American University of Beirut
Office of the Provost

Guidelines to Periodic Review of
Academic Programs

September 2013
I Overview

Academic program reviews promote and maintain high quality undergraduate and graduate programs that are effective and consistent with the mission and resources of the department and the University. They verify that AUB’s existing programs meet or exceed international standards of academic excellence and also aid in the identification of promising new areas for programmatic offerings. Faculty members, new and returning students and, indeed, the University community as a whole all benefit from a rigorous and effective review process.

A successful review depends on the proper assessment of course and program learning outcomes and the use of assessment results to improve student learning. While such improvements can and should be made on an annual basis, major programmatic changes usually require a formal process of review. During the review, the department prepares a reflective self-study to examine its educational programs and practices, and to evaluate their quality and progress. The self-study also identifies future program needs, directions, and priorities. It is carefully studied by a pair of external reviewers who visit the campus and prepare a separate report, which may lead to modification of the department’s plan for program enhancement, creation, or termination.

Next, the departmental self-study, the reviewers’ report, and the joint response of the dean and chair are examined by an internal review committee, which summarizes all findings and the agreed-upon recommendations in a final report submitted to the provost, dean, and departmental chair. The provost presents the plan’s financial implications to academic and administrative heads for their input and asks the Senate to consider and approve its educational aspects. The plan thus forms the basis for all future actions related to planning, budgeting, and program improvement.

II Timing of Reviews

i. All undergraduate and graduate programs and departments without professional accreditation are reviewed at least once every six years. Accredited programs/departments will follow the timeline required by the accrediting body.

ii. The Provost’s Office maintains, in coordination with the deans, a schedule for the periodic in-depth review of undergraduate and graduate programs. The schedule lists all undergraduate and graduate programs identified for review during the multi-year cycle.

iii. Departments are requested to review all of their degree programs simultaneously and to submit one self-study report. Requests for the separate review of undergraduate and graduate programs require the prior approval of the relevant dean, the Board of Graduate Studies, and the provost.

iv. Departments that review programs for professional accreditation by external boards, commissions, or other agencies follow the schedule and requirements of that body for the accredited programs.

v. The academic review process typically follows a 21-month timeline from written notification of program review to the submission of the final Internal Review Committee report to the provost.
III Academic Review Process

The review process is designed to provide a uniform and effective mechanism for collecting data; integrating, reporting, and analyzing the data; and making recommendations for program improvement and development. Each review results in a departmental self-study that provides descriptive and evaluative information about the program(s), the faculty members, and the students, and suggests areas and plans for improvement. External reviewers assess the self-study and conduct a campus visit to verify program needs before forwarding their own recommendations to the Internal Review Committee (IRC), which is chaired by the coordinator for program review in the Provost’s Office, and to the provost. After receiving the external review report, the dean consults with the departmental chair to ensure the report’s accuracy and to review the department’s action plan. The self-study, external reviews, and the responses of the dean and the chair are then studied by the IRC. The IRC chair drafts a final report for submission to the dean and the provost.

Deans are responsible for providing departments with faculty data relevant to their operations and for ensuring the timely completion of the program/department self-studies. The coordinator for program review is the main point of contact for departments with programs under review; he/she chairs all IRCs, which are responsible for examining the self-studies, external reviews, and any responses received. The provost safeguards the integrity of the process, facilitates internal and external reviews, and follows up on recommendations for budgeting and implementation as applicable.

