

Self-Study Guidelines

(Last Revised 9/11/2026)

The self-study is a core document of the academic unit review process, providing background information for the review committee and allowing the unit in review to explain its unique context, challenges, and opportunities. This document, along with the site visit, allows the review committee to provide a comprehensive assessment of the unit and its programs.

The Graduate School Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) is the body charged with managing the academic unit review process for the University of Washington. For questions and guidance about this document or any of the academic unit review process, contact the OAA at unitrev@uw.edu.

Self-Study Format

- The self-study narrative (excluding appendices) should be **no more than 25 single-spaced pages**, using 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Especially large or complex units should consult with OAA about exceptions to this limit.
- Use the template below, including headings and subheadings, but not the specific prompts, in your final text.
- The self-study must be authored by unit faculty leadership and indicate author(s) on the cover page.

Self-Study Review Process

- Due date for the initial draft self-study to be submitted to the OAA is specified in the charge letter and is typically twelve weeks prior to the site visit. **This draft should be in Word format.**
- OAA reviews the draft self-study to ensure alignment with Graduate School guidelines, providing feedback as needed. After any revisions, the OAA sends the self-study to the chief academic officer (CAO) with oversight of the unit under review (Dean, Divisional Dean, or VCAA).
- After CAO review and approval, the OAA invites the review committee to provide feedback or requests for additional information before the site visit.
- The final draft of the self-study, including only required appendices, must be provided in a **single pdf document**. Additional (non-required) appendices should be provided as single separate pdf document.

Data Support

The Graduate School will provide a standard data packet including enrollment and survey data that will be included as an appendix to the self-study. Units are encouraged to provide additional data as non-required appendices. The following resources may be helpful:

- [BI Portal](#): includes a wide range of data collected across units. (View Graduate School guidance for accessing various data [here](#)).
- [Institutional Analytics & Decision Support](#): develops ad-hoc or custom reports or analyses in addition to the information provided through the BI Portal.
- [UW Career Center](#): provides data for post-graduate outcomes and satisfaction (undergraduate only).
- [Institutional Assessment & Evaluation](#): offers guidance on developing effective assessment plans.

Note: The self-study provides a snapshot of the unit's current standing, recent trends, and plans for the future. It is not intended as an exhaustive report chronicling the 10+ years since the unit's last review. While units are encouraged to include internally maintained data if desired and allowable under [UW Records Retention Schedules](#), the self-study requirements can be fulfilled using centrally available data.

Using Work from External Accreditation Reviews

If a unit has completed an external accreditation in the past two years, the unit may use elements from the accreditation self-study to fulfill the requirements of the University of Washington's self-study where appropriate.

Special Note Regarding Student Confidentiality and FERPA

Self-study documents are posted on the Academic Unit Review Archive website at the conclusion of the review and become accessible to members of the University community. Please do not include students' (current or former) names and other identifying information in the document or required appendices. Academic units may elect to provide information about students (e.g., awards or the placement of recent graduates) in a non-required appendix.

Self-Study Structure

Include the following introductory materials

1. Cover page including:

- Name of unit, including name of school/college/campus
- Official title(s) of degrees, minors and graduate certificates offered by the unit
- Year of last review
- Name of academic unit leader (Dean/Chair/Director)
- Name(s) of self-study coordinator/author (if different from above)
- Date submitted (final draft)

2. Executive summary (see note below for details)

3. Table of contents

4. A listing of all abbreviations/acronyms commonly used in the self-study

Executive Summary

The executive summary should be 1 to 2 pages in length. It should describe the unit's current state, including the number of faculty and staff, any unique aspects of its administrative structure, the unit's physical home, and enrollment trends across each of its programs. The summary should identify what the unit considers to be the key components of its mission and the areas it regards as its primary strengths. It should also address the challenges the unit currently faces and the directions it hopes to explore in the coming years.

The executive summary should conclude with a brief listing of the questions the unit is posing to the review committee. These questions will be presented and discussed in full in Section IV.

