

# V.PERIODIC REVIEW OF DEPARTMENTS & PROGRAMS: C. EXTERNAL REVIEW

## External Review Process

Once every twelve years the Department Report will be followed by a visit from an external review team. The Department Report written in advance of an external review addresses the same questions as the standard quadrennial report as detailed in V.A (<https://catalog.denison.edu/faculty-handbook/periodic-review-departments-programs/v-a-department-reports/>). At the External Review stage of the twelve-year cycle, departments and programs often provide more detailed responses to those questions. Thus, the Department Report written in anticipation of the External Review is referred to as the **Department Self-Study**, to signal the different stage of the cycle. Contact the Provost's Office for an up-to-date schedule of Departments Reports, and the Department Self-Study & External Review.

The External Review Team will be selected by the department or program in consultation with the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. It will include one individual in the field from a college comparable to Denison who chairs the team, and another person in the field from a Ph.D.-granting institution.

The third member of the team will be a Denison faculty representative from the same academic division as the department under review. This faculty member, selected by the Office of the Provost in consultation with the department or program under review, will take part in all aspects of the external team's activities, except for meetings with individual members of the department.

The department, in consultation with the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, has the option of adding a Denison graduate to the committee.

The External Review Team will be invited to campus for a two-day visit to familiarize themselves with the department or program. It will have access to the Department Self-Study, and to faculty and students in the department or program. The two external reviewers will draft the External Review Report, with the other member(s) of the team serving in an advisory capacity. In its report the Team will respond to the following questions:

1. Comment on what you think to be the most important issues raised in the self-study.
2. How does the department's program compare with programs at similar institutions? Has the department kept abreast of developments in the field and how are they reflected in the curriculum?
3. What distinctive strengths do you find in the department's program? What weaknesses do you find in the department's program?
4. Curriculum:
  - a. Comment on the structure of the major. Would you propose changes?
  - b. Assuming the staff size remains the same, what changes would you suggest in the department's array of course offerings, including offerings for majors and non-majors?
5. Student Learning:

- a. Do students have a grasp of the discipline? Are they able to talk both specifically and comprehensively about the discipline? Do you find evidence of student interest and involvement in the intellectual life of the department?
  - b. Do you find evidence that students receive adequate training in research, laboratory, studio, or performance skills?
  - c. Comment on the quantity and quality of student involvement in research, laboratory, studio, or performance activities.
6. Commitment to Diversity & Equity: Comment on the department/program's engagement with issues of inclusion and diversity? Does the curriculum and programming seek to prepare students for post-Denison life in a diverse and global community?
  7. Resources:
    - a. When appropriate, please comment on the department's physical resources. What changes would you suggest?
    - b. Are there compelling reasons to change staff size?
    - c. Do you find library and other academic support resources (technology, tutoring, etc.) adequate to support the department's curriculum? What areas of acquisition would you suggest?

The chair of the External Review Team shall send the External Review Report to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs who will share it with the chair of the department or program under review and the Denison faculty representative on the External Review Team. The External Review Report is to be treated as an internal document with limited access granted to all faculty upon request to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.

## Departmental Response and Meeting with the Academic Affairs Council

The chair or director of the department or program under review will write a brief response to the External Review Report. It should include mention of possible changes to be made as a result of the review and significant areas of disagreement, if any, with the report. All members of the department or program and the Denison faculty representative on the External Review Team shall be provided with a copy of this response and have an opportunity to supplement it with statements of their own.

Once the department has delivered to the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs a written a response to the External Review Report, the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs shall share the Department Self-Study, the External Review Report, and the Departmental Response with the Academic Affairs Council. The chair of the department or program and the Denison faculty representative on the External Review Team will meet with the Academic Affairs Council to discuss appropriate action to be taken as a result of the review. This group will decide which actions should be initiated by the department or program and which, if any, should be initiated by the Academic Affairs Council or the Administration. AAC reviews the Department Report process and documents only once in every three Reports, that is, once in the twelve-year cycle when an external review may have been conducted.