

## **School/Institute Review Template**

### **RBHS GUIDELINES**

#### **Objective:**

As a best practice and to ensure academic excellence, rigor in educational and research programs, quality in health care delivery, and to fully engage faculty in the school governance, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) recommends a formal review of each school, institute, and academic department within a school to be conducted every five years. In conjunction with school and institute bylaws and procedures, the following guidance shall be followed to ensure a consistent review across schools, institutes, departments, and programs and maintain standards of excellence in achieving RBHS core missions.

The objective of these reviews shall be:

- 1) To assure ongoing excellence within the discipline(s);
- 2) To assess the alignment of the program's goals with the strategic goals of the school or institute, RBHS, and Rutgers University;
- 3) To provide the department with opportunities for review and assessment of directions, goals, strengths, areas for improvement in education, research, and patient care;
- 4) To assess the present and future programmatic and operational needs to achieve stated goals;
- 5) To provide a mechanism for faculty to express their views on the performance and responsiveness of leadership.

#### **Overview of Procedure:**

The bylaws of several RBHS schools call for the periodic review of departments and chairs and outline general procedures. This is a wise practice, and is intended to be applied uniformly throughout RBHS. The following guidelines are recommended to ensure open, objective, and thorough reviews at the school and institute levels.

To conduct the review of the school/institute and its leadership, and in consultation with the Chancellor, a School/Institute Review Committee shall be appointed by the dean/director and provided with a committee charge to guide to process. The dean/director shall select the chair and vice chair of the committee. The committee should primarily be composed of senior faculty members from within the unit, plus others as described below. The review process should also include a site visit by external reviewers who have national reputations and particular expertise in the discipline or field of the school/institute.

These reviews should be prospective rather than retrospective and focus on the school's/institute's efforts to be in the vanguard of the respective disciplines and academic health centers nationally. The process should provide independent and objective feedback on performance and goals, be collaborative and collegial, and instill confidence in the faculty.

The School/Institute Review Committee and the dean/director will initiate, name, and organize a series of review committees for each of the major departments of a school or programs of an institute. Members of departmental/program review committees will be primarily senior members of departments/programs other than the one being reviewed. Typically, department/program reviews should be completed within 90 days of the appointment of the committee. Reports from each department/program review will become important resource documents for the use of the School/Institute Review Committee in conducting its preliminary research and preparation of their final comprehensive report.

The School/Institute Review Committee should hold a series of meetings in preparation for a site visit by the external reviewers. The site visit should be an in person visit over the course of one to two days. The internal and external reviewers should meet with faculty, staff, and administration from the institute or school. The site visit should begin with a charge from the dean/director and conclude with a meeting with the review committee, followed by a final meeting with the dean/director, the chair of the review committee, the campus provost, and other leadership as needed. Typically the final meeting will then be a private meeting with the RBHS chancellor. At those concluding meetings, the external reviewers share their findings and recommendations prior to issuing a formal written report.

The final work product of the School/Institute Review Committee, after its series of meetings have concluded, is to produce a formal written report of its review, including its observations, findings, and recommendations. The external reviewers' report will be appended to form the comprehensive review document. The final document is to be submitted to the dean and chancellor.

### **Appointment of the Ad Hoc Internal Review Committee**

After consulting relevant school bylaws, and in consultation with the chancellor, the dean/director shall appoint the members of the School/Institute Review Committee and designate a chair. The committee should be representative of the school/institute faculty and will be composed of seven to ten senior faculty members. The committee should also include representatives from school administration, RBHS administration, senior faculty from RBHS from outside the program, Rutgers University at large, or clinical affiliates whenever appropriate.

### **Development of a Resource Document by the School/Institute**

A letter is sent by the dean/director early in the academic year in which the review will occur formally notifying the school/institute faculty members that the review process has been initiated, and inviting input to the named School/Institute Review Committee. The committee will request of the dean/director a resource document, which will serve as the principal reference document for the committee and the external site visitors. The report shall include:

- An overview of the unit's history;
- Current unit organizational charts;
- The unit's academic plan - outlining the directions in education, research, and administration for the next three-five years;
- Descriptions of the education, research, clinical, and community service programs of the unit;
- Listings of unit faculty, fellows, residents, resources, accomplishments, other pertinent data, etc. as appropriate;
- Reports from all individual department/program reviews.

The format of the document is likely to vary for clinical programs and basic science programs. The report is submitted by the dean/director to members of the committee, and the external site visitors.

### **School/Institute Committee Meetings**

The school/institute review committees typically hold one or more meetings to develop a full understanding of the school/institute under review and its proposed academic plan. The dean/director will attend the first meeting of the school/institute review committee to provide the committee charge.

In addition, the initial meeting(s) should build the foundation for the review process and include: 1) discussions of potential site visitors; 2) selection of individuals for the committee to interview; 3) creation

of subcommittees as needed, e.g., to organize departmental reviews; 4) the meeting schedule; 5) other information needed in the resource document.

Subsequent meetings shall include discussions with department chairs and the school/institute faculty and staff, individually or in groups, and other faculty members and others outside the department. The dean/director shall assign to the committee a staff member who shall be responsible for all interview scheduling, meeting room reservations, adequate documentation of each meeting, and travel arrangements for site visitors.

The committee's final meetings will focus on drafting and completion of the final report.

### **Solicitation of Comments on School/Institute Under Review**

The committee chair shall send a memorandum outlining the review to the faculty of the unit under review, other school department chairs, directors of centers and/or institutes associated with the school, the leaders and members of other institutes and schools, and others as appropriate soliciting constructive comments and the unit and on the resource document, and inviting them to request a meeting with the committee.

