Planning and Conducting Reviews

U.S. Department of Agriculture

CSREES Guidelines for Institutions

Revised

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CONTENTS

PREFACE

These guidelines draw heavily on the review experiences of University Deans, AES Directors, Department Heads, CSREES scientists, and former review team members. Important insights and ideas were gained from an extensive survey of documents developed by universities preparing for reviews and the review reports drafted by CSREES scientists. These documents represent a cross section of universities and scientific disciplines. Valuable contributions were made by a committee appointed by the CSRS (now CSREES) Administrator in 1991, consisting of CSREES scientists and administrative personnel from colleges of agriculture and home economics. The committee's charge was to evaluate the CSRS review program and recommend changes for improving the efficiency and impact of the process. It also provided important information in drafting these guidelines.

CSREES' mission is to work with its partners and customers to advance research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences and related environmental and human sciences to benefit people, communities, and the nation. CSREES is accountable to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Congress for the use of federal funds in the support of research and education programs conducted by the institutions(1). The primary goal for the review program is to promote relevance, excellence, usefulness and partnership. CSREES is also required by the Congress to justify the continued federal support of institutional research and education programs on the basis of performance and benefits to the agricultural industry, rural communities/environment, and consumers, and in meeting other social goals stated in the authorizing legislation. CSREES conducts reviews because they are a cost-effective management tool which enhances excellence, evaluates relevance and usefulness of programs and strengthens the Federal / Land Grant partnership. The review process is supportive of the agency's duties and responsibilities in the judicious administration of federal funds that support institutional programs. CSREES places high priority on reviews in allocating its scientists' time and other resources.

Kinds of Reviews

Departmental - The review of the program(s) in a single academic department.

Program - Programs that cut across departmental and/or college boundaries such as a plant biotechnology or agronomic program. (Multi-disciplinary reviews)

Issue - Based upon a single issue such as sustainable agriculture, integrated pest management, water quality, or food safety. Issue based reviews most likely cut across both departmental and disciplinary boundaries. (Multi-departmental reviews)

CSREES solicits review requests from Institutional Administrators annually. Institutional requests are submitted in late fall for the next fiscal year. It is the responsibility of Agricultural Administrators to share this request for reviews with appropriate unit administrators and coordinate a response to CSREES.

INTRODUCTION

Why Reviews?

CSREES conducts reviews at the request of cooperating institutions. Departmental, program and issue reviews serve as cost-effective management tools to meet the Agency's responsibilities in administering federal funds to support institutional programs. Although reviews are not mandated by federal statues or required by CSREES, the Agency shares institutional goals to improve science and education program performance and increase resource effectiveness.

CSREES reviews are effective in helping universities meet their institutional goals. Reviews offer the opportunity for a program to receive input from an external panel on a number of their broad goals and provide some of the following specific benefits: (1) contributing to departmental planning efforts; (2) identifying major departmental strengths and weaknesses; (3) clarifying problem areas and encourage priority setting; (4) improving the quality of research, teaching, and extension programs; (5) improving departmental management; (6) giving college administrators greater awareness of departmental needs, opportunities and programs; (7) improving communications among faculty and between faculty and administrators; (8) improving coordination of interdepartmental programs with other institutions and federal agencies; (9) encourage forward thinking and strategic planning; and (10) establishing a benchmark for future program evaluation.

Institutions currently face challenging new circumstances in which reviews are needed. One of the most dramatic is budget restrictions. Faculty and Administrators must continue to compete effectively for scarce resources and demonstrate accountability, while dealing with increased pressures for reallocation of resources, downsizing programs and personnel reorganization. Some reviews are now conducted to set priorities or to deal with budget exigencies; others are requested by state or university governing boards to meet institutional requirements for periodic internal program evaluations.

These Guidelines

These guidelines were developed to assist universities in preparing for reviews that will best serve their present needs, as well as new needs that may arise within changing institutional environments. One objective is to derive as much benefit as possible from the resources that institutions and CSREES invest in the reviews, through improved planning and conduct of the review process. The planning process offers sufficient flexibility to meet university objectives by using time management and human resources available to CSREES.

These guidelines can be adapted to meet specific needs in reviews. Departmental reviews addressing teaching, research, extension are the most often requested. However, CSREES strongly encourages more issue based and multi-disciplinary program reviews. Institutions may also want reviews to include departmental organization and management.

