

**Texas Wesleyan University**  
**Quality Improvement Plan**  
**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS/DEPARTMENTAL**  
**SELF-STUDY AUDIT**  
(Five - Seven Year Cycle)

---

**Table of Contents**

Introduction and Background .....	2
Seven Common-Sense Principles and Practices .....	3
Overview of Process and Timeline.....	5
Instructions .....	5
Title Page.....	6
Part I: Program Learning Objectives and Actual Outcomes .....	7
Part II: Input from Stakeholders .....	11
Part III: Commonly Accepted Practices/External Requirements .....	14
Part IV: Department Discussion & Curriculum Review.....	15
Part V: The Preliminary Improvement Plan .....	26
Part VI: Self-Study Audit Signature Sheet .....	27
Part VII: Audit and Report by Outside Peer Reviewer(s) .....	28
Part VIII: Departmental Improvement Plan .....	29
Part IX: After the Audit: Closing the Loop.....	29

---

## Introduction and Background

The goal of an Academic Program Self-Study Audit is to achieve high-quality educational programs at Texas Wesleyan University. If colleges and universities do not deliver high-quality education, resolving other important issues such as cost and access will make little difference. Moreover, programs designed to improve student assessment, institutional accountability, and performance measurements often fail to improve the quality of academic programs.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of an Academic Program Self-Study Audit is to elicit thoughtful conversations among faculty about how to produce tangible improvements in the quality of educational programs without having to spend more money. An audit includes a self-study by the program/unit and a site visit by peers from outside the department or institution. Program auditors evaluate the expected student learning outcomes established by the program and the program's "education-quality processes"—the key faculty activities required to produce, assure, and regularly improve the quality of teaching and learning.

An academic program audit asks how faculty organizes their work and the kinds of data they use to make decisions, as well as how faculty members can use the resources available to them and work collegially to do better. Good education/administrative-quality processes systematize a program or department's approach to quality, instead of leaving it mainly to unmonitored individual initiative. Furthermore, the audit process identifies real problems, generates tangible ideas for improvement, and creates conversation with colleagues on and off campus.

---

<sup>1</sup> This document is based on W.F. Massy's work:

Massy, W. F. (2003). Auditing higher education to improve quality. *The Chronicle of Higher Education: The Chronicle Review*, 49(41), B16.

Massy, W. F. (1999). Energizing quality work. *National Center for Postsecondary Improvement*. [http://siher.stanford.edu/documents/pdfs/6-06\\_swedendenmark.pdf](http://siher.stanford.edu/documents/pdfs/6-06_swedendenmark.pdf)

---

## SEVEN COMMON-SENSE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

All the steps outlined in this document require planning, diligence, and reinforcement. Most of all, faculty/staff need to resist competing demands on their time and the dulling effects of routine. They must be self-disciplined and actively collaborate with colleagues in the work team and department.

Researchers at the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement at Stanford University have identified seven common-sense principles and practices that can help a department improve its processes.

The seven common-sense principles and practices are:

1. **Define quality in terms of outcomes.** The quality of student learning, not teaching per se, is what ultimately matters. Learning should pertain to what is or will become important for the students enrolled in the program—not some "ideal" student. Exemplary departments determine their students' needs and then work to meet them.
2. **Base decisions on facts.** Departmental teams should collect data on student preparation, learning styles, and, where relevant, probable requirements for employment. Team members might obtain feedback from past students and their current employers. They should analyze the data carefully in light of disciplinary standards and their own professional experience, and then incorporate the findings in the design of curriculums, learning processes, and assessment methods.
3. **Focus on teaching, learning, service and assessment.** Programs/departments should carefully analyze how professors teach, how students learn, how staff serves and how all approach assessment. Departments should consult the literature on pedagogy in their academic disciplines and collect data on what works and what doesn't. They should stress active learning, exploit information technology, and not hesitate to experiment with new teaching and learning methods. Colleagues should be quick to adopt successful innovations, which should become part of the department's modus operandi and form the baseline for future experimentation and improvement.
4. **Strive for coherence in curriculums and educational activities.** Departments should view learning through the lens of the student's entire educational experience. Courses should build upon one another to provide the desired depth and breadth. This concept also applies to the typical student's "portfolio" of class sizes and learning approaches. For example, a mix of large lectures and small seminars may produce better learning than a succession of medium-size classes that consume the same amount of time.