### **Selection of Site Visitors by the School/Institute Review Committee**

The involvement of external site visitors in the review process provides an opportunity for the school/institute review committee and the dean/director to obtain a wide perspective of trends in the discipline of the unit under review. The selection of site visitors shall be a participatory and consultative process, involving the dean/director and the committee members, and be done in consultation with the chancellor. After the school/institute review committee and dean/director agree on a final slate of external consultants, (usually three names and two alternates), the names, together with brief bio sketches of each, are sent to the chancellor who schedules a meeting with the committee chair and dean/director to finalize the selection of external consultants. The dean/director sends a formal letter of invitation to the top three consultants, which is followed up by communication from the committee chair. If one or more are unable to accept the invitation extended, alternate consultant(s) receive a formal invitation.

### **School/Institute Review Committee Report**

The school/institute review committee determines the overall structure and contents of its draft final report and should include an executive summary of recommendations written by the committee chair. The report should be written in such a way that it can be shared with the dean/director, faculty and staff, the Provost, and RBHS senior leadership. If necessary, the chair may also submit a confidential memorandum to the dean/director and/or the chancellor containing any recommendations or information that would not be appropriate for inclusion in the final report. Reports will differ depending on the unit under review and the pertinent issues raised during the review.

### **Site Visit by External Reviewers**

Once the site visitors have accepted the invitation to serve, the school/institute committee chair, or designee, arranges the site visit dates and travel arrangements. The school shall pay for the travel arrangements. Prior to the site visit, each visitor is sent the department report for review and a list of committee members. The visitors are asked to provide their current CV, which is distributed to internal attendees to site visit meetings.

The site visit generally occurs over two consecutive days of meetings. The dean/director, all department chairs, the committee members, and the visitors should all have an opportunity to propose individuals to meet with during the site visit. The visitors interview the department chairs, key faculty, and staff from the

department under review, students, residents, various members of other departments whose activities relate to the department, as well as RBHS senior leadership where appropriate. The resource document is provided to the site visitors in advance of their visit.

The review shall be conducted in the format of an NIH site visit. The agenda is developed and approved by the school/institute review committee and is flexible to accommodate additional requests by the visitors. The proceedings begin with brief remarks by the chancellor regarding the unit under review and any institutional priorities that might have an impact. The chancellor presents the visitors with their charge for the review. This initial meeting provides the visitors the opportunity to ask any questions or request any information that they determine necessary. The visitors speak next with the dean/director. At this meeting the dean/director provides an overview of the history of the unit, an assessment of the current state of the unit, relevant goals, outcomes, and accomplishments during the past five years, and his/her strategic plans for the future. The balance of the day and the following morning are generally devoted to interviewing faculty, administrative staff, and students.

Interviews continue on the second day and typically conclude with another session with the dean/director. This provides an opportunity for the visitors and the dean/director to ask questions and follow up on any unfinished business or issues that have arisen from their interviews. The visitors should then meet alone in a working session to discuss and summarize the review and develop an outline which will later become their report. Following their deliberations, the visitors first meet with the school/institute review committee members to discuss their preliminary findings and to ask any remaining questions. The visitors then have a final meeting with the dean/director, referred to as the exit interview, to discuss the same. Also present at the exit interview are the chancellor, campus provost or his/her designee, the school/institute review committee chair, and other leadership as appropriate to discuss the review and the consultants' recommendations.

The visitors are then asked to produce a concise, yet comprehensive report submitted to the dean/director, which reflects their assessment and recommendations. In addition, they may also submit a separate letter to the dean/director and chancellor, to include confidential recommendations or information that would not be appropriate to include in the report. The report should be provided no later than three weeks after the site visit. The external report should be considered an "open" document that can be made available to all concerned and ultimately become an appendix to the report of the ad hoc review committee.

### **Comprehensive Review Committee Report/Post-Review Activities**

The school/institute review committee chair is responsible to coordinate the site visitors' report together with the committee report to develop the final comprehensive review report. After the final document is reviewed by the school/institute review committee chair, he/she meets with the chancellor to discuss findings and recommendations. Following this, the chancellor meets with the dean/director to discuss the review and its implications on the future plans of the unit. Once this meeting is complete, the comprehensive review report is considered final and a copy is sent to the campus provost and the chancellor. The dean/director is sent a copy to share with the unit.

A copy of the final comprehensive review report shall be maintained by the school/institute and a copy sent to archives.

### **Sample Timeline**

The following sample time is proposed for the comprehensive review of a school/institute and the dean/director:

#### Fall Semester – Departmental Reviews

- 1) September - Kickoff meeting with faculty outlining departmental review process, dean/director review process, school/institute review – introducing purpose of the review, concepts, and preliminary data requests. Solicitation of potential nominees for school faculty review committee members and external visitors.
- 2) September 15 - Departmental review process begins, dean/director appoints committees, data collection initiated, committees hold organizational meetings.
- 3) October - Departmental reviews continue.
- 4) November/December – Departmental committee reports are drafted.
- 5) January - Conclusion of departmental review processes, all reports due to dean by January 15.

#### Spring Semester – School/Institute Review

- 6) February - School/Institute Review Committee is convened; reports provided to committee, data is presented to committee.
- 7) March - Site visit by external reviewers, dean meets with review committee.
- 8) April/May - School/Institute Report is drafted.
- 9) May 15 - Review committee reviews draft report, provides opportunity for dean/director to respond.
- 10) June 1 - Report presented to Chancellor.
- 11) July - Final report published - distributed to faculty.