While review of all functions and subject matter is still the popular mode for departmental reviews, limited time and resources on some occasions require a more focused approach. A focused review concentrates on a specific purpose, issues or problems identified by the institution while planning the review. Some institutions have designed reviews entirely around issues, sharply focused and with considerable impact. Reviews that are strictly issue oriented can be appropriate and productive, especially in large departments with a broad range of activities and major concerns or when the time available for planning the process and/or conducting reviews is limited. Although reviews may not be as detailed as program evaluations (such as those required by university governing boards or for accreditation), the processes outlined here are designed to be as rigorous.

These guidelines stress the futuristic nature of the CSREES review process, (see "Relating the Review to

Departmental Planning" in a following section). CSREES and the Institution work together to ensure that reviews maintain a high level of credibility with the Institution's administrators, State and Federal officials.

PLANNING AND PREPARING FOR A REVIEW

Much of the success of a review depends on the planning and preparation of the program or department prior to the review. Advance planning assures that objectives are met, the most relevant materials are prepared and distributed to the review team prior to the review, and that time management, during the conduct of the review, is a priority for faculty, administrators, and the review team. One of the most significant benefits of the review is the consensus building that occurs among faculty prior to the review, in the preparation process. Other major benefits are derived from the review process itself, including, dialogue during the closing interviews, the final written report and follow-up communication. A very significant increment emerges during the follow-up as the college and department or unit responds to the recommendations.

Early in the planning process, the Institutional Administrator requesting the review should designate a representative -- usually the Department Head and Program Leader -- to work with the CSREES team leader in planning and conducting the review. The Department Head, Program Leaders, and departmental committees usually provide leadership in preparing for a review. Faculty, students and staff are expected, and also expect to participate in preparing for the review and the process itself.

The selection of functions and topics to be addressed in the review are determined by the Institutional Administrator in consultation with the CSREES team leader. The type of review and the specific design can be tailored to the size and complexity of the unit under review, coupled with the needs and preferences of faculty and administrators. Institutions and review teams are encouraged to be creative in their approaches and to share the insights gained with others in federal-state partnership.

In planning reviews, four things should be kept in mind: (1) the need to have a defined focus; (2) the importance of creating a futuristic orientation for those involved in the process; (3) the value of emphasizing broader program areas to avoid becoming overwhelmed by project details; and (4) the benefits of giving careful attention to the environment and institutional context in which a unit operates; its professional reputation and ranking within the university; and interdisciplinary relations with other departments, institutions and the external community.

The major steps in planning and conducting departmental reviews are outlined in the following sections of this guide. The decision to conduct a review should be made far enough in advance to provide sufficient time to develop plans, select and contact review team members, develop background materials, and ensure preparation time for the review team. Appendix A provides a summary of steps involved in planning and conducting reviews, along with suggestions for responsibility and time management.

When to Have a Review

Each year CSREES sends out a call to cooperating universities for review requests. Universities are asked to state (1) the circumstances indicating the need for a review; (2) the objectives and expectations of the review, (3) who expressed the need for the review (4) the planning context for the review, and (5) explain the comprehensiveness of the proposed review. The appropriate CSREES science unit assesses available resources and determines its capacity to accommodate review requests. Statements from the universities which clearly express the reasons a review has been requested are the main factor used by CSREES to prioritize requests, since the agency believes that institutional administrators are the best judges of when a review is needed. CSREES communicates with university administrators regarding their requests and the agency's decisions.

Universities request reviews based upon need, yet a five to seven year interval between reviews is common. Some institutions combine CSREES reviews with those mandated by state or university governing board requests or requirements, thereby expanding the dimension and increasing the efficient use of resources.

A significant reason to have a review is faculty desire to have outside experts provide program advice. Reviews may be particularly helpful under any one or a combination of the following circumstances:

1. To accompany unit planning efforts so the review can be interspersed with the planning process.
2. To address specific major issues or problems.
3. To enhance multi-disciplinary or multi-institutional interactions and the integration of research, teaching and extension activities.
4. To re-examine program directions at critical points. It is essential that departments anticipate significant changes and schedule reviews early enough to facilitate the necessary planning. The changes might include:

a. Major changes in departmental resources, which account for re-allocations or changes in direction.

b. Appointment of a new Department Head.

c. Change in needs of department's constituency.

d. Legislation of new programs or funding opportunities.

e. Significant shifts in type or number of faculty, resulting from retirements, redirection, resignations or an influx of new faculty.

f. To overcome administrative or faculty complacency.

g. Recognition of poor performance or reduced faculty morale.

h. Loss of competitive position with other departments within or external to the university, adversely affecting student and faculty recruitment and competitive grantsmanship.