The following is a summary of the Academic Review Process:

i. The provost publishes the program review schedule for the next academic year and the rolling schedule for the next six years. The provost informs the appropriate deans of the faculty and departmental chairs of the forthcoming reviews.

ii. The provost establishes one or more IRCs, each of which is composed of three members: the coordinator for program review, who chairs the committee; the associate dean of the concerned faculty (or a senior faculty member appointed by the dean if the associate dean contributes to the program(s) under review); and the associate dean of a second faculty, who is appointed by the provost. The number of IRCs depends on the number of programs/departments undergoing review in any given year.

iii. The IRCs oversee the integrity and administration of the entire review process. Each IRC receives all documents related to the program/department reviews with which it has been tasked and ensures that the self-studies follow University guidelines.

iv. The coordinator for program review coordinates the activities of all IRCs.

v. Once formal notification of the review process is received from the provost, the departmental chair appoints departmental faculty members to a Program Review Committee (PRC), which conducts the review(s) and drafts the self-study. The PRC is normally chaired by a senior faculty member appointed by the departmental chair. All faculty members involved in the program(s) are expected to provide the committee with any information that it requests. The committee may also ask the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) for assistance in conducting alumni, employer, or
market surveys to strengthen the self-study’s mandatory SWOT analysis, in which all departmental faculty are required to participate. The standards and criteria for the self-study may be ones specifically required by the relevant accrediting body or the guidelines for the self-study report provided in Appendix I. When the guidelines are used, the programs of the selected external reviewers will serve as the default norms if other benchmarks have not been chosen.

vi. Each IRC periodically meets with the relevant PRCs to provide advice and assistance and to monitor progress toward the completion of the self-study.

vii. The first draft of the self-study is presented to departmental faculty by the PRC no less than one week before a departmental meeting to recommend an action plan for the improvement or termination of the program(s) or the establishment of a new one. The plan should include a discussion of the resources needed for its accomplishment and how these resources may be accessed. It should also address the possibility of reallocating resources currently available to the department and faculty. If the department/faculty concludes that a current program should be terminated or scaled down, the self-study should propose an action plan to bring about this outcome. The action plan is incorporated into the final self-study document, which is endorsed by departmental faculty through a majority vote. The PRC then sends the document to the provost, with copies to the faculty dean and the chair of the IRC.

viii. The IRC reviews the self-study report to ensure its compliance with AUB’s self-study report guidelines for undergraduate and graduate programs and its readiness for submission to external reviewers.

ix. Two or more reviewers from outside of the University are selected by the IRC from lists of nominees supplied by the dean and the PRC. The external reviewers should be acknowledged experts in the discipline(s) under review and peers in aspirant institutions. A copy of the self-study is sent to the external reviewers by the provost.

x. An onsite visit of not less than three working days is scheduled for each complement of external reviewers in coordination with the faculty dean and the academic unit. (Note that at least six weeks must pass between the receipt of the self-study report by the reviewers and their scheduled visit.) The IRC chair will accompany the reviewers to an introductory meeting with the dean and the departmental chair to discuss the self-study report and to review the schedule for the site visit. The reviewers’ other arranged meetings, scheduled in coordination with the department, will normally include:

• Meetings with current undergraduate and graduate students in the program(s).
• Meetings with the departmental chair; undergraduate program coordinator (if applicable); PRC members; other departmental faculty; and staff members as appropriate.
• A tour of program facilities.
• A meeting with faculty/school advisory and/or administrative committee.
• A separate meeting with the faculty dean.
• An exit interview with the departmental chair, IRC chair, associate dean, faculty dean, and provost.
xi. The external reviewers submit their report to the IRC chair and the provost within 10 working days of the onsite visit. (Guidelines for the external reviewers’ report appear in Appendix II.) The IRC chair forwards the report to the dean, who shares it with the departmental chair.

xii. The departmental chair studies the external reviewers’ report, checking it for factual accuracy and the suitability of recommendations. The departmental chair provides the dean and the IRC chair with a formal response to the report, in addition to any supporting materials that may be needed for the response. This response might include a discussion of the reviewers’ recommendations and any necessary modifications to the action plan. The dean prepares her/his independent response and sends it to the IRC chair and the provost for inclusion in the IRC final report. As an alternative, the dean may prepare her/his response after the IRC final report is drafted.

xiii. The IRC reviews the self-study, the external reviewers’ report, and the responses of the dean and chair. The IRC chair summarizes the findings and the agreed recommendations in a final report submitted to the provost, dean, and departmental chair. (Guidelines for the IRC report appear in Appendix III.)

