instituted as a consequence. (The effectiveness of the Review process depends to a large extent upon the ability of the Department and University to act upon the advice of the external reviewers, especially in the correction of long standing deficiencies.)

Also provide any reviews of teaching programs conducted by the Senate Curriculum Committee.

**B. Faculty and staff demographic summary tables**

Tables or spreadsheets providing the following information are requested:

**B.1 Tenured faculty members:**

Name	M/F	Title	Date initial appointment	Discipline	Budget FTE	Externally supported FTE

**B.2 Non-tenured, part-time and sessional faculty members** (table to be adapted as appropriate):

Name	M/F	Title	Date of initial appointment	Budget FTE

**B.3 Staff** (table to be adapted as appropriate)

Name	M/F	Job title	Supervisor	Date of initial appointment	Budget FTE

**B.4 General comments on faculty/staff demographics:**

Include here any comments and analysis of the demographic data, trends, changes since the last review, strengths, needs, etc.

**C. Scholarly activity**

The unit should provide the appropriate evidence that demonstrates both the extent and quality of scholarly activity in the academic administrative unit covering both research and pedagogy, as demonstrated by the following examples:

**C.1 Research support:**

Funding support for scholarly activity received by the faculty over the past 3-5 years. Funding should be provided in categories that include, Tri-Council funding, Provincial, International, non-profit agencies/foundations, Centres of Excellence, University, Industry contracts, Service Agreements, etc

**C.2 Awards and recognition of faculty:**

Research Chairs/Professorships, Canada Research Chairs, international fellowships such as those awarded by the Guggenheim Foundation, Killam Research Fellowships, fellowships in international and national Learned Societies, numbers of researchers with investigator/scholar awards, editorships of journals, etc

**C.3 Scholarly work and citations:**

Data on refereed publications, books, book chapters, creative works/exhibitions, patents, invention disclosures, numbers of citations where appropriate, and involvement in interdisciplinary research teams, etc. Give examples of interdisciplinary or collaborative teams.

#### **C.4 Dissemination and Community Outreach**

Examples of activities by members of the unit that serve the wider community, such as public lectures, community service learning programs, involvement in community health, social, and learning initiatives.

#### **C.5 General comments on scholarly activity:**

Place the above information in the context of the last review.

Define the scholarly reputation and future research-related objectives of the unit.

### **D. Graduate programs**

Provide a brief description of programs offered by the unit, highlighting changes since the last review and recent curriculum innovations.

Provide the appropriate evidence that demonstrates recruitment practices, enrolment, pedagogy, funding and student support (teaching/ research assistantships) in the unit.

#### **D.1 Enrolment and recruitment statistics:**

- graduate recruitments and enrolments (including numbers of applicants) by type of program, year, gender, nationality, and subject areas

#### **D.2 Graduate courses:**

- number of the unit's graduate course credits taught
- number of outside the unit graduate course credits taught
- other teaching and learning experiences, assessment strategies e.g. workshops, non-credit, professional development activities
- theses completed and data on time to completion of degrees

#### **D.3 Scholarships, Teaching Assistantships, and Professionalization:**

- total scholarship funding (sources, amounts over 3-5 years)
- TA's (total funding, numbers of FTE TA's)
- Stipends and funding packages including research assistantships
- Publications in leading journals, presentations at conferences, membership in professional organizations, participation in professional development activities

#### **D.4 General comments on graduate programs:**

Comment on the progress and potential of the graduate programs in the unit, defining strengths, significant changes since the last review, and areas for improvement.

Once the Senate-approved Curriculum Streamlining Process project is fully implemented, include a report from the Senate Curriculum Committee summarizing the findings of its periodic program reviews.



**E.     Undergraduate programs**

Provide a brief description of program(s) offered by the unit, highlighting changes since the last review and recent curriculum innovations.

The unit should provide the undergraduate demographics, recruitment practices where appropriate, data on evaluation of teaching, curricular innovations, course credits taught, and include both professional pedagogical development activities and teaching awards and prizes won by faculty and TA's.

**E.1 Enrolment and recruitment statistics:**

- undergraduate enrolments: by type of program, year, gender, and nationality
- role of the unit in providing instruction to students in programs outside the unit, both through faculty teaching in other programs and students in other programs enrolling in the unit's courses
- undergraduate recruitment: by type of program, year, numbers of applicants, GPA cut-off, recruitment programs, selection procedures, etc.