The two most important characteristics that contribute to successful reviews are (1) faculty recognition of the value for advance planning and improved programs, and (2) specific needs or good opportunities exist for change. Reviews are most productive when the department administration and faculty value the opportunity for improvement in programs and management.

All faculty in the unit being reviewed are expected to participate in the review sessions and as many of the appropriate administrators as possible. To avoid scheduling conflicts and enhance participation, reviews should ideally be held when classes are not in session. Careful thought should be given to on-site administrative schedules, previously confirmed travel plans, and major professional commitments. Rescheduling the review or conflicting events may be options to ensure maximum department and institutional participation.

Determining the Objectives of the Review

An institution will achieve maximum benefits from a review if the objectives are clearly focused and there is no misunderstanding about how the results will be utilized. The review objectives will guide the planning, development of materials, and conduct of the site visit. An ideal objectives statement includes what the institution expects to accomplish through the review and how they plan to use and benefit from the results. Review objectives should address both long- and short-term issues relating to all matters critical to the future of the department / unit / program. Department members and university administrators should maintain a continuing dialogue throughout the process to ensure that the review is meaningful and addresses their defined objectives. Faculty should be informed of the objectives promptly so the materials they develop will be consistent with the overall institutional review plan. A tentative list of objectives should be sent to the CSREES team leader for reactions and suggestions before being finalized by the university.

Relating the Review to Departmental Planning

For more meaningful results, departments or programs are encouraged to develop a comprehensive long-range plan prior to the review. Careful time management is essential throughout the entire process. While a brief evaluation of past efforts is helpful, focusing on future directions has proven to be more beneficial. A recommended guideline would be that only one-fourth to one-third of the time allocation should be spent describing historical accomplishments, while the remaining two-thirds to three-fourths should be focused upon intended future directions. The review team can provide relevant feedback in an environment where clear goals and agreed upon plans have been outlined for the department's future.

Scheduling a CSREES review provides an excellent opportunity for departments to take an introspective look at all segments of their operations in an off-campus retreat. During this unit process, it may be advantageous to seek comments and suggestions from the CSREES review team regarding the department's tentative plans for the review.

Selecting the Review Team

Selecting the review team is a crucial step in preparing for a CSREES review. Team member selection should be based on professional competency, objectivity, yet intelligence and a willingness to carry out the review process in a manner compatible with the goals of both the institution and CSREES. The review team selection process should begin, at least, six months prior to the review; more lead time will increase the probability of obtaining first-choice individuals. Institutions are encouraged to nominate minorities and women to serve on review teams. Under the CSREES-institution partnership philosophy, the following interactive process is used:

1. Department or program representatives should consult with the Institutional administrator regarding potential review team candidates. Although the institution develops a tentative list of candidates and alternates, the nomination process usually begins in the department to be reviewed.
2. Depending on institutional policies, the Institutional administrator or Department Head sends a list of suggested review team members to the CSREES team leader, indicating first choices and alternates for each team position designated and the rationale for the selections.
3. The CSREES team leader contacts the institutional representative to discuss the proposed team membership and any other relevant information.
4. The final selection is made by the CSREES review team leader, based on recommendations from the institution. An invitation is sent to prospective members and the institution is notified of the final membership.

The following criteria are suggested when selecting potential team members:

1. Individuals should possess the knowledge and experience relevant to the review objectives and identified issues.
2. Review team members should be professionally active, with training and experience in their specialty areas and well respected by their colleagues.
3. Review team members should provide a balance among sub-disciplines, functions, and points of view. Effective review teams include individuals from land grant and non-land grant universities, federal agencies, private organizations and agricultural industry or other user groups.
4. Institutional team representatives can also be chosen from related campus departments, neighboring states, the graduate school, or other entities as indicated by institutional policies. These individuals can be very helpful in providing the review team with an understanding of the institutional environment.
5. Recent graduates or faculty with connections to the department under review should not be selected as review team members to avoid any conflict of interest or even the appearance of it.

When there are internal university faculty, students or administrators on the review team, the team leader will clarify and define their responsibilities. Institutional team members should be able to clear their appointment calendars of travel, teaching, advising and research commitments to participate fully in the review.

CSREES covers transportation, lodging, and subsistence costs for the team leader and up to two team members. Funding for additional members will be the institution's responsibility. Under most circumstances, a four or five member team is appropriate. Logistics and coordination problems increase rapidly if the team is larger.

