Program Review Process and Timeline:

Reviews with Fall Semester Site Visits

Confirmation of the academic year during which the review will occur. The program review process begins when the department chair/program director receives confirmation of the academic year of the review. The respective Associate Dean will notify the chair/director of the program review at least one year prior to the academic year in which the review is to occur. Normally, the semester of the site visit is also determined at the time the year of the review is confirmed.

Fall semester one year prior to the visit

The following activities should be undertaken no later than the fall semester of the academic year prior to the anticipated site visit. Some departments/programs initiate these activities even earlier, especially if there is a department retreat planned during the previous spring or summer.

- **Discussion of preliminary plans with Associate Dean.** As early in the semester as possible, the chair/director should consult with the Associate Dean to prepare a tentative schedule for the self-study process and the site visit by the external reviewers. The chair or director should keep the Associate Dean informed about the progress of the self-study and consult with the Associate Dean frequently during the self-study preparation.

- For departments and programs that are accredited by external organizations, the schedule and specific elements of the program review process may be adjusted to reflect the requirements of the accrediting agency as well as the requirements of the college. In particular, the self-study content requirements of the accrediting organization should be compared with the St. Olaf self-study content requirements to ensure that the department/program's self-study addresses both sets of expectations. All departments/programs must also prepare a response to the external reviewer's report for the Provost, even if a response is not required by the accrediting organization. Chairs/Directors should confer with their Associate Dean to plan the necessary adjustments.

- **Preliminary planning by program faculty.** Program faculty should begin identifying key questions the review should answer for the department/program and anticipating specific uses of the findings. They should also begin identifying potential external reviewers in light of these preliminary plans. See Program review uses and Planning the self-study for additional suggestions.

- **Selection of external reviewers.** The external reviewers are selected by the Provost in consultation with the chair/director and the Associate Dean.

  - **Number of reviewers:** Most program reviews include two external reviewers; however, in exceptional cases, and with the approval of the Provost, there may be as few as one or as many as three.

  - **Identification of preferred reviewers:** As early as possible during the fall semester of the

year prior to the anticipated visit, the chair/director collaborates with the department/program and the Associate Dean to provide to the Provost an ordered list of individuals who could serve as reviewers. This timeline ensures maximum availability of the preferred reviewers.

- o **Reviewer compensation:** External reviewers normally receive an honorarium of $750 (payable after their report is received by the Office of the Dean of the College, normally within six weeks of the site visit), plus travel expenses (payable after a reimbursement request and itemized receipts are received). If any of the proposed external reviewers is a non-US citizen, the Associate Dean will confer with a college Senior Accountant to determine what is needed to document eligibility to receive compensation (based on immigration status and tax residency).

- o **Reviewer recruitment:** Once the Provost has identified the preferred reviewers, the Associate Dean extends the invitation to serve and establishes the specific dates of the site visit in consultation with the reviewers, the chair/director, the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College, and the program faculty.

- o After the external reviewers have confirmed their willingness to serve, the chair/director should provide the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College (doc@stolaf.edu) with the names, CVs, and preferred contact information of each reviewer.

- ● **Initiation of the self-study.** Programs should consult the <u>outline of self-study contents</u> for a detailed description of the major topics normally addressed in a self-study and a brief list of relevant information resources. In particular, programs can review <u>program-specific data reports</u> provided annually to chairs/directors by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. These annual data reports from IE&A are intended to provide much of the trend data frequently cited in program reviews. On-going assessment of ILOs both within programs and also in regard to assessment of CORE requirements in cases where the program contributes a significant proportion of courses carrying a particular CORE designation.

Self-studies should include all recent assessment reports conducted as part of the Decennial Assessment Cycle of program-level ILOs. In cases where a program, contributes a significant number of courses carrying a particular CORE attribute, self-studies should include any assessment results from relevant annual Ole Core Assessment reports (available on the Assessment Committee web page).