xiv. The provost calls for a concluding meeting with the IRC chair, faculty dean, and departmental chair to discuss implementation of the action plan derived from the program review. If the establishment of a new program is recommended, for example, the proposal must be examined in relation to University strategic planning. An approved implementation plan is attached to the IRC report with a copy of the minutes of this concluding meeting.

xv. The provost forwards the academic aspects of the program action plan to the Academic Development Committee (or Board of Graduate Studies, if applicable), which sends it to the Senate for approval if it includes major curricular changes.

xvi. The provost disseminates the final IRC report with the approved action plan to the relevant faculty.

xvii. The dean of the faculty supports and monitors the progress of the reviewed program/department in achieving its approved action plan in the year following the review.

xviii. Twelve months after the conclusion of the review meeting, the departmental chair reports to the provost and dean on the implementation of the approved plan.

IV Resources and Other Assistance for Program Reviews

The Provost’s Office shall provide the following resources and other assistance to support the periodic review of programs at the University:

i. Provide a budget, in coordination with the relevant dean, to support onsite visits by external program reviewers.

ii. Provide a template for the self-study and a writing guide with examples. Faculties should provide editorial assistance during the writing process.
iii. Support a one-month summer salary or a teaching buyout of one course for each of two semesters for the faculty member tasked with writing and editing each self-study report.

iv. Work with the Center of Teaching and Learning to provide training on the assessment of course and program learning outcomes and on program evaluation.

v. Provide institutional and faculty data as needed with the assistance of OIRA, the Admissions Office, and the Registrar’s Office. OIRA will implement and manage requested student surveys for program review; develop, maintain, and disseminate performance indicators relevant to program reviews; and provide general advice on the interpretation of performance indicators and surveys.
# V. Review Timeline for Departments

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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Task</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1: September</strong></td>
<td>- The Provost’s Office publishes the program review schedule for the next academic year and the rolling schedule for the next six years. The Provost notifies faculties/departments in writing of their forthcoming reviews.</td>
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| **Year 1: October**   | - The relevant dean and the provost meet with the faculty, students, and staff of each concerned department to brief them on the review process, the timeframe, and the required contents of the self-study report.  
- Appointment and confirmation of Internal Review Committees (IRCs) for programs under review.  
- IRC chair (always the coordinator for program review) convenes each IRC to coordinate the review process and calendar.  
- Departmental chairs establish Program Review Committees (PRCs). |
| **Year 1: November**  | - CTL provides workshops for PRCs on Self-Study                                                                                                                                                     |
| **Year 1: December-January** | - The provost requests nominations for external reviewers by January 31.  
- PRCs decide on surveys needed for external stakeholders and coordinate survey administration with OIRA. |
| **Year 1: February-September** | - PRCs conduct self-studies.  
- IRCs meet periodically with PRCs to advise and monitor progress in completing the program/department self-study report  
- PRCs receive survey results and feedback from internal and external constituents through OIRA.  
- PRCs receive data from OIRA and relevant dean’s offices.  
- Target groups identified for meetings with external reviewers during site visits.  
- Selection of external reviewers. Confirmation of visit dates. |
| **Year 2: September 30** | - Provost, relevant dean, and IRC chair receive copy of final draft of the self-study from each department under review.  
- IRCs review the self-study reports to ensure compliance with AUB’s self-study report guidelines (if appropriate) and their readiness for submission to external reviewers.  
- External reviewers must have four to six weeks to examine final self-study text before they arrive. |
| **Year 2: December-February** | - Site visits by external reviewers.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| **Year 2: March**     | - External reviewers’ reports are received by IRC chair and provost.  
- IRC chair circulates the external reviewers’ reports to the relevant IRCs and deans, who forward them to the concerned |
departmental chairs. The dean and chair check the factual accuracy of the report and the suitability of recommendations. Chairs notify deans in writing of any inaccuracies or inappropriate recommendations and supply supporting materials.