Developing the Agenda and Review Schedule

The agenda for the review should be determined after the objectives have been identified. It is essential that the review agenda relates to the objectives of the review. Review team activities must work in concert to accomplish the identified and intended objectives. The department and institutional administrators should develop an agenda and schedule at least four to five months prior to the review. The CSREES team leader should review the agenda and arrange a time for a review team organizational meeting. This should be done before the final schedule is confirmed. Time allotted for each session should be proportional to the importance of the segment under review.

During reviews of biological and physical science departments, appropriate time should be allotted to view laboratories, scientific equipment, greenhouses, barns, land, and other departmental facilities. More review team on-site time may be needed for departments with extensive facilities, and combined departments like agronomy/soils or animal science. In the interests of effective time management, institutions have occasionally used slides to orient the review team, rather than extended on-site visits. Videotapes are especially useful for developing an appreciation of the contributions of outlying stations. However, if facility needs are a major focus of the review, teams should visit the facilities.

It is essential that the review team be allotted adequate time to absorb relevant information, dialogue with faculty, and develop consensus on issues, arrive at conclusions, make recommendations, and write a draft report. Scheduling sufficient on-site time for these important activities results in improved team performance, reduces the time needed in home offices to draft reports, and reduces the time in which the final report can be written and forwarded to the Institution. The duration for an on-site review depends on the size, logistics, complexity and diversity of the department, as well as the review objectives and areas to be covered. Full department reviews usually require a total of four to five days, including time for deliberation and writing a draft report. Reviews covering a limited number of issues can be shorter.

Most institutions will want to schedule the sessions that appear on Appendix B, while the optional sessions in Appendix C, may be useful. The program review sessions -- item 6 in Appendix B -- constitutes the heart of the review. These sessions can be organized around subject-matter, functional areas, specific issues, or any combination thereof. The organizing theme may relate to the format used by the department in its planning efforts, departmental organization, or institutional preferences. Department, College or University-wide issues may be important in some reviews and discussion of them should be included in the agenda. Arranging time for a brief and casual interaction between faculty and the review team is generally valuable, as it allows each group to discuss important issues outside the formalities of the review itself. One evening is sufficient and additional evenings should be reserved for team deliberations and report writing.

Institutions are urged to allow the review team to interact with the faculty as a unit, rather than dividing the review team into sub-units and conducting concurrent sessions. Team cohesiveness in the process enhances consensus building on issues and recommendations.

Preparing the Review Document

An orientation and informational document should be developed by the department for the review team. This review document includes a clear description of the department's long-range plans, programs, curricula, personnel, accomplishments, and the areas on which the review will focus. Providing relevant information for advance study by the review team contributes to both the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. It minimizes presentation time during the reviews, permits a concentrated focus on important materials, and ensures that the majority of time is devoted to major issues.

Appendix D outlines materials that might be included in a review document, although it is not intended that all items should be a part of any one document. A concise, coherent, accurate, and easy to follow document that addresses points that are relevant to the review process should guide the selection of materials to be included.

The ultimate objective of departmental programs is to serve their constituents. Departments are urged to provide objective empirical data regarding program performance, outcomes, accomplishments and impacts on the audiences served. Performance analysis is an important aspect of the review process, and the knowledge of program outcomes and impacts is valuable to departmental planning processes and critical to funding agencies. Commissioning program evaluation studies and interspersing the results into the review is encouraged. By including program performance information in review documents, departments provide a comparison with other institutional units. Appendix D contains more detailed suggestions on reporting program performances under the headings (1) outputs or accomplishments and (2) impacts.

Although information in the review documents is designed primarily for the review team, it is also useful to departmental faculty, college and university administrators in understanding the department, its missions, goals, plans, problems, and development potential. If it is not feasible for all members to participate in the advanced preparation for the review, it is highly desirable to convene a session with the entire faculty prior to review to discuss the self-study report and the identified issues and concerns.

The review document should reach the team members 3 weeks before the on-site review. This allows the team members time to read the documents prior to arrival on campus. Allow appropriate time for delivery and use Express Mail if necessary.

CONDUCTING THE REVIEW

The Review Sessions

Proper usage of the limited on-site time of the review team is essential to the process. Time management is most effective and produces the most productive results if faculty presentations focus on collections of projects within departments, rather than on individual projects. In departmental reviews, project-by-project presentations are time consuming and make it difficult for members of the review team to concentrate on future directions. A small team's presentation of a program area allows coveerage of an entire program in a limited time. It is equally important that all faculty working in the program participate in the review, respond to questions, and be available to offer additional information.