5. **Work collaboratively to achieve mutual involvement and support.** Professors should demonstrate collegiality in teaching, just as they do in research. Departments should encourage staff and faculty members to work together, hold one another accountable, and bring a broad array of talent to bear on difficult problems. Such teamwork can make the department a "learning organization" with respect not only to disciplinary content, but also to teaching and education.
6. **Identify and learn from best practices.** Audit reports should be shared widely to exchange information and motivate improvement. Departments should seek out examples of good practice and adapt the best to their own circumstances. They should compare good versus average or poor-performing methods and students, assess the causes of the differences, and seek ways to minimize the variation.
7. **Make continuous improvement a priority.** Departments should strive to improve the quality of teaching, learning and service on a regular basis. While most professors will continue to place strong emphasis on teaching and scholarship, faculty and staff should spend enough discretionary time on quality processes to keep the improvement ball rolling. Academic administrators and faculty review committees should make the results of such work, along with teaching and scholarly work, a criterion for promotion and tenure for faculty.

The postsecondary-improvement center's articulation of these principles and practices can help promote audits to improve quality in higher education. Audits can spur improvement and accountability in flexible and inexpensive ways. Faculty from multiple disciplines can discuss educational processes because audit conversations do not require expertise in any particular discipline. Faculty from all fields of study can learn and spread exemplary practices by serving on audit teams.

The faculty members and administrators who participate in the audit, the institution, and, most importantly, the students all benefit.

## Overview of Process and Recommended Timeline

<b>Process</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Departments are strongly encouraged to read and discuss all instructions (this entire document) in the spring or fall semester prior to the scheduled self-study audit year and to develop an action plan.	for “ <u>fall – spring</u> ” self-study audits	for “ <u>spring – fall</u> ” self-study audits
<b>A. Departmental Self-Study</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part I: Program Learning Objectives and Actual Outcomes</li> <li>• Part II: Input from Stakeholders</li> <li>• Part III: Commonly Accepted Practices/External Requirements</li> <li>• Part IV: Department Discussion &amp; Curriculum Review</li> <li>• Part V: Preliminary Improvement Plan</li> </ul>	Summer and Fall Semester  Note: Some departments recommend starting sooner, e.g. spring semester prior to the scheduled self-study audit year.	Spring and Summer Semester  Note: Some departments recommend starting sooner, e.g. fall semester prior to the scheduled self-study audit year.
<b>B. Peer Reviewer Identification &amp; Budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm with Provost Office that self-study is on the right track</li> <li>• Identify 2-3 potential peer auditors/reviewers</li> <li>• Confirm budget for audit with dean</li> <li>• After approval of Provost Office, make tentative contact with peer reviewers to affirm their availability</li> </ul>	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
<b>C. Approval of Self-Study by Dean and Provost Office</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part VI: Submit self-study and signature form to obtain formal approval of self-study and possible peer reviewer(s)</li> <li>• Submit proposed agenda/schedule for reviewer(s) to dean &amp; Provost Office for approval</li> </ul>	By December 1	By June 1
<b>D. Audit and Report by Outside Peer Reviewer(s)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part VII</li> </ul>	Spring Semester (February – March)	Fall Semester (September – October)
<b>E. Departmental Improvement Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part VIII</li> </ul>	Late Spring Semester/ Summer	Late Fall Semester/ Spring
<b>F. Submission of Self-Study Audit Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part IX: Submit report by peer reviewer and final departmental improvement plan at the same time as the regular annual assessment documents.</li> </ul>	October	June

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

- **Please complete the forms below and provide the information requested. (Your final Self-Study Audit will begin with the title page on the next page.)**
- **Please work closely with your dean and the Associate Provost throughout this process.**

***Self-Study Audit Title Page***

**Department & School**

**Degree Program(s) Audited**

**Year of Self-Study**

**Date of Visit & Name of Reviewer**

**Date of Completion**

---

## PART I: PROGRAM LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND ACTUAL OUTCOMES

In the boxes provided, include the following for each degree program audited:

-The most recent Program Objectives and associated Student Learning Objectives with Criteria (from “Standing Requirements” and most recent Assessment Cycle in TaskStream).

-Summary, aggregate results of assessments pertaining to each objective since your last program audit, or for the last 3-4 years.

-Use of assessment results for program improvement since last audit.

If any of the objectives have changed in the last 3-4 year period, please provide an explanation in the “summary results” box.