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<tr>
<th>Year 2: <strong>End of March</strong></th>
<th>• The chair provides the dean and the IRC chair with a formal response to the reviewer’s report</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2: <strong>End of April</strong></td>
<td>• The dean prepares her/his independent response and sends it to the IRC chair and the provost for inclusion in the IRC final report. As an alternative, the dean may prepare her/his response after the IRC final report is drafted.</td>
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</table>
| Year 2: **End of May**   | • IRCs review self-study reports, associated external reviewers’ reports, and any responses from deans and departmental chairs.  
• IRC chair summarizes the findings and the agreed recommendations for each review in a final report. |
| Year 2: **June**         | • IRC chair sends final reports to the provost, the relevant dean, and the departmental chair.  
• The provost meets with the IRC chair, faculty dean, and departmental chair to plan implementation.  
• IRC report and approved implementation plan are made available to the concerned faculty. |
Appendix I: Guidelines for Writing the Self-Study Report

The objectives of the internal review of academic programs process are to provide an assessment of the quality of each academic degree program and to use that assessment to develop a plan and implementation strategies for program improvement. A key component of the process is the preparation of a self-study report that addresses both of these objectives.

The Self-Study Report is therefore expected to be a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the strengths and limitations of the program(s) being submitted for review. It will provide information critical to a thorough on-site review of the program(s).

While the following organization of the self-study report is recommended, departments/programs should feel free to make changes to this organization as long as all parts are included. For example, sections may be added that are specific to the department/program or professional frameworks may be adopted to help the department/program evaluate how consistently they are meeting professional standards in their field.

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

A. Department History.
B. Programs (List and summarize all programs offered by the department).
C. Organizational Structure and Governance.
D. Program(s) Review (Applicable if the program(s) has undergone a review process).
E. Others.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMS

A. Mission Statement.
B. Program(s) Educational Goals (or Objectives).
C. Program(s) Constituencies.
D. Process for Revision of the Program Educational Objectives.
E. Program(s) learning outcomes.
F. Relationship of Program(s) learning outcomes to Program Educational Goals.
G. Process for the Establishment and Revision of the Program(s) learning outcomes.
H. Assessment of Learning Outcomes.
I. Continuous Improvement.

CURRICULUM

UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM

A. Curriculum Description (course plan, degree requirements…).
B. Minors.
C. Curricular Areas.
D. General Education Requirements.
E. Evaluation of Curriculum (use assessment data, data from external sources, such as alumni and employers...)
F. Curriculum Change (how the curriculum has changed in the last few years).
G. Internship, Research, Projects…
H. Teaching.

GRADUATE CURRICULUM
A. Curriculum Description.
B. Evaluation of Curriculum.
C. Course Offering.
D. Curriculum Change.
E. Internship, Research, Projects…

STUDENTS

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS
A. Student Admissions (admission requirements and process).
B. Student Characteristics (enrolment, attrition, retention, time to graduation, age, gender, ethnicity, residency...)
C. Quality of Students (honors students, student awards...)
D. Monitoring Student Progress.
E. Transfer Students and Transfer Courses.
F. Advising.
G. Graduation Requirements.
H. Placement of Graduates (What do your students do after graduation).
I. Research (What research opportunities are open to undergraduate students).
J. Student Learning Assessment (to what extent do students participate in the evaluation of instruction and assessment of the program).
K. General Education (how the General Education requirements have contributed to the achievement of program learning outcomes).

GRADUATE STUDENTS
A. Student Admissions.
B. Student Progress.
C. Graduate Advising and Thesis Supervision.
D. Graduate Student Teaching.
E. Quality of Students.
F. Placement after Graduation.
G. Resources and Support.
H. Student Learning Assessment.