Team members are expected to study the review document materials prior to arriving on campus. Therefore it is unnecessary for presenters to repeat detailed information thus provided. A minimum of time should be spent defining the history of programs, unless it is essential to understanding the current situation and environment. About one-third of the time should be spent focusing on future plans, relationships among program areas, and between research, extension and other units. Presentations should identify important issues and encourage review team questions and dialogue.

Approximately one half of the time in each session should be allotted for discussion and faculty should be encouraged to share ideas with the team and among themselves. Group interaction and dialogue is enhanced if seating is arranged so individuals face each other, rather than in classroom style. Team members can then provide feedback based on the discussions and their own experiences. Members of the department and the review team should make every effort to create an atmosphere that encourages exchange of ideas.

Time should be budgeted carefully and the objectives, approaches, and time schedules communicated and followed by program chairs and presenters. The challenge is to convey a maximum amount of useful information in a limited time. A faculty member should be designated as chair for each session, to ensure sufficient time for presentations, discussion and closure. Faculty should organize their presentations and use visual aids to highlight important material. They should also avoid procedural details or methodology, unless a program objective is to explore new methodologies.

Participation in Review

In planning the review, the institutional and department administrator should include external faculty such as adjuncts, area extension staff, or branch station staff and joint appointees housed in remote campus units. Interdisciplinary faculty may benefit from attendance and contribute significantly to the discussions, especially when multi-disciplinary work is being discussed. Participation by professional and technical staff, graduate students and department stakeholders is also encouraged. State user groups can provide useful insights to departments and programs regarding problems and can assess how well their needs are served.

Every effort should be made to have the entire teaching, research and extension faculty participate in all sessions throughout the review, rather than just when their area specialties are being discussed.The participation of all faculty is necessary to fully grasp program interdependencies, share in discussions of future plans and alternatives, learn about activities throughout the department and benefit from an information exchange with the review team.

If feasible, the review should be held away from department offices to reduce faculty work day distractions. However, selection of the review schedule and site should allow faculty and administrators to maintain their regular activities during deliberations if they are not able to completely clear their calendars. For example, the total review time might be 4 days, yet individual faculty participation would usually be 2 to 2.5 days.

Work space should be available to the review team throughout the entire process, particularly during the evening, when organizational meetings, writing or discussions may be held. Word processing equipment should also be available and, if necessary, secretarial assistance to work on draft reports.

Although the institution is not responsible for lodging costs for the two agency supported team members and for the CSREES team leader, it is a courtesy to make reservations for them.

Role of the Review Team

Written objectives and expectations by faculty, Department Heads and Administrators are very helpful to the review team. The objectives should be clearly identified in the review document; however, supplemental lists of objectives are sometimes provided. It is important to remember, only a limited number of objectives can be successfully addressed in a single review.

The team leader is responsible for overall coordination of the review team activities, facilitating communication, identifying the need for additional material and serves as the CSREES contact person for the institution. The team leader directs discussions to the issues of the review objectives, keeps presentations and discussion within the prescribed time schedule and helps avoid non-productive discussion paths. It is the joint responsibility of the team leader and the institution's administrator to make productive use of the faculty's and review team's on-site time.

Members of the review team share the responsibility for the success of the review with faculty and administrators. The team's main functions are to provide feedback on the relevance and prioritization of departmental programs and input regarding processes and strategies. They evaluate program strengths, weaknesses and departmental / program priority setting.

It is essential for the team to ask pertinent questions and gather information relevant to their analyses. Occasionally, team questions may appear critical of the department or of the individuals questioned. These questions are purely for information purposes and are not intended to indicate the personal or professional view of the review team. These inquiries are an essential part of the review process and allow the team to make as objective an analysis of the department as possible.

The closing interview serves several important functions. It provides: 1) a quick communication to administration, faculty, staff and students of the review teams evaluations; 2) a list of specific team recommendations; 3) an evaluation if the unit goals are on target; and 4) other considerations important to strengthening the unit's programs. It is critical that the closing exchange be candid and the information presented be consistent with the comments in the final written report.

FOLLOW-UP

Immediately following the review, the team finalizes its written report, which includes observations, analyses, conclusions, and recommendations for improvement. CSREES policy mandates that the final report will be forwarded to the institution within 6 weeks after completion of the on-site review.

Upon receipt of the CSREES report, the institutional administrator that initiated the review should promptly provide copies to the Department Administrator and other college and university administrators. The department administrator can then make copies available to the faculty.