*Note: If you do not have assessment data for the last 3 years, STOP and speak with your dean!*

Add space, rows, and boxes as needed for additional program objectives and associated learning objectives.

Degree Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Objective/Expected Outcome 1: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Learning objectives/ expected outcomes</b> <i>Quote verbatim from Standing Requirements in TaskStream</i></p>	<p><b>Measurements including targets</b> <i>Quote verbatim from most recent cycle of Assessment Plan ("Goals &amp; Measurements") in TaskStream</i></p>	<p><b>Summary Results of Assessment (Actual Learning Outcomes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Provide <u>summary</u> information regarding results from the last 3-4 period. (<u>Summarize</u> findings in TaskStream relative to the expected outcome).</i></li> <li><i>Were Criteria met? What does your assessment data show? Are students learning what you expect them to learn?</i></li> <li><i>Do you have additional outcomes assessment data for this learning objective in addition to the specified criteria measured? If so, please include here.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Use of Results/ Improvements to Date</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>In summary form, describe the changes already made to the curriculum as a result of what you've learned through assessments during the last 3-4 years.</i></li> <li><i>In summary form, describe actions already taken to improve outcomes and impact.</i></li> <li><i>Indicate whether the changes have been effective.</i></li> </ul>
<b>1-1</b>	<b>1-1</b>	<b>1-1</b>	<b>1-1</b>
<b>1-2</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>1-2</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>1-3</b>	<b>1-3</b>	<b>1-3</b>	<b>1-3</b>
<i>Add rows as needed.</i>			



Program Objective/Expected Outcome 2: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Learning objectives/ expected outcomes</b> <i>Quote verbatim from Standing Requirements in TaskStream</i></p>	<p><b>Measurements including targets</b> <i>Quote verbatim from most recent cycle of Assessment Plan in TaskStream</i></p>	<p><b>Summary Results of Assessment (Actual Learning Outcomes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide <u>summary</u> information regarding results from the last 3-4 period. (<u>Summarize</u> findings in TaskStream relative to the expected outcome).</i></li> <li>• <i>Were Criteria met? What does your assessment data show? Are students learning what you expect them to learn?</i></li> <li>• <i>Do you have additional outcomes assessment data for this learning objective in addition to the specified criteria measured? If so, please include here.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Use of Results/ Improvements to Date</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In summary form, describe the changes already made to the curriculum as a result of what you've learned through assessments during the last 3-4 years.</i></li> <li>• <i>In summary form, describe actions already taken to improve outcomes and impact.</i></li> <li>• <i>Indicate whether the changes have been effective.</i></li> </ul>
<b>2-1</b>	<b>2-1</b>	<b>2-1</b>	<b>2-1</b>
<b>2-2</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>2-2</b>	<b>2-2</b>
<b>2-3</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<i>Add rows as needed.</i>			

Program Objective/Expected Outcome 3: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Learning objective/expected outcome</b> <i>Quote verbatim from Standing Requirements in TaskStream</i></p>	<p><b>Measurement including targets</b> <i>Quote verbatim from most recent cycle of Assessment Plan in TaskStream</i></p>	<p><b>Summary Results of Assessment (Actual Learning Outcomes)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Provide <u>summary</u> information regarding results from the last 3-4 period. (<u>Summarize</u> findings in TaskStream relative to the expected outcome).</i></li> <li><i>Were Criteria met? What does your assessment data show? Are students learning what you expect them to learn?</i></li> <li><i>Do you have additional outcomes assessment data for this learning objective in addition to the specified criteria measured? If so, please include here.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Use of Results/Improvements to Date</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>In summary form, describe the changes already made to the curriculum as a result of what you've learned through assessments during the last 3-4 years.</i></li> <li><i>In summary form, describe actions already taken to improve outcomes and impact.</i></li> <li><i>Indicate whether the changes have been effective.</i></li> </ul>
3-1	3-1	3-1	3-1
3-2	3-2	3-2	3-2
3-3	3-3	3-3	3-3
Add rows as needed.			

**Add boxes and rows as needed for additional program objectives and associated learning objectives.**

---

## PART II: INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Collecting input from various stakeholders such as students, alumni, and employers, should be a regular part of program assessments to gain feedback on whether learning objectives are met and whether the program is effective. Since a department cannot assess all learning objectives every year, the self-study audit provides the opportunity to aggregate all information gained since the last self-study or during the past 3-4 years. Some programs have established processes for regular collection of this information, e.g. advisory boards or regular surveys to alumni; others use the audit as the time to gather such information.