FACULTY AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF
A. Faculty Qualifications (composition, size, credentials, experience...)
B. Faculty Workload (teaching, research, service...).
C. Faculty Composition and Change (Faculty appointment, reappointment, promotion...gender, ethnicity...)
D. Faculty Size.
E. Professional Development.
F. Faculty Mentoring
G. Authority and Responsibility of Faculty.
H. Faculty Productivity.

**RESEARCH (For Review of Graduate Program(s)).**
A. Research Areas.
B. Productivity and Grants.
C. Others.

**FACILITIES**
A. Offices, Classrooms and Laboratories.
B. Computing Resources.
C. Guidance (regarding the use of the tools, equipment, computing resources…).
D. Maintenance and Upgrading of Facilities.
E. Library Services.

**INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**
A. Financial Support.
B. Staffing.
C. Others.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT**
A. Strengths
B. Weaknesses
C. Opportunities and Challenges
D. Actions and plans for improvement

**Appendix A** – Course Syllabi.
**Appendix B** – Faculty Vitae.
**Appendix C** – Equipment (if applicable)
**Appendix D**– Tables: Program Enrollment and Degree Data, Personnel.
**Appendix E**: ICE Form and ICE Summary.
**Appendix F**: Exit Survey.
**Appendix G**: Employer Survey.
**Appendix H**: Alumni Survey.
**Appendix J**: Program Outcomes Assessment Plan.
Appendix II: Guidelines for the External Reviewers’

Reviewers’ Onsite Visit

1. The self-study report is submitted to external reviewers before end of October.

2. An onsite visit of not less than three working days is scheduled on December or February for the external reviewers (round trip ticket, accommodation, and honorarium will be covered). This visit is in coordination with the faculty dean and the academic unit. The Internal Review Committee chair will accompany the reviewers to an introductory meeting with the dean and the departmental chair to discuss the self-study report and to review the schedule for the site visit. The reviewers’ other arranged meetings, scheduled in coordination with the department, will normally include:

- Meetings with current undergraduate and graduate students in the program(s).
- Meetings with the departmental chair; undergraduate program coordinator (if applicable); Program Review Committee members; other departmental faculty; and staff members as appropriate.
- A tour of program facilities.
- A meeting with faculty/school advisory and/or administrative committee.
- A separate meeting with the faculty dean.
- An exit interview with the departmental chair, IRC chair, associate dean, faculty dean, and provost.

3. The external reviewers submit their report to the IRC chair and the provost within 10 working days of the onsite visit.

Guidelines for the External Reviewers’ Report

The external reviewers’ report should assess the quality of the program(s) in the following areas and make recommendations for improvement:

- Alignment of the mission of the program(s) with the missions of the University, the faculty, and the department. The department’s place in the faculty’s strategic plan.

- Structure and administration of program(s).

- Scope, depth, and currency of the curriculum/curricula, and requirements for degree completion.

- Faculty effectiveness in teaching and advising; faculty productivity in scholarly or creative pursuits; faculty research, publication, and recognition in the discipline/field.

- Impact on student learning; assessment of student learning; and mechanisms for continuous improvement.
• Resources for program(s), including space, equipment, operating budget, and library holdings.

• Demand on the part of prospective students and employers. Projected consistency of demand for the next five years.

• Is the action plan proposed by the self-study clear, appropriate, and feasible?

• Competitive positioning (strength, attractiveness, relevance,…) of the department’s programs within the regional and international research and teaching environments

The reviewer’s report length is (on average) 5-10 pages, but could be longer depending on the reviewer’s findings.
Tentative Visit Program of Reviewers

The department will provide the reviewers with a room which contains two computers and access to printing. All materials for review should be available in this room. Extending personal social invitations of a reviewer outside the review schedule must be avoided to the best possible. Invitations can be made by groups of at least three faculty members from the department, with the knowledge of the program review coordinator.