After receiving the final report, departments occasionally schedule retreats or other follow-up activities so they may include the team's suggestions in their continued planning efforts. It is appropriate at this time for the Institutional Administrator to meet with faculty to discuss the implications of the review and the department's priority needs. Some universities require a department's written response to the administration outlining any reactions to the report's conclusions and recommendations, major changes the department plans to make in the next 3 - 4 years, and the resource implications of the planned changes.

Analyzing and responding to the review report can be an important additional benefit of the overall process, especially if the recommendations are reviewed one to two years later to determine if progress has been made. It is hoped that recommendations contained in the written review report will be useful to you and the department as you strive for excellence in your programs.

As you review and react to the team recommendations, CSREES would like to receive a follow-up report in approximately one year from the time of the review. The report should describe the extent to which recommendations have been considered by the department and whether or not they were considered for implementation. Feed-back to CSREES allows the federal partner to determine and describe impacts and outcomes of these activities for agency GPRA reporting.

Appendix A. Summary of Steps Involved in Planning and Conducting Reviews

What	Who	When

1. Decide to have review and send request to CSREES	Institution administration in cooperation with the unit to be reviewed	At time of CSREES annual call for review requests, based on previous discussion of needs and objectives
2. Discuss type of and objectives of review with institution administrators and start advanced planning	same as above	6 to 12 months prior to review
3. Communicate specific objectives for review and discuss with CSREES team leader	Institution Administrators or Department Head	6 to 12 months prior to the review
4. Agree to review, schedule dates, and designate CSREES review team leader	CSREES administrator	Within 2 months after receipt of request
5. Forward nominations for team members to CSREES team leader	Institution administrator or Department Head	At least 6 months prior to review
6. Invite team members to participate	CSREES team leader	As soon as possible
7. Identify issues and start to develop review document	Department	6-8 months prior to review
8. Develop agenda and schedule for the review	Department in consultation with institutional administrators and CSREES	4-5 months prior to review
9. Forward review document to review team	Department	To arrive 3 weeks prior to review
10. Conduct on-site review	CSREES review team and the university	
11. Provide write-up for report to CSREES team leader	Team members	On site or within 1 week after end of the review

12. Send draft of report to team members for review	CSREES team leader	1-2 weeks after end of review
13. Return comments to CSREES team leader	CSREES team leader	3 weeks after review
14. Send final written report to CSREES	CSREES team leader	4 weeks after review
15. Forward final report to Institional administrator	CSREES administrator	6 weeks after review

Appendix B. Suggested Review Sessions

Session	Participants	Purpose	Comments	Approximate time needed
1. Organizational meeting of review team	Team members	To discuss plans and division of labor	Should be the evening before the review	1 - 1.5 hours
2. Opening session with department head	Department Head, Faculty representatives, program leaders, or review planning committee optional	To discuss plans for the review	Might be a breakfast	1 - 1.5 hours
3. Opening session with administrators	Dean; and Research, Extension, teaching, and International Program Directors in the college, could also include University Administrator	Administrators to give their perceptions of the department and make clear the objectives they want to accomplish through the review		1 - 1.5 hours

4. Opening session with the department	All faculty, professional and technical staff, joint appointees, and collaborators	To highlight results of preliminary planning and discuss major issues to be addressed in the review		1 hour
5. Informal session with faculty	Same as session 4	To provide interaction between the team and faulty members and give the team insights it might not receive otherwise	Could be done through an informal social gathering the first evening of the review	2 hours
6. Review sessions	Same as session 4	To discuss current programs and future plans	May want to include graduate students	1.5 - 2 hours each
7. Closing session with administrators	Same as session 3	For the team to present a summary of its major conclusion, recommendations, and discuss issues and future departmental plans with administrators		1.5 hours
8. Closing session with faculty	Same as session 4	For the team to present a more detailed summary of its conclusions and recommendations; respond to questions from the faculty; and to have joint faculty/team discussion of future plans and issues	May want to include graduate students	2 hours

Appendix C. Optional Review Sessions			
Group or Session	Participants	Purpose	Comments
1. Tour of facilities	Department Head, Faculty and Staff	To give the review team insights into potentials or constraints as influenced by amount and quality of facilities and equipment	
2. College department heads	Heads of other departments in the college or other cooperating departments	For heads to give the review team their perceptions of how well the department is fulfilling its mission, multi-disciplinary work, and suggestions for Improvement	Might be a luncheon meeting
3. Higher level university administrators	Relevant university administrators	To discuss university environment that affects current status and future plans of the department	
4. Users	Representatives of private and public users of departmental services	Users to give their perceptions of their needs, how well the department is serving them, and their suggestions for future departmental programs	Might consider the feasibility of a formal users advisory committee for the department