The cover page and executive summary together serve an important purpose: they should give a broad range of university stakeholders the context needed to understand the review committee's report at the conclusion of the process.

Section I: Overview of Organization (+/- 6 pages)

1. Mission & Organizational Structure

1.1 Overview: Describe the overall mission of the unit. Be sure to touch on all aspects (scholarship, education, community engagement, etc.)

1.2 Academic Programs: List undergraduate majors and minors and graduate degrees and certificates offered in the unit, including program options. For each undergraduate major, indicate whether admissions are open, minimum requirements, or capacity constrained. For each degree program, describe current

student enrollment and trends, such as increases or declines in enrollment and completion rates over the past 5+ years. Refer to tables in the Graduate School data packet along with any additional data you are providing in an appendix.

- 1.3 Administrative Structure:** Describe how the unit's administrative structure supports academic services (e.g., advising) and non-academic services (e.g., technology support, fiscal services) to students and faculty. Refer to the organizational chart in Appendix A (see below).
- 1.4 Shared Governance:** Describe how shared governance works in the unit, including the frequency at which faculty meet to discuss curriculum and academic policy, the selection process, make up, and communication of any representative boards, councils or committees, and any recent updates of the unit's by-laws. Briefly describe how your unit participates in shared governance at college, school, campus, and/or university levels.
- 1.5 Stakeholders outside of the unit:** Describe how the unit solicits the advice of stakeholders such as community stakeholders, students, advisory boards and faculty and staff from other academic units.
- 1.6 Inclusive Excellence:** Describe how the unit's administrative structures and processes ensure a culture of engagement, innovation, and improvement that is inclusive of people with different backgrounds and perspectives.

2. Budget & Resources

- 2.1. Overview:** Provide an outline of the unit's budget including all sources of funding. Refer to the budget summary prepared for Appendix B (see below).
- 2.2. Evaluation Processes:** Describe how the unit evaluates whether it is making the best use of its current funding, human capital and other resources.
- 2.3. Fundraising:** Describe any advancement strategies to pursue additional funds through gifts, grants or contracts.

3. Inclusive Excellence

The UW Graduate School defines *inclusive excellence* as an integrated strategy in which we embrace the wide array of lived experiences and perspectives of all members of our community to garner the greatest benefits. This section of the self-study focuses on unit efforts to create a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all stakeholders. Language and terminology around these efforts vary and units should address the following guidelines using their preferred terminology.

Data shared in this section should be detailed but aggregated in such a way that individuals

cannot be identified by unique combinations of characteristics.

Units are strongly encouraged to complete the [Graduate School's Excellence Progress tool](#) as they consider and communicate how the prompts below are addressed in their graduate programs. Units are also encouraged to review the [University of Washington Diversity Blueprint](#) and as well as school/college/campus-level plans in reflecting on the questions below.

- 3.1. Overview:** Provide an overview of successful and ongoing efforts to create a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive environment in the unit. Include whether the unit has a formalized plan or statement of goals in this area (which can be included or linked in Appendix D), whether the unit has an official committee charged with ensuring the unit is a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive environment, and provide an overview of representation on that committee.
- 3.2. Faculty and Staff:** Describe strategies the unit employs to recruit, retain, and support the career success of faculty and staff from all backgrounds and experiences. Highlight the unit's successes and challenges in maintaining and promoting an inclusive culture among employees.
- 3.3. Students:** Describe strategies the unit employs to recruit, retain, and support the academic success of students from all backgrounds and experiences. Describe whether the unit has student handbook(s), how recently they have been updated, and how the unit ensures new and returning students' understanding of its content. Reference applicable data in the provided Graduate School Data Packet and (optionally) any additional data the unit chooses to highlight successes or challenges in maintaining and promoting an inclusive student population.
- 3.4. Partnerships:** Describe ways in which the unit uses institutional resources or partners with central administrative units to ensure a supportive, welcoming, and inclusive climate. Examples include: [Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity \(OMA&D\)](#), [Graduate Student Equity and Excellence \(GSEE\)](#) (Seattle campus), [Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) (Bothell campus), and [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) (Tacoma campus); [Office of Academic Personnel & Faculty Inclusive Excellence](#); institutional data from sources such as the UW Climate Survey.