Spring semester prior to the visit

- ● **Scheduling** of administrative meetings during the site visit. The chair/director should contact the Executive Assistant to the Provost and Dean of the College to schedule the following meetings with the external reviewers:

  - o With the Provost and the appropriate Associate Dean (together) for 30 minutes at the beginning of the first day of the visit

  - o With Dean's Council for lunch, generally on the last day of the visit

  - o With the Provost and the Associate Dean together for a one-hour exit interview at the

> conclusion of the visit

- **Continuation of the self-study.** The program should complete its information gathering as early as possible in the spring semester to maximize time for summary, interpretation, and analysis of the findings. It is common to administer questionnaires to alumni and/or current students during
- this time frame, and it is advisable to do so prior to spring break

- *Summer prior to the visit/Early in the fall semester of the visit*

    - **Completion of travel arrangements for the external reviewers.** To allocate travel expenses to the appropriate budgets, chairs/directors should use the department purchase card to make airline and hotel reservations, and then re-classify these charges when they appear on the purchase card statement. Confer with the Budget Analyst in the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College for instructions on how to reclassify charges so they are attributed to the Dean of the College's budget rather than to the program budget. While making arrangements, chairs/directors should also remind external reviewers of the need to retain itemized receipts for parking, meal expenses while in transit, etc.

    - **Completion of the self-study.** The self-study should be completed a minimum of six weeks prior to the site visit. Before the document is finalized, programs should revisit the outline of self-study contents and their own program-specific data reports. In addition, many of the college-wide documents frequently appended to self-studies are available for download on the program review website.

    - **Review of self-study by Associate Dean.** The purpose of the Associate Dean's review is to conduct a final check on the accuracy of information (particularly concerning the Faculty and the college as a whole) before the self-study is provided to the external reviewers.

    - **Distribution of the self-study.** Following the Associate Dean's review and any final adjustments to the contents, the self-study should be distributed at least four weeks prior to the visit of the external reviewers, as follows:

        o A complete copy (narrative plus attachments) should be provided in electronic form to the Provost and Dean of the College (via doc@stolaf.edu) and to the appropriate Associate Dean.

        o A separate copy of the Executive Summary alone should be provided in electronic form to the Provost and Dean of the College (via doc@stolaf.edu) for later distribution to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents.

        o A complete copy (narrative plus attachments) should be provided in electronic form to each of the external reviewers.

        o The narrative portion only should be provided to the members of Dean's Council (deans-council@stolaf.edu).

    During the fall semester of the visit

    - **Completion and distribution of the site visit schedule.** The specific individuals and groups with whom the external reviewers will consult during the site visit will vary somewhat with each

program. However, in addition to the administrative meetings discussed above, it is common to include the following in the site visit schedule:

- o Meetings with the chair(s)

- o Meetings with program faculty (either collectively or in small groups, depending on the size of the program);Meeting with students

- o Tour of facilities

- o Meeting or tour of library and IT

- o Meetings with other faculty in programs closely linked to the department

Meals with the external reviewers can be arranged either as part of the meeting schedule or simply as an opportunity for informal visiting. The site visit schedule also should include meeting-free time for the reviewers to work together.

When the complete schedule for the site visit has been finalized, the chair/director should provide a copy to the external reviewers, program faculty and staff, the appropriate Associate Dean, and the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College (doc@stolaf.edu).

- ● **Hosting of the site visit and securing of signed W-9 forms.** The site visit proceeds as determined by the schedule. During the visit, each external evaluator should also complete a W-9 form.

Following the visit

- ● **Travel expense reimbursement of external reviewers.** The reviewers should be invited to submit their expense reimbursement requests with original itemized receipts to the chair/director as soon as convenient following the conclusion of the site visit. These, together with the reviewers' completed W-9 forms, should be forwarded to the Budget Analyst in the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College, who will then arrange for payments.

- ● **Provision of honoraria to external reviewers**. The chair/director should notify the Budget Analyst in the Office of the Provost and Dean of the College (x3876) when the external reviewers' report has been received, so that payment of the reviewers' honoraria can be arranged.

- ● **Preparation of program response to the findings of the review.** In consultation with program faculty, the chair/director prepares a written response to the findings of the entire review process – the self-study, the external reviewers' report, and feedback from the Provost and Dean of the College, the appropriate Associate Dean, and Dean's Council. The response should indicate the program's plans for specific actions inspired by the findings and recommendations of the review, and a tentative timeline for these actions.

- ● **Receipt and discussion of reviewers' report.** Reviewers should be asked to provide their written review to the chair/director within six weeks of the site visit. After the external reviewers' report has been received and discussed by program faculty, the chair/director will discuss the report and the program response with the Provost and Dean of the College and the appropriate Associate Dean. The report is also accessible to the Dean's Council.