5. Graduate students	Representatives of the graduate students	For students to give the team their perceptions of strengths of departmental programs, problems, and suggestions for improvement	Recommend that no faculty or administrators participate
6. Undergraduate students	6 to 10 undergraduate students representing the department's undergraduate degree programs	Same as session 5	Same as graduate student session
7. Heads of departments outside agriculture	Heads of related departments in the university	Same as session 2	
8. Private faculty meetings with the review team	Individual faculty	To discuss any matter any faculty feels a need to discuss in confidence	It is important to stress that this opportunity is open to all faculty
9. Professional support staff	Professional and technical associates and assistants	Discuss support effectiveness, policies, and career development opportunities	

Appendix D. Outline of Material to Consider Including in Review Document

It is suggested that departments prepare a two-part review document, not exceeding 200 pages, with a summary followed by more detailed background data. A much shorter review document is appropriate and possible when objectives are clearly focused and addressed. Following is an outline that includes items presented in review documents. It is not intended that all documents include all of these materials, but rather that a department select materials that are most relevant to the objectives and coverage of its review. The material should be organized to facilitate use by the team during the review by collating the materials with the items on the agenda by functions or subject matter, and by organizing the document to follow the theme used in the review.

PART I. SUMMARY

A. The Review

1. Objectives of the review
2. Members of departmental review planning committee(s)
3. Members of review team
4. Agenda. Suggestions: (1) include beginning and ending times on the agenda, (2) give first names of participants, not just initials, (3) identify administrators the panel will meet with by title

B. Faculty Personnel List

Suggest that this list be in strict alphabetical order and that it give rank, division of time among functions and program areas, institution and year of terminal degree, and number of years in the department. Include collaborators and joint appointees. (It is convenient for the panel to have a copy of this list as a separate that can be removed from the document.)

C. Departmental Organization and Structure

Organization and decision making structure, including associate or assistant heads and program leaders (if any); processes for planning and making major program decisions; major committees; and communication linkages within the department

D. Interrelationships with Others

Suggest that this show major linkages with others in the university, in the state, and in adjacent states, such as cooperation with the USDA and other states on variety and other field trials

E. Recent Changes

A summary of major departmental changes during the past 5 years

F. Planning Information

A summary of information from any recent department planning efforts (a copy of the entire plan might be included in Part II along with executive summaries of university and college plans if they exist)

G. Issues

A statement of the issues the department wants the review panel to address, along with the data and information needed for the panel to analyze each issue (some of the data may be in Part II)

PART II. BACKGROUND DATA

A. State and Institutional Environment

A brief overview of the environment in which the department operates, covering:

1. The state

a. Trends in agriculture and rural areas (include a state map)

b. Major current and prospective problems facing the state

2. The university

3. The college of agriculture. Suggest including: (1) an organizational chart showing lines of authority, responsibility, and communication, and (2) a statement of reward policies and procedures (tenure, promotion, and salary increases)

B. Financial and Physical Resources

1. Funds--federal appropriations, state appropriations, grants and contracts, and total distributed among:

a. Functions (teaching, research, and extension)

b. Subject-matter areas

2. Operating funds per faculty FTE by function

3. Historical funding pattern for unit (5 years)

4. How does it rank with other units in the college

5. Role and emphasis on outside funding as it might affect departmental programs and accomplishments
6. Facilities and equipment

Current status and adequacy of items such as laboratories, scientific equipment, plot land, farm land, green houses, barns, feedlots, orchards, forests, germplasm stocks, insect collections, herds and flocks, computer laboratories and equipment, farm buildings and equipment, and other facilities and equipment used in carrying out departmental research, teaching, and extension programs

7. Field stations at which departmental programs are conducted, showing geographical distribution and areas of specialization

C. Personnel

1. Number of faculty currently and 5 years ago distributed by function (i.e., teaching, research, extension) and academic rank
2. Number of post doctorate and other professional staff distributed by function
3. Number and types of scientific aides and technical assistants
4. Number and types of farm and laboratory workers
5. Number of secretarial and clerical staff distributed by function
6. Number of graduate assistants by degree level
7. Number of sabbatic leaves taken by the faculty during the past 5 years in relation to the number who would have been eligible
8. Faculty resumes. It is urged that resumes be limited to **1 to 2 pages** and that a standard format be used throughout the department. Information on publications is far more useful to review teams if summarized under section E below than listed in the faculty resumes. On their resumes, each faculty member should be given the opportunity to state his or her goals for the next 5 years.