4. Employee Success and Mentorship

- 4.1 Tenure and Promotion Processes:** Describe the academic unit's established promotion and tenure policies and practices across all ranks and tracks.
- 4.2 Support for Mid- and Later Career Faculty:** Describe how these policies and practices support the success of faculty in the unit.
- 4.3 Faculty Support Documentation:** Describe the ways in which the expectations

are shared with faculty (e.g., orientation meetings, handbooks, documents on the website, one-on-one meetings).

- 4.4 Support for Other Unit Employees:** Describe how the unit ensures support of post-doctoral fellows, staff, non-professorial track faculty, and other employees in their unit duties and professional development. In addition, describe the ways in which expectations are shared with these employees (e.g. orientation meetings, handbooks, documents on the website, one-on-one meetings).

Section II: Teaching & Learning (+/- 6 pages)

5. Student Learning Goals and Outcomes

- 5.1 Program Student Learning Goals:** For each degree program, minor, and graduate certificate program, describe student learning goals and outcomes (i.e., what are the students expected to learn? what are the students expected to be able to do as a result of the education provided?).
- 5.2 Program Curriculum:** For each degree program, minor, and graduate certificate program, provide a link to a webpage where reviewers can view the curriculum.
- 5.3 Student Learning Goals for Non-Majors:** Provide a description of the overarching student learning objectives your academic unit has for courses intended for non-majors. You may also list courses for non-majors that are offered by the unit (i.e. service and general education courses) and describe enrollment levels in those courses.

6. Assessment

There are resources and data provided by various university offices that may be useful in answering this section. See the [Data Support](#) section above for suggestions.

If assessment is conducted differently in different degree/certificate programs in your unit, please highlight those differences.

- 6.1 Individual Student Assessment:** Summarize the ways in which the unit evaluates individual student learning (e.g., classroom-based assessment, capstone experiences, portfolios, etc.).
- 6.2 Program Level Assessment:** Describe how the unit assesses its programs' effectiveness (for example, whether and how it supports students' achievement of program-level student learning objectives.)
- 6.3 Student Satisfaction Assessment:** Describe methods used to assess student satisfaction. Additionally, articulate efforts to assess how satisfaction may vary among students from different socioeconomic, geographic, and experiential

backgrounds.

- 6.4 Implementing Change:** Describe how the unit has used findings to make improvements in the programs, effect curricular changes, and/or make decisions about resource allocation. If applicable, in what ways and were the intended improvements realized?

7. Instructional Effectiveness

In reflecting on and describing practices in this section, units are encouraged to review the resources on the [Teaching@UW](#) website and the [5 Core Elements of Effective Teaching](#).

- 7.1. Evaluation of Instruction:** Describe method(s) used within the unit to evaluate quality of instruction, including the use of standardized teaching evaluation forms and peer evaluation but highlighting methods that are unique to the unit.
- 7.2. Professional Development in Instruction:** Note all opportunities for training in instructional methods that are made available to individuals teaching within the unit (including graduate students).
- 7.3. Examples of Improvement and Innovation:** Describe specific instructional changes that have been made by instructors in response to evaluation of teaching or training.

8. Student Success

Consider including artifacts in the appendices supporting this section. There are resources and data provided by various university offices that may be useful in answering this section. See the [Data Support](#) section above for suggestions.

- 8.1. Support of Academic Success:** Describe how the unit works with undergraduate and graduate students, through advising, mentoring, and other means, to ensure steady academic progress and overall success in programs. Describe strategies you use to ensure consistent communication of, and access to, student support resources.
- 8.2. Experiential and Community Opportunities:** Provide an overview of any co-curricular, experiential learning, undergraduate/graduate research opportunities or other high-impact practices that the unit provides. Summarize any available data on student participation.
- 8.3. Support of Post-Graduation Success:** Describe how the unit works with undergraduate and graduate students to prepare them for the next phases of their academic and professional lives. Include information on preparation for careers outside of academia.