While valuable information may be collected informally from stakeholders, departments should ensure that feedback is formally collected and documented, e.g. through surveys, interviews, and focus groups.

Types of questions to address with each group:

- Are students learning what is expected in light of program learning objectives?
- Are the learning objectives relevant/current?
- Should the program add learning objectives (are there things missing from the program as currently designed)?
- Should the program delete certain learning objectives that are irrelevant?
- Are graduates obtaining employment as expected or enrolling in graduate programs as expected?

Whether information has been collected during the annual assessment process and/or whether information is specifically collected for the self-study audit process, please present the information below. Remember that the purpose for this section is to ask various stakeholders to give their opinions regarding the effectiveness of the program.

Please provide summary information below with regards to the stakeholders listed. Add space as needed.  
Please retain documented evidence of the assessments in the department office.

**1) Current students**

i. Method of assessment/instrument(s) used to collect information/data

Response:

ii. Information/data gathered

Response:

**2) Alumni**

i. Method of assessment/instrument(s) used to collect information/data

Response:

ii. Information/data gathered

Response:

### 3) **Employers**

i. Method of assessment/instrument(s) used to collect information/data

Response:

ii. Information/data gathered

Response:

### 4) **Other (e.g. advisory boards, graduate programs)**

i. Method of assessment/instrument(s) used to collect information/data

Response:

ii. Information/data gathered

Response:

---

### PART III: COMMONLY ACCEPTED PRACTICES/EXTERNAL REQUIREMENTS

Each undergraduate program of study identifies courses that are designed as introductions to the major, required courses, electives, general education, capstone courses, and any other program requirements. Undergraduate program requirements allow for an integrated understanding of the discipline. Such programs display a clear rationale and design and include clearly stated and measurable outcomes consistent with the mission of the institution.

Commonly accepted practices for the requirements of an undergraduate program address an appropriate number of semester hours, or its equivalent; a coherent course of study appropriate to higher education; and the completion of an appropriate general education component at the collegiate level. To ensure that a program meets commonly accepted practices, it is important to gather information from a number of sources.

i. Please include a map of the current program's requirements to those of peer programs/institutions and provide an analysis/commentary regarding similarities and differences.

ii. Provide information regarding programmatic/specialized accreditation or licensure requirements and/or program requirements recommended by professional organizations and provide a map and analysis/commentary regarding how the current program meets those expectations.

**STOP! SEND DRAFT OF PARTS I - III TO ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR FEEDBACK!**

---

## PART IV: DEPARTMENT DISCUSSION & CURRICULUM REVIEW

This is the most important part of the self-study audit, and departments should expect to spend a considerable amount of time on this section.

Effective audits require "structured conversation," both within the program/department while preparing the self-study and then with the site-visit person or team. Conversations are important because that is how ideas become actions and progress occurs in academe. Structure is critical because it focuses people's attention on the key areas that are important for improving quality.

Five *Keys to Improving Academic Quality* have been outlined below. These *Keys* also include statements derived from the 2013 *Resource Manual for the Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement* of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. While the *Keys* outlined below should be discussed on a regular basis by department faculty, the self-study audit process is an opportunity for reassessment.

After the information has been gathered in response to sections I - III, above, the department should find sufficient time to review and discuss the questions below in light of the aggregated assessment data. While the assessment data gathered in parts I - III will give information about past performance, the purpose of this section is to look towards the future and what the program *should* look like in light of the data gathered.

**Below, looking forward, please include a brief statement addressing each of the key areas—add space as needed.**

**Please retain documented evidence in the department office that each of the following questions/statements has been discussed and addressed in departmental meetings (e.g. copies of minutes).**

**Remember to address these key areas for each degree program audited.**

**1. Identify the underlying purpose of the education offered and determine the desired program outcomes.**

- i. In broad terms, what should a student who successfully completes the program know and be able to do? Please list the expected program outcomes (3-5).

List:

- ii. How should expected learning outcomes be clearly defined in measurable terms for the educational program? For each broad program outcome listed above, please list specific desired expected learning outcomes in terms of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors a student should exhibit upon completion of the program. Include learning objectives for technology as appropriate to the program.

List:

Program Objective 1:

Learning Objective 1.1

Learning Objective 1.2

Program Objective 2:

Learning Objective 2.1

Learning Objective 2.2

Etc.



iii. How will the program build on the student's prior knowledge and capability?