### Day 1: (Monday)

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>Meeting with the department Chairperson</td>
<td>Introductory meeting. Notes may be taken. Reviewers identify people/committees* they want to meet with, and documents they want to review.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>Tour of classrooms, faculty offices, facilities…</td>
<td>By PRC member(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 13:00</td>
<td>Meeting with the Program Review Committee</td>
<td>Questions about department, self-study report… Notes may be taken.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00-14:00</td>
<td>Lunch attended by PRC members and department chair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00-15:00</td>
<td>Meeting with the Program Review Committee, continued</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00-16:00</td>
<td>Meeting with departmental subcommittees, faculty members, student representatives from each program and professional society.</td>
<td>The department will provide details</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00-18:00</td>
<td>Material Review</td>
<td>Annual reports, undergraduate and graduate catalogues, sample student’s work, course files…</td>
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### Day 2: (Tuesday)

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>Meeting with the dean (the dean may invite others to attend)</td>
<td>Reviewers share their observations/suggestions with the dean. Notes may be helpful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00</td>
<td>*A meeting with members of Faculty administrative committee (if requested by reviewers).</td>
<td>Reviewers may ask about shared resources, services offered from/to other departments… Minutes must be taken.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-13:00</td>
<td>Meeting with departmental subcommittees, faculty members,</td>
<td>The department will provide details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 – 11:00</td>
<td>Reviewer’s meeting at AUB to prepare a preliminary report.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 – 12:30</td>
<td>Exit Meeting with the department chair, IRC chair, associate dean, dean,</td>
<td>Notes should be taken</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and provost</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30-13:00</td>
<td>Meeting with provost.</td>
<td>This meeting is at the provost’s discretion. Additional people may be</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>invited to attend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:00 – 14:30</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:30</td>
<td>Reviewers meet</td>
<td>The reviewers meet to discuss the final report.</td>
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Appendix III: Guidelines for the Internal Review Committee (IRC)

1- Composition

The provost establishes one or more Internal Review Committees (IRCs), each of which is composed of three members: the coordinator for program review, who chairs the committee; the associate dean of the concerned faculty (or a senior faculty member appointed by the dean if the associate dean contributes to the program(s) under review); and the associate dean of a second faculty, who is appointed by the provost. The number of IRCs depends on the number of programs/departments undergoing review in any given year.

2- Operation

The Internal Review Committee (IRC) members are charged with:

- The IRCs oversee the integrity and administration of the entire review process. The coordinator for program review coordinates the activities of all IRCs.

- Each IRC periodically meets with the relevant Program Review Committee to provide advice and assistance and to monitor progress toward the completion of the self-study.

- The IRC reviews the self-study report to ensure its compliance with AUB’s self-study report guidelines for undergraduate and graduate programs and its readiness for submission to external reviewers. The IRC chair (always the coordinator of program review) will inform the relevant dean of any omissions.

- The IRC selects two or more reviewers from outside of the University from lists of nominees supplied by the dean and the PRC. A copy of the self-study is sent to the external reviewers by the provost.

- An onsite visit of not less than three working days is scheduled for each complement of external reviewers in coordination with the faculty dean and the academic unit. The IRC chair will accompany the reviewers to an introductory meeting with the dean and the departmental chair. The IRC chair will attend an exit interview with the departmental chair, IRC chair, associate dean, faculty dean, and provost.

- The external reviewers submit their report to the IRC chair and the provost. (Guidelines for the external reviewers’ report appear in Appendix I.) The IRC chair forwards the report to the dean, who consults with the departmental chair to ensure the report’s accuracy and to review the department’s action plan.

- The chair provides the dean and the IRC chair with a formal response to the report, in addition to any supporting materials that may be needed for the response. The dean prepares her/his independent response and sends it to the IRC chair and the provost for inclusion in the IRC final report. As an alternative, the dean may prepare her/his response after the IRC final report is drafted.
• The IRC reviews the self-study, the external reviews, and the responses of the dean and chair.