- 8.4. Summary of Available Student Success Data:** Summarize evidence of student success in achieving program-related goals after graduation (see also 9.4).

Section III: Scholarly & Civic Impact & Future Directions (+/- 10 pages)

9. Impact of Faculty, Postdocs, Alumni and Students

- 9.1. Faculty Scholarship:** Describe the broad impact of faculty members' research, civic, and/or creative work. Feel free to note specific individuals and how their work embodies the unit's mission or distinguishes the unit from those at peer institutions.
- 9.2. Post-doctoral Fellow Scholarship:** Describe post-doctoral fellows' participation in the scholarly and teaching activities of the unit, *if applicable*.
- 9.3. Student Scholarship:** Describe undergraduate and graduate students' activities that have had an impact on the field or community while enrolled in the program. Include significant awards and noteworthy presentations. (Do not include student names in the self-study narrative. A non-required appendix can be included with students' names and names, achievements, etc.).
- 9.4. Alumni Scholarly or Civic Impact:** Describe how program graduates have had an impact on the field either academically or professionally. (Do not include former students' names in the self-study narrative. A non-required appendix can be included with former students' names, achievements, etc.).
- 9.5. Scholarly and Community Partnerships:** List any collaborative and/or interdisciplinary efforts between the unit and other units at the University of Washington or other institutions and the positive impacts of the efforts.

10. Future Directions

Rather than simply addressing this section by reiterating previous sections of the self-study thus far, address these questions in a way that is constructive for the unit as it thinks about its future.

- 10.1. Overview:** Where is the unit headed? What opportunities does the unit wish to pursue and what goals does it wish to reach? Describe how advances in the field or discipline, changing paradigms, changing funding patterns, changes in pedagogy, new technologies and trends, or other changes in research, scholarship or creative activity impact the unit.
- 10.2. Strategy:** How does the unit intend to reach these goals?
- 10.3. Impact:** What is the unit's current impact regionally, statewide, nationally, and internationally? Given the unit's envisioned future, describe how reaching this

future will augment that impact.

Section IV: Unit-Defined Questions (+/- 3 pages)

In this section, list the unit-defined questions that the unit submitted as part of its academic unit review planning form. For each question, provide any background information or context the review committee will need to adequately address the questions. The Chief Academic Officer for the Division, School, College, or Campus may include additional questions here.

APPENDICES

(Include all required appendices in the single pdf file for submission. Include non-required appendices as a separate pdf file.)

Appendix A: Organizational Chart

Provide a chart or list(s) that depicts the unit's organizational structure, including titles of those in leadership positions, names of departments/centers/units, etc.

Appendix B: Budget Summary

Using the sample format provided below, provide a summary of the unit's three most recent biennia.

Appendix C: Information about Faculty

Provide a list (reflective of the past academic year, autumn to summer) of all faculty members' names, ranks, appointment types, and affiliations with other units. If they are available online, provide links to faculty CVs. If these are not available online, you may choose to include them digitally as a supplemental appendix.

Appendix D: Inclusive Excellence Plan

Attach the unit's inclusive excellence plan or, if it is published on a department website, provide a link to the document.

Graduate School Data Packet

The Office of Academic Affairs will provide a packet of data on program enrollment and survey responses. Units are encouraged to provide additional data as non-required appendices.

Supplemental (Non-Required) Appendices:

The unit may include supplementary appendices in addition to those listed in this document. *Non-required appendices should be a separate file.*

Sample Appendix B – Budget Summary

Funding Sources	AY 20/21	AY 21/22	AY 22/23	AY 23/24	AY 24/25
State-funding					
# Tenure-track faculty					
# Teaching-track faculty					
# Research-track faculty					
Other non-temporary faculty positions					
State/GOF revenue					
State/GOF expenditure					
Research Cost Recovery (RCR) revenue					
RCR expenditure					
Other revenue					
Other expenditure					
Fee-based programs					
Student enrollment					
Net revenue					
Fee-based expenditure					
Carry forward balance					