D. Programs

1. Research

a. Current distribution of faculty FTEs among subject matter areas and indication of any major shifts in distribution during the last 5 years

b. Outline by subject matter areas showing goals, major activities underway, cooperative work with others, progress being made, and future plans

c. Research project outlines and annual progress reports contain more detail than is useful in the review, and their inclusion in the document is discouraged. A list of projects or a 1-page statement per project, showing the following items is useful: (1) project number, (2) title; (3) names of departmental faculty and cooperators who are working on the project, (4) duration, (5) objectives, and (6) sources of funds, including grants or contracts associated with the project

2. Extension

a. Current distribution of faculty FTEs among program areas and indication of any major shifts in distribution during the last 5 years

b. Outline by program areas of objectives, major activities underway, cooperative work with others, and future plans.

(1) Extent to which leverage is being added to the extension program by training and working through others

(2) Use of innovative new educational approaches

3. Teaching

a. Undergraduate program

(1) Degree programs offered

(2) For 10 years ago, 5 years ago, last year, and current year

(a) Number of student majors by degree program

(b) Number of degrees awarded

(c) Number of students enrolled in each course

(3) List of courses (including those taught in other colleges) showing name, number, and one- or two-sentence statement of what is covered; frequency the courses were taught; and number of sections taught each of the last 5 years

(4) New innovations for increasing productivity or quality of instruction

b. Graduate program

(1) Degree programs offered at M.S. and Ph.D. levels

(2) For 5 years ago, last year, and current year:

(a) Number of assistantships available and stipends

(b) Number of majors at M.S. and Ph.D. levels by degree program

(c) Number of domestic and international students

(d) Number of degrees awarded

(e) Number of students enrolled in each course

(3) List of courses (including those taught in other colleges) showing name, number, and a one- or two-sentence statement of what is covered, and frequency courses were taught last 5 years

(4) First job of each student who completed M.S. and Ph.D. degrees last 5 years

4. International programs

a. Degree of internationalization of the department's programs

b. Involvement of faculty in international programs overseas and on campus

5. Degree of integration of teaching, research, and extension programs

E. Program Performance

1. Outputs or accomplishments

Departments should provide as much quantitative, as well as qualitative, information as possible on program outputs or accomplishments. It is suggested that information be provided for the last 5-year period, and that the accomplishments be related to the department's program areas. Examples of outputs or accomplishments related to functions are outlined below.

a. Research

(1) Major discoveries or scientific breakthroughs

(2) New cultivars or varieties

(3) Patents received

(4) Publications

(a) Books

(b) Chapters in books

(c) Articles in refereed professional journals

(d) Research bulletins or other research reports

(5) Systems or computer programs developed

b. Extension

(1) Workshops or training sessions conducted

(2) Presentations to grower and other groups

(3) TV and radio programs

(4) Individual contacts with growers and other clientele

(5) Clinic services provided

(6) Publications

(7) Videotapes and computer programs prepared for users

c. Teaching

By graduate and undergraduate level

(1) Number of courses taught

(2) Number of sections taught

(3) Student credit hours taught

(4) Number of majors and advisees

(5) Number of degrees awarded

(6) Videotapes prepared for class use

(7) Publications

2. Impacts

While it is often difficult to obtain definitive information, the department should provide as many insights as possible on the impacts of its programs on the audiences it is trying to serve. Information on the extent to which the department's outputs are being utilized by various audiences is useful. Such information can be obtained through informal feedback from growers and other users; feedback from state extension personnel; surveys of county extension personnel; adoption studies; and in other ways.

In addition to <u>utilization</u>, it is also useful to have as much information as possible on the <u>impacts</u> or payoffs from the use of the department's services--who is benefitting, how are they benefitting, and how much are they benefitting. While some of the department's contributions may be to the advancement of science, impacts on people in the state are always of interest to reviewers. Some insights on impacts can be obtained through informal feedback on programs. Additional insights can be obtained through student evaluations of instruction, surveys, and formal evaluation studies.

1. In these guidelines, the term "institution" refers to the universities and colleges who receive funds through and cooperate with CSREES, and the terms "institution" and "university" are used interchangeably.