• The IRC integrates the self-study findings, the external review report, and the joint response of the dean and departmental chair into its own internal review report. The IRC should assess the quality, vitality, and direction of the program(s) following the same criteria used by the external reviewers. It should evaluate the recommendations of the department and the external reviewers to arrive at final recommendations for action. For instance, the IRC might recommend a change in the direction, structure, or activities of an undergraduate or graduate program in order to improve its quality, increase its effectiveness, or utilize AUB resources more efficiently.

• The IRC prepares a budget for the final recommendations indicating the extent of the University’s financial commitment.

• The IRC chair (unless the IRC agrees otherwise) summarizes the findings and the agreed recommendations in a final report submitted to the provost, dean, and departmental chair.

• The provost calls for a concluding meeting with the IRC chair, faculty dean, and departmental chair. If the establishment of a new program is recommended, for example, the proposal must be examined in relation to University strategic planning. An approved implementation plan is attached to the IRC report with a copy of the minutes of this concluding meeting.
Appendix IV: Guidelines for the Program Review Committee (PRC)

1. Composition

The departmental chair appoints departmental faculty members to a Program Review Committee (PRC), which conducts the review(s) and drafts the self-study. The PRC is normally chaired by a senior faculty member appointed by the departmental chair, and it should ideally be composed of three faculty members for effective conduct of the work. Normally, the departmental chair should not be a member of the PRC committee.

2. Operation

1- The PRC conducts the review(s) and drafts the self-study. All faculty members involved in the program(s) are expected to provide the committee with any information that it requests. The committee may also ask the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) for assistance in conducting surveys to strengthen the self-study’s SWOT analysis.

2- The PRC requests a departmental meeting with the dean, the provost, the staff, and selected students to brief them on the review process.

3- The PRC meets at least once every two weeks. The minutes of the meeting are distributed to all faculty members involved in the program(s) under review and to the members of the Internal Review Committee (IRC). Faculty members are expected to provide feedback (if needed) within 5 working days.

4- The PRC, in its first meeting, nominates two or more reviewers from outside of the University. The external reviewers should be acknowledged experts in the discipline(s) under review and peers in aspirant institutions. The PRC must provide CVs or personal website of all nominated reviewers, and evidence that these reviewers accept to carry out the review once selected. In addition, a detailed description of the level of collaboration between any reviewer and member of the department under review must be provided, and at least two reviewers must be working in a US university and must have no prior collaboration with any faculty member in the department under review.

5- The PRC, in its early meetings, decide on surveys needed for external stakeholders and coordinate survey administration with OIRA.

6- The Internal Review Committee (IRC) meets periodically with the PRC to provide advice and assistance and to monitor progress toward the completion of the self-study.

7- Once a chapter in the self study report is completed, it is distributed to all faculty members involved in the program(s) under review and to the members of the IRC. Faculty members are expected to provide feedback (if any) within 5 working days.

8- PRC presents the first draft of the self-study to departmental faculty no less than one week before a departmental meeting. The department recommends an action plan for
the improvement or termination of the program(s) or the establishment of a new one. The plan should include a discussion of the resources needed for its accomplishment and how these resources may be accessed. It should also address the possibility of reallocating resources currently available to the department and faculty. If the department/faculty concludes that a current program should be terminated or scaled down, the self-study should propose an action plan to bring about this outcome. The action plan is incorporated into the final self-study document, which is endorsed by departmental faculty through a majority vote.

9- The PRC sends the document to the provost, with copies to the faculty, dean and the chair of the IRC by September 30.

10- IRC reviews the self-study reports to ensure compliance with AUB’s self-study report guidelines (if appropriate) and its readiness for submission to external reviewers.

11- Membership in PRC committees is a service which involves all related review activities including attendance of all meetings, data collection and analysis, etc… The PRC member who is responsible of writing the self-study report will be given a release of two courses (one course in the spring term, and a second course in the fall) or a compensation equivalent to one month salary in the summer. If more than one PRC member share the write-up of the self-study report, the one month salary will be divided among these members. (For example, in the case of 3 members, each will receive (one month salary)/3)
### Appendix V: Periodic Review Schedule Over Six Years

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