

PURPOSE

The University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) conducts Operational Assessment of each of its academic and academic support units once every five years. The purpose of an Operational Assessment is to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement through a thorough, comprehensive, and objective review process. All operational activities in support of the unit's normal scope of administrative, academic, research, clinical, and/or service activities are to be considered in the review, including budget and capital resources. The operational assessment should be seen as developmental and should result in continuous improvement of services, processes, and performance without being threatening in any degree or form. Specific operational assessment objectives may be identified for a particular unit and recommended by the unit to the Review Committee. The Operational Assessment is not intended to evaluate the curriculum of academic programs or units.

REVIEW SCHEDULE

All academic and academic support units are scheduled to be reviewed once every five years. Reviews are scheduled for a three month period (or 12 weeks) to allow for information gathering, research, meetings and interactions, etc. as needed. Reviews are staggered so that no more than three or four reviews will be in progress at one time. Due to the holiday break, efforts will be made to minimize the number of reviews conducted during the month of December (unless requested by the unit). Upon completion of the 5-year schedule, the process begins again as part of the university's commitment to process and quality improvement.

REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Review Committee should consist of at least two external reviewers and one internal reviewer with a maximum number of five members. The Chair or Director of the unit under review shall submit nominations for both external and internal reviewers to their respective Dean/Vice President. External reviewers should have some familiarity with academics, support services, and/or similar review situations. The Dean responsible for the unit under review shall review the nominations submitted and then recommend nominations to the Provost. Vice Presidents responsible for the unit under review shall review the nominations submitted and then recommend nominations to the President's Office. The Review Committee nomination process should start well in advance of the scheduled start date of the operational assessment to allow time to confirm nominations.

A member of the unit under review will act as a resource to the Review Committee by serving as the Operational Assessment Coordinator. He or she will be the point of contact to provide the Review Committee with necessary background information on the unit under review and will communicate with the Office of Organizational Excellence (OOE) to monitor progress

during the review.

The unit under review should contact Review Committee members to schedule the site visit and set up conference calls prior to the site visit to answer any of their questions about the Operational Assessment. The conference calls will provide the Review Committee the opportunity to ask questions about the Operational Assessment process, select a chair, and discuss any other issues relevant to the review.

The unit under review will prepare a self-study using a standardized template and may choose to ask the Review Committee to focus on specific issues as part of the operational assessment. The Review Committee will conduct its review by analyzing the unit self-study and conducting a one-to two-day site visit. The unit self-study should be provided to Review Committee members prior to the site visit to allow members the opportunity to review the self-study in advance.

A typical site visit takes two days of time for Review Committee members, who may arrive on site by mid-day of day one, conduct meetings on the afternoon of the first day and morning of the second day, and conclude the site visit by early afternoon of the second day. An alternate format may have the Review Committee arrive later in the day and conduct the entire site visit the next day. During the site visit, the Review Committee typically meets with the respective dean/vice president, unit leadership, faculty, staff, students, and/or other parties as arranged with, and agreed to in advance by, the chair/director of the unit. The last meeting of the site visit is typically an exit briefing between the Review Committee and the unit chair/director and respective dean/vice president to provide preliminary findings of the Review Committee.

Within four weeks of completion of the site visit, the Review Committee will submit its written report to the unit chair/director. The written report should begin with an Executive Summary that summarizes the Review Committee's general observations, the unit's strengths and opportunities for improvement, and responses to any specific questions/issues posed by the unit. The report should contain the Review Committee's more detailed, aggregated answers to the "Questions to Guide Reviewers" listed below along with other observations that might contribute to increased efficiency and effectiveness. The Review Committee is free to assign responsibilities among the members, e.g., assigning members to be primary or secondary reviewers for specific sections.

Individuals or groups outside the Review Committee may be called upon by the unit to contribute to the review. Such groups could include students, alumni, faculty, staff, and/or administration.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Review Committee is expected to review and analyze all aspects of a unit, including:

- Budget
- Human resources
- Physical resources
- Program activities (administrative, academic, research, clinical, and/or service, as appropriate)
- Information technology
- Operational processes
- Benchmarking/Comparisons to similar organizations
- Alignment with UNTHSC Strategic Plan
- Current unit Assessment Plan and Assessment Results

In general, each unit review will follow the checklist outline below for the Operational Assessment process. A more detailed time line is included on the last page of the Operational Assessment Guide.

- Nomination, confirmation, and notification of Review Committee members
- Selection and confirmation of site visit date
- OOE notified of Review Committee members and site visit date
- External Review Committee members sign non-disclosure agreement as needed
- Conference call with Review Committee members to provide initial briefing and select Review Committee Chair
- Preparation of self-study
- Site visit agenda drafted and reviewed by VP/Dean
- Site visit agenda submitted to Review Committee members and OOE
- Submission of self-study report to Review Committee and OOE at least two weeks prior to site visit
- Site visit by the Review Committee
- Review Committee report received
- Travel reimbursements and stipends processed for external Review Committee Members
- Closure of the review (to include development of Action Plans to support Opportunities for Improvement) and submission of Review Committee report to VP/Dean and OOE

OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT EXPENSES

Expenses for the operational assessment include:

- Travel and lodging for external reviewers in accordance with UNTHSC and state travel guidelines, see <http://bsc.untsystem.edu/sites/default/files/TravelGUIDELINES.pdf>
- Stipends for external reviewers (typically \$500 to \$1,500 per reviewer)
- Onsite lunch(es) for reviewers and participants in lunch time meetings
- Dinner for reviewers and unit chair/director not to exceed \$70 per person

Unit chairs and directors should use good judgment and discretion with respect to expenses, exercising stewardship over funds allotted for the review. Non-academic units must cover the expense of the operational assessment through their own budget and/or with assistance from their respective Vice President/Executive Vice President. The Office of the Provost provides limited funds for academic units reporting to the Provost. Chairs/directors must work with Laura Barber in the Office of the Provost to ensure that operational assessment expenses are appropriate.