**E.2 Course credits taught, teaching evaluations, assessment and promotion of teaching and learning:**

- number of the unit's undergraduate course credits taught (per FTE)
- number of outside the unit undergraduate course credits taught (per FTE)
- summary of the teaching, learning and assessment strategies employed by instructors
- examples of faculty and T.A. involvement in professional development in pedagogical areas including workshops attended or led, research undertaken, and publications
- examples of teaching recognition, e.g., grants, awards, prizes, scholarly works
- description of peer evaluation of teaching procedures and guidelines and their outcomes
- summary of student teaching evaluation data including a copy of the assessment instrument (categorized by class size, required versus elective, senior or lower level courses)
- data on special instructional infrastructure acquired, renovated or planned, including facilities for enhancing teaching and learning, e.g. laboratories, classrooms, computer technology, field stations, studios, performance areas, reading rooms.

**E.3 Programs and curriculum:**

Brief description of program(s) offered by the unit and any recent curricular innovations.

Once the Senate-approved Curriculum Streamlining Process project is fully implemented, include a report from the Senate Curriculum Committee summarizing the findings of its periodic program reviews.

**E.4 General comments on undergraduate programs:**

Comment on the strengths of and requirements for the continued development of the undergraduate program(s).

**F. Unit academic or strategic plan**

Include the most current academic or strategic planning documentation for the unit and describe both how the plan was formulated and how it advances the University's strategic plan.

**PART II**

Information requested of the head of the unit, as a personal statement based on his or her own knowledge and experience. To be submitted at the same time as Part I. The Head's Statement will be treated as confidential and available only to the Review Committee. The following issue should be considered concisely and mainly in terms of changes made or required consequent upon the previous review.

**A. The department and governance**

An outline of the departmental structure and governance, its effectiveness and contribution to the attainment of the unit's academic goals. An analysis of the departmental academic goals and how well they are being met and the effectiveness of the administrative structures and committee system.

**B. The faculty**

A summary of the scholarly quality and teaching performance of the faculty and their professional status within the University, nationally and internationally. Analysis of the faculty demographics and plans to respond to anticipated turnovers in faculty and opportunities for renewal.

**C. The curriculum and students**

A concise overview of student demographic trends, enrolment and demands in targeted areas and programs, with commentary on the unit's response to the learning needs of students..

**D.     Resources**

An assessment of the adequacy of the unit's budget, facilities and space needs, support staff and teaching/learning related resources (such as library capacity) in pursuing existing programs and future objectives.

**E.     Other matters**

Any matter not covered by the above and which the head of the unit deems relevant to the work of the Review Committee.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REVIEW COMMITTEES**

To examine and report on the following:

**A. Scholarly Activity (including creative or performing activities)**

- (1) The scholarly activity of the unit in relation to the state of its discipline (or disciplines) in Canada and internationally. How does the range, distribution and intensity of scholarship compare with that in comparable universities? Are there important directions of change evident in the discipline; if so, how is the unit responding?
- (2) Given the kinds of scholarship in which unit members engage, what general assessment can be made of the quality of the unit as a scholarly community? How successful are unit members in competitions for national grant support (where relevant)? How adequate is the support from the University Administration? How does it stand vis-à-vis comparable units elsewhere in North America? What do unit members, and their disciplinary colleagues elsewhere, see as its major strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities?

**B. Faculty Recruitment and Progress:**

What has been the unit's experience in the recruitment of new faculty? Has the unit been able to appoint a sufficient number of new people, in a sufficient range of academic areas, for on-going renewal? If the unit has been able to appoint new faculty, how well have their searches been organized? What has been the quality of the applicants, and how successful has the unit been in attracting the best ones? How adequate are the starting salaries offered? Are potential faculty interested in the resources of other units, or particular facilities (Library, computer)?

What has been the unit's experience in operating within the policies and procedures regarding faculty (and potential faculty) originating in the Collective Agreement or in Immigration directives?

**C. Teaching - Undergraduate and Diploma Programs:**

The tenets underlying curriculum and instructional models to support student learning and to identify the needs and developments pertaining to improvements in teaching and learning; the quality, breadth and relevance of teaching and the curriculum; the means being used to evaluate, maintain and improve the quality of teaching and curriculum; the quality of the structure of majors and honours programs, and their relationship to other parts of the University; academic

standards; level of undergraduate scholarship support, and its effectiveness; advising of majors and honours students; level of teaching innovation, vis-à-vis comparable departments; recruitment of students; enrolments: their distribution and trend, their relation to past figures and the prospects for the future – all with a view to determining the effectiveness of these programs.

