

**Sam Houston State University  
Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Administrative Program Review**



## Guidelines

## PURPOSE

The purpose of **Administrative Program Review (APR)** is to support executives, managers, and employees of Sam Houston State University administrative departments through the examination of current operations, identification of opportunities for enhancement, implementation of adjustments, and establishment of plans for continuous improvement.

## STEPS

The APR process incorporates three stages: (1) completion of a **self-study** by the administrative department; (2) review of the administrative unit by members of a **peer review committee**; and (3) development of an **action plan** identifying viable steps for improvement in administrative functions. The administrative department head is encouraged to include key staff in any and all aspects of the APR process, which is expected to last 3 – 6 months.

- (1) In order to describe operational conditions and examine routine and non-routine functions conducted by the administrative unit, the administrative department head will complete the **self-study** document, which will be provided by the APR staff. In addition, the Assistant Director for APR will provide a variety of datasets and reports spanning the most recent five years to support the department's self-study.
- (2) After the self-study is complete, a **peer review committee**, selected by the administrative department head, will review and evaluate the administrative department and the self-study. Onsite visits may be conducted, or the peer review may take place remotely, depending on the availability of offsite reviewer(s). The peer review will result in the completion of an evaluation rubric to document the process. Additionally, peer reviewers will be asked to provide recommendations for improvement based upon their expertise in higher education and the administrative function. Coordination of onsite and offsite reviews will be handled by an Institutional Effectiveness representative.
- (3) Utilizing the self-study and the peer reviews, the department head and APR staff will construct an **action plan**. University and division leadership will receive an executive summary of the process and outcomes, and the administrative department head will meet with the Assistant Director for APR approximately two years after the action plan is developed to review the status of the action plan items and adjust as necessary in order to achieve the stated objectives.

## TIMELINE

Ideally, an administrative department will perform the APR process once every five years. If a department incorporates periodic peer review for purposes of accreditation or outside organization recognition, the APR process will be carefully coordinated to minimize duplication of time and effort.

## **SELF-STUDY**

At a minimum, the self-study document will address an administrative department's:

- Mission, goals, and objectives
- Policies, procedures, and plans
- Resource adequacy (staffing, facilities, and equipment)
- Organizational context and impact
- Communication and stakeholder feedback
- Strengths and challenges

Supporting datasets and administrative documents to be provided to the administrative department head in advance of the self-study may include CampusLabs documentation of annual assessments, department and organization budget and expense reports, institutional and divisional goals, guidelines issued by the Council for the Advancement of Standard in Higher Education (CAS), department and division organization chart, and any business continuity plan in place. It is anticipated that up to five years of data will be provided for use in the self-study. APR staff will assist in obtaining any additional supporting documents.

## **PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE**

A peer review committee shall be identified by the administrative department head early in the APR process. The Assistant Director for APR will assist with all coordination.

The committee shall include, at minimum, one external reviewer (professional not employed at SHSU), one internal reviewer (on-campus faculty or staff from outside the administrative department), and one student reviewer. The student can be an undergraduate or graduate, and the Assistant Director for APR can assist in identifying an appropriate selection.

The role of the peer review committee is to review the self-study and the administrative department, either onsite or remotely. In order to document the reviewers' evaluations and recommendations, an APR rubric, provided by the Assistant Director for APR, will be completed.

## **ACTION PLAN**

An objective of the Administrative Program Review process is to establish viable plans for continuous improvement. Once the self-study and peer review are complete, the administrative department head will work with the Assistant Director for APR to create an Action Plan. This is an opportunity for the department head to consider future needs, such as the development of budget needs for new initiatives, identification of programs or functions that are not aligned with department, division or institutional goals, etc.

Once the Action Plan is complete, APR staff will construct an executive summary of the department's APR process. At the request of the divisional or department leadership, a brief meeting can be conducted to discuss the administrative department's APR experience and highlight the department's Action Plan. The Assistant Director for APR will schedule a meeting with the administrative department head to discuss the status of the Action Plan approximately two years after the APR process concludes.