

**Middle Tennessee State University**  
**Performance Funding: Program Review**  
*The Self-Study: Suggested Guidelines*

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**Why Should We Do the Review?**

1. Enhance the program quality.
2. Obtain additional resources (performance funding).
3. Satisfy Tennessee Board of Regents' requirements.

**What Should the Self-Study Entail?**

1. Brief history of the department (include current mission statement and goals)
2. Findings and recommendations from the previous review (What was recommended? What action has been taken?) optional
3. Learning Outcomes
4. Curriculum
5. Student Experience
6. Faculty (Full-time and Part-time)
7. Learning Resources
8. Support
9. Future Plans
10. Appendices (Data useful to the reviewer, but too much for the body of the report such as Departmental Committee structure, list of faculty publications and presentations).

**How Should the Self-Study be Written?**

✓ **Responsive**

The report should follow the outline (Program Review Rubric for Baccalaureate Programs). Make variations only if it improves the report. Be thorough, but make it succinct and readable. Emphasize program quality and its products; try to avoid extraneous issues.

✓ **Documentation**

Make the report data-based where possible. Internal and external peer comparisons are helpful to the reviewers. Data should be interpreted and evaluated - not just included in the document. **Provide examples of ways assessment data has been used to make improvements in the program.** (*Your departmental Institutional Effectiveness Plans are a good source of information and documentation. It is certainly permissible to include the most recent plans in your appendices.*)

- ✓ **Tone** The report should be constructive in nature and tone. Focus on challenges, aspirations, goals and needs. Do not dwell on problems and avoid ax grinding.

✓ **Perspective**

Make the report forward looking and consistent with departmental, college, and university mission statements and goals. Discuss needs comparatively, with appropriate attention to priorities and time frames.

✓ **Objective**

The self-study should represent a straightforward, candid report of the department's status and opportunities. Do not just state problems; be introspective and analytical. For maximum usefulness, make the report as credible as possible.

- ✓ **Accurate**  
Make an effort to avoid errors of facts or views. If different individuals write different sections of the report, make sure that everyone has up-to-date information. The report should reflect the departmental views, not the views of the individuals writing the report. The Committee should work collaboratively with the Department Chair, the Dean, and the faculty.
  
- ✓ **Useful**  
Since the self-study has to be written, take advantage of the situation. Ensure that the department will derive the full benefit from the process. A thorough, accurate, and unbiased self-study focused on the department's goals, needs, and future plans provides the best hope that the university will understand and appreciate the department's situation.
  
- ✓ **Signoffs**  
A signature sheet should be attached to the front of the self-study report certifying that the report has been reviewed and approved by the Department Chair and the College Dean before it is forwarded to the University Provost and the Assistant Vice-Provost of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research.

Adapted from the MTSU's Graduate Program Self-Study,  
Suggested Guidelines (Summer 1998)  
with permission from Dr. Ray Phillips.  
Last revision: December 2017