Statement:

iv. How will the program contribute to the student's future employment opportunities, capacity to make social contributions, and quality of life?

Statement:

## 2. Determine whether the curriculum achieves the education's purpose.

Programs offered by the University should be directly connected to its mission and to fields of study appropriate to higher education. In order to guide students through the continuous process of learning, the content of the program demands increasing levels of knowledge integration. Coherence is a critical component of a program and should demonstrate an appropriate sequencing of courses, not a mere bundling of credits, so that student learning is progressively more advanced in terms of assignments and scholarship required and demonstrates progressive advancement in a field of study that allows students to integrate knowledge and grow in critical skills.

- i. What should be taught, in what order? Please be very specific.

Outline the desired curriculum.

- ii. Can the proposed program demonstrate coherence in sequencing, increasing complexity, and linkages between and among program components? How does the curriculum provide opportunities for (1) increasingly complex understandings of theories, principles, and practices; (2) increasingly complex levels of analysis and development of skills; and (3) application of theories and principles? Please be specific.

Statement:

iii. How will what is taught contribute to the desired learning outcomes? Please link specific courses with the learning objectives outlined in Part IV, section 1.i&ii above.

Include a curriculum map for the desired curriculum.

iv. How are currency and relevancy of the theories and practices in the field or discipline and intellectual rigor appropriate to the degree program established?

Statement:

v. What course materials should be used? How will these materials relate to other parts of the student's program?

Statement:

vi. How are desired technology competencies addressed in the proposed curriculum?

Statement:

vii. How will the desired curriculum compare with similar programs at peer institutions?

Statement:

**3. Consider the design and organization of the teaching and learning processes.**

Many professors think education quality revolves around simply getting the right course content. That certainly is necessary, but it is far from sufficient.

- i. What methods will professors use to introduce the material to the student, to answer questions and provide interpretation, to stimulate involvement, and to offer feedback on student work?

Statement:

- ii. What new roles and responsibilities will faculty need to assume?

Statement:

iii. What other resources will be required, and how will they be used?

Statement:

iv. How is technology used to improve student learning? How does the program ensure student and faculty access to the training, use, and application of technology as appropriate to the program?

Statement:

#### 4. Determine how best to assess student learning outcomes.

Good education-quality processes seek to improve assessment to further their own purposes, not to satisfy some external authority. When considering the effectiveness of its curriculum, the faculty establishes learning outcomes of the curriculum and assesses the extent to which these outcomes are being achieved. Consequently, the characteristics for assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum might include the extent to which the curriculum provides opportunities for (1) increasingly complex understandings of theories, principles, and practices; (2) increasingly complex levels of analysis and development of skills; and (3) application of theories and principles.

- i. To establish the program's effectiveness, what will be the measures and indicators, and will they provide information on multiple dimensions of student performance? Will measures and indicators compare performance at the beginning and end of the term to get the value-added dimension? Will baseline and trend information be available?

Statement:

- ii. How will the long-term outcomes of the educational experience be determined? How does the program establish and document student success in terms of program retention as well as post-graduation success in relation to the mission and educational program? A broad range of indicators may be used, to include, as appropriate, course completion rates, state licensing examinations, job placement rates, or other means relevant to the program.

Statement:

iii. Who will be responsible for assessment and how will the results be evaluated and used?

Statement:

iv. From Part IV, Section 1, list the program learning objectives and associate each with methods of assessment, measures, and indicators. Consider both direct and indirect methods of assessment and the discussion in this section (i-iii):

Program Objective/Expected Outcome 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Learning objectives/ expected outcomes	Methods of Assessment, Measures & Indicators (Targets)
1-1	1-1
1-2	1-2
<i>Add rows as needed.</i>	

Program Objective/Expected Outcome 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Learning objectives/ expected outcomes	Methods of Assessment, Measures & Indicators (Targets)
1-1	1-1
1-2	1-2
<i>Add rows as needed.</i>	

Etc.



**5. Determine whether faculty members are delivering content as intended, are using the most appropriate teaching methods or procedures consistently, and are performing assessments and measuring results effectively.**

Would specific faculty development be beneficial to meet identified gaps and/or new learning objectives or teaching methods? Are there new or old methods of teaching that might benefit from regular review of effectiveness? Can the department engage in evaluation of assessment data differently from before? At best, each program/department will move to a "learning organization" in terms of educational processes with quality embedded in the program/departmental culture, and the idea of regular improvement in all five key areas will be a well-accepted way of life.