**D. Teaching - Masters and Doctoral Programs:**

Standards for admission (posted and real); quality of applications received, and standard of students accepting admission; recruitment of students; program requirements and methods of evaluation of their effectiveness; level of graduate student support, and its effectiveness; the quality, breadth and relevance of teaching and the curriculum; the relationship of programmes to other parts of the university; level of teaching innovation vis-à-vis comparable departments; administration, including supervision of graduate students; academic standards required for continuation; enrolments; their distribution and trend, their relation to past figures and the prospects for the future - all with a view to determining the effectiveness of graduate programs.

**E. Service and Outreach Roles:**

Is the unit doing what it should (or could) do to provide service to the University community and the wider community in appropriate ways? How might its service and outreach roles be enhanced?

**F. Governance and Administration:**

How adequate are the committee structures and procedures as these relate to the good governance of the unit and to the responsibility of the head as this is understood within the wider context of University governance? How well does the unit manage procedures with regard to appointment, reappointment, promotion and tenure? How well does the unit manage the situation of faculty with partial appointments in other units of the University?

**G. Staff, Facilities and Resources:**

The unit's staff – management, secretarial and technical assistance; the unit's physical space in relation to need; studio and performance facilities; computers and computing; Library support; reading rooms; audio-visual and other equipment.

**H. The review process:**

How effective has the review process itself been.

**I. Any other matter deemed by the Committee to be relevant**

1. To make recommendations on any or all of the above, with a view toward indicating where resources should be placed to have the greatest positive impact.
2. The Committee is not authorized to consider specific issues of salary, promotion, and tenure dealt with by existing structures; or to consider specific cases involving undergraduate and graduate affairs covered by established procedures.
3. Provide other advice as appropriate relative to the general purposes of the review.

# SENATE

## Policy abstracts

### Reviews of Administrative Units

1. Reviews of departments, institutes, centres, schools, faculties or other administrative units within the University should be initiated when a reasonable request for a review is made by the academic staff involved, the Head or other responsible administrator, the responsible Dean, the President, or the Senate. While this implies no rigid periodicity for reviews, some Faculties may find it desirable to review units within them according to some timetable, and a regular review of special administrative units like institutes and centres may be particularly worthwhile.
2. Committees struck to review departments and other units within a Faculty should be appointed by, and be responsible to the Dean, who should also receive their reports. Correspondingly, reviews of Faculties should be conducted by committees appointed by and responsible to the President, who will receive their reports. The administrative officer responsible for the review committee should be responsible also for arranging the necessary funding.
3. Faculties are authorized and encouraged to design and approve statements of policies and procedures for the conduct of reviews of departments and other administrative units or programs within their responsibility. The arrangements should be designed to allay apprehensions about reviews, to expedite them, and to ensure maximum benefit from them. These faculty statements should contain, inter alia:
  - a. A description of the structure of review committees. Committees should include one or more experts from outside this University. However, some Faculties may choose to limit the role of external assessors (for example, by having them act only as advisors to the review committees or by restricting their concern with certain matters such as administration or finance.)
  - b. Procedures for selecting members of review committees. Among other things, the extent to which members of the academic unit being reviewed will participate in the selection of reviewers should be stipulated.
  - c. Provisions to ensure that review committees are provided with explicit terms of reference, particularly in respect of the extent to which their investigations are to extend beyond purely academic matters to issues of administration and finance. The academic strength and balance of the unit under review should be the main focus of the investigation, and this should include the full spectrum of its academic activities.
  - d. Clear and detailed arrangements to govern the submission of documentation and communications between the committee and the members of the academic unit being reviewed.
  - e. Provisions for the review committee's report to be made available to the members of the unit reviewed, subject to deletions by the Dean on the advice of legal counsel with respect to any material that may be defamatory or of other legal consequence, or that might be considered an invasion of privacy.
4. Faculties' statements of policies and procedures for reviews should be submitted to the Senate for approval.
5. The Senate should be advised of reviews being undertaken, and a copy of each review committee's report as submitted to the members of the unit being reviewed deposited with the Secretary of Senate and made available for examination by senators.
6. That, within two years of the completion of the review, a report on the implementation of the recommendations of the review be forwarded to the Dean or the President as appropriate and a copy lodged with the Secretary of Senate.