UNIT SELF-STUDY

In preparation for the Operational Assessment, the unit should prepare a self-study that will allow the Review Team to conduct an off-site assessment and prepare for the onsite visit. At a minimum, the unit should collect the required documents and prepare responses to the self-study questions. Units should use the Operational Assessment Self-Study Template to enter and publish their self-study information and attach supporting documents. Questions for Review Committee consideration are included in italics for each item and can be used to guide the preparation of the self-study.

Self-Study Elements

1. Programs, Services, and Organization
 - 1.1. Describe the main programs and services provided by the unit.
List the main programs and services provided by the unit, e.g., education, research, accounting, admissions, clinical care, etc.
 - 1.2. Attach a copy of the unit organizational chart that shows how it is linked to other UNTHSC and UNT System components as appropriate.
Attach unit organizational chart in Appendix A.
 - 1.3. List the unit faculty and/or staff by position. Link to faculty profiles and/or attach CVs or resumes of faculty and/or professional staff.
Provide a table listing unit faculty and/or staff by position and primary responsibilities.

Link faculty to their faculty profiles and/or attach CVs or resumes of faculty and/or professional staff in Appendix B.

Name, degree	Position	% FTE	Primary Responsibilities
Jane Smith, MS	Counselor	100%	Counseling, reporting, advising

1.4. Attach copies of the unit budget for the current year and previous four years.

Attach copies of unit budgets in Appendix C.

2. Strategic Planning

2.1. Describe how unit faculty and/or staff are involved in creating and updating the unit’s annual objectives that support the institutional strategic initiatives.

Describe the processes used to create and update the unit Mission, Objectives, Performance Measures, Targets, and Action Plans and how unit faculty and/or staff are involved in the processes, e.g. annual retreats, staff meetings, etc.

2.2. List the current unit Mission, Objectives, Performance Measures, Targets, and Action Plans.

Provide a list of the current unit Mission, Objectives, Performance Measures, Targets, and Action Plans.

2.3. Describe how the unit’s annual objectives are disseminated and communicated to unit faculty and/or staff.

Describe the processes used to disseminate and communicate the unit objectives faculty and/or staff, e.g., annual retreat, staff meeting, email, etc.

2.4. Describe the strategic challenges currently faced by the unit.

List the major strategic challenges currently faced by the unit. Describe any barriers that need to be overcome and resources needed in order to achieve the long-term goals of the unit.

2.5. Describe the unit’s strategic advantages.

List the strengths of the unit. Describe what sets it apart from other similar units and what will allow it to achieve its long-term goals.

3. Stakeholders (e.g., students, patients, other units, external stakeholders)

3.1. List the main stakeholders, e.g., beneficiaries and constituents (internal and external) served by the unit.

List the internal and external beneficiaries and constituents served by the unit, e.g., students, patients, faculty/staff, funders, community, external organizations, etc.

3.2. Describe how the unit learns about the needs, expectations, and priorities of its main stakeholders.

List the methods used to learn about the needs, expectations, and priorities of both internal and external stakeholders, e.g., satisfaction surveys, focus groups, one-on-one conversations, course and instructor evaluations, etc.

3.3. Describe how the unit ensures information gathered from stakeholders is analyzed regularly and used to improve programs and services.

Describe the processes used to analyze information collected from constituents and beneficiaries along with examples of how you have used the data to improve programs and services.

4. Learning and Growth

4.1. Describe how the unit identifies unit faculty and/or staff education and performance needs.

Describe the processes used to identify and assess unit faculty and/or staff education and performance needs, e.g., annual evaluations, faculty/staff coaching, faculty/staff surveys, focus groups, one-on-one meetings, etc.

4.2. Describe how the unit ensures that unit faculty and/or staff education and performance needs are met.

Describe the processes used to ensure that unit faculty and/or staff education and performance needs are met and provide examples specific to your faculty and staff, e.g., faculty/staff development funds, tuition reimbursement, mentoring programs, etc.

5. Measurement and Analysis

5.1. Describe the processes used by the unit to ensure that the programs and services it offers are of the highest quality.

Describe the processes used to evaluate and assess the quality of the unit's programs and services, e.g., annual review, internal/external assessments, satisfaction surveys, advisory committees, etc.

List the key performance indicators for your unit. Describe how you collect, process, and analyze your key performance indicators and how you disseminate this information to unit faculty and staff.

- 5.2. Describe how the unit uses results from performance measures and KPIs to maintain and improve the quality of the programs and services it provides.

Describe the processes used to improve programs and services provided by the unit, e.g., Plan Do Check Act, Curriculum Committee, other committee(s), ad hoc performance improvement teams, etc.

Describe how you use the results from your performance measures and KPIs to create Action Plans to implement change in your unit along with examples of how you have used the data to implement change, e.g., annual review by leadership, faculty and/or staff, annual retreat, committee review, etc.

6. Achievements and Outcomes

- 6.1. List the results that reflect the operational performance of your unit objectives.

List the major achievements of your unit from the last three years.

Notes:

- This assessment is not intended to evaluate curriculum
- Background and supporting information should be provided to the Review Committee at least two weeks prior to the site visit
- Additional information may be requested by the Review Committee prior to or during the site visit