Statement:

---

## PART V: THE PRELIMINARY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

After gathering and reviewing data (Parts I – IV, above) the department faculty should prepare a preliminary improvement plan with the action steps required to move the program from its current design to what the faculty has determined it should be. The plan to improve may require changes or modifications in courses, curricular requirements, teaching strategies, or other actions to reach expected student learning outcomes or in the departmental goals or student learning outcomes themselves. This plan will be reviewed by the outside peer reviewer as part of the audit process.

**Please use the table below to present the proposed actions for program improvement.**

It is suggested that one table be used for each degree program addressed depending on the actions required.

Actions	Responsibility
Add rows as needed.	

**STOP! SEND THE COMPLETE SELF-STUDY (PARTS I-V)  
TO DEAN AND ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR FEEDBACK!**

## Part VI: Self-Study Audit Signature Sheet

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Programs Audited: \_\_\_\_\_

School or Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Scheduled Rotation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations of Outside Reviewer: *(please submit three selections)*

Name of Reviewer	Institution	Brief Bio	Dean/ VP Approval*	Provost/Associate Provost Approval*

*\*Please initial your reviewer approval*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Department Chair/Director*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

Please circle appropriate response below:

**Self-Study Satisfactory**  
YES NO

**Reviewer Approved**  
YES NO

\_\_\_\_\_

*Dean/Vice President*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

YES NO

YES NO

\_\_\_\_\_

*Provost or Associate Provost*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

Comments:

---

## PART VII: AUDIT AND REPORT BY OUTSIDE PEER REVIEWER(S)

After completion of Parts I – IV, above, and **after Provost Office approval of the self-study and approval of potential peer reviewer(s)**, an outside peer reviewer (or reviewers, depending on the size and mission of the department) should be invited to campus. Peer reviewers should come from institutions and/or departments that are similar in mission and scope to the one being reviewed (and, for the sake of cost savings, should come from the nearby region).

The peer reviewers or peer auditors evaluate the expected outcomes of the courses and program(s) and the "education-quality processes"—the key faculty/staff activities required to produce, assure, and regularly improve the quality of teaching and learning.

**There are three steps to the peer review/audit:**

1. Prior to coming to campus, the auditor should review the departmental self-study (Parts I – V). This review will facilitate an understanding of the mission and expected learning outcomes of the courses/programs and an understanding of the information already gathered by the department about actual outcomes, discussions held, and proposed actions to improve.
2. Once on campus, the auditor will engage in conversations with students, faculty, staff, and others, such as alumni, to learn more about the program(s), to evaluate the effectiveness of the program(s), and to engage in a collegial exchange of ideas. These conversations should be facilitated by the department through the development of an agenda/schedule in consultation with the auditor/reviewer.
3. After visiting the campus, the auditor will submit a report to the department regarding the program(s) and outcomes, including suggestions for improvement.

**Please refer to the document titled  
*Academic Programs/Departmental Self-Study Audit Site Visit Guide*  
for guidance on how to conduct an audit.**

---

## PART VIII: DEPARTMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

After receipt of the auditor’s report, the department will prepare a final improvement plan based on the department’s own recommendations in the self-study and the auditor’s recommendations. As noted in Part IV, the plan to improve may require changes or modifications in courses, curricular requirements, teaching strategies, or other actions to reach expected student learning outcomes or in the departmental goals or student learning outcomes themselves. This improvement plan should include a timeline for implementation.

Actions	Responsibility	Timeline/ Deadline
Add rows as needed.		

## PART IX: AFTER THE AUDIT: CLOSING THE LOOP

After the Academic Program Self-Study Audit has been completed, the most important aspect is to act upon the information gained and to implement the improvement plan. As noted in the introduction, the purpose of the Self-Study Audit is to produce tangible improvements in the quality of educational programs (without having to spend more money).

- 1) Any changes outlined in the improvement plan should be reflected in the strategic and operational (continuous improvement) and assessment plans that are submitted as part of the regular annual assessment reports, due during fall semester (or end spring semester) following the Academic Program Self-Study Audit.
- 2) The completed self-study audit, including the reviewer’s report and department’s final improvement plan should be submitted to the dean and Associate Provost by October 15 (June 1) following completion.

