



**CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY**  
**Office of Planning, Assessment and Research**

**ADMINISTRATIVE and EDUCATIONAL  
SUPPORT UNITS PERIODIC REVIEW:**

**Internal Review Team (IRT) Guidelines**

OPAR 2012

### ***Purpose***

These guidelines will assist you in carrying out your responsibilities as a member of the Internal Review Team (IRT). The guidelines describe the role of the IRT, the IRT Review process, the IRT Report, and other helpful information. They also provide a process for IRT members to follow in preparation of serving on the Internal Review Team as well as conducting the internal review. Each team member should read the guidelines carefully and complete the review process accordingly. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the Administrative and Educational Support Units (AES) Self-Study Report, Guidelines and Procedures and AES Periodic Review Assessment Tool.

### ***Role of the Internal Review Team***

The role of the Internal Review Team is to: (1) evaluate the department's Self-Study Report against the AES Periodic Review Assessment Tool and (2) conduct additional inquiry through the review of supporting data and interviews with staff and customers. The team may utilize any other appropriate means needed to provide information by which a determination can be made as to the validity of the department's self-assessment. The team's report should be a standard by standard evaluation of the department/unit's report and should include specific recommendations for improvement. Any noteworthy commendations identified in the report should also be included. This must be done in a collegial manner and adhere to the highest standards of professional ethics and confidentiality.

### ***Role of the Team Chair***

Leadership of your Internal Review Team is vested in the Chair. The Chair is responsible for organizing the work of the team and is the primary contact person as individuals prepare for and participate in the review. Any matters of concern or issues that may arise should be discussed with the team Chair.

### ***Role of the Team Members***

Individuals will be chosen to serve on the Internal Review Team to provide an external professional judgment to the department undergoing review. The team will consist of three to five members (depending upon the size of the unit to be reviewed) that include: an appointed member of the University's Effectiveness Committee (UEC); one representative from the AES department/unit undergoing review; and individuals from different departments/units. Members should function as a team. Each member of the team will be given specific assignments; however, members should strive to assist other team members and always note and communicate information that may contribute to the findings of other team members. It is the collective judgment of the team members that forms the basis for the team's report.

### ***Department/Unit Team Members***

Each team will include a member assigned from the department undergoing review. This individual is a fully participating member of the team. He / She may be able to offer useful insight into the department/unit's operation; however, all questions, requests for additional information and documentation should be addressed to the Head Administrator.

### ***Role of Support Offices***

The Office of Planning, Assessment and Research (OPAR) will be available to facilitate the Internal Team Review process. OPAR may clarify the Guidelines and Procedures, but cannot participate in the evaluation of the departments/units under review.

### ***Desired Outcomes***

The IRT review process involves making collective professional judgments. The team's responsibility is to provide an objective professional judgment to the Department/Unit Head Administrator and the department/unit under review as to: (a) the status of compliance with the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Periodic Review Guidelines and Procedures; and (b) the quality and acceptability of the department/unit's Self-Study Report. The team also provides advice on other areas of support service improvement. The ultimate role of the IRT is to examine the department/unit's purposes (mission, goals, and objectives), policies, procedures, support services, and resources etc., that relate to sections or subsections of the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Periodic Review Content Areas and present to the full team findings and any proposed recommendations and suggestions. Team members will carefully review the department/unit's Self-Study Report and other documents, and interview staff and customers, gathering information that will enable each member to provide an equitable and objective evaluation of the department.

### ***Specific Responsibilities of Internal Review Team Members***

Responsibilities of the Internal Review Team include the following:

1. Team members will be expected to prepare for the review by examining the department/unit Self-Study Report and supporting documents, studying the Administrative and Educational Support Units Periodic Review Guidelines and Procedures and becoming familiar with the role and assignment of the team.
2. Active participation in all scheduled or special meetings of the team.
3. Regardless of the specific assignment, all team members will be expected to provide input to the member(s) assigned to evaluate all other aspects of the review using related sections of the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Periodic Review Content Areas.
4. Team members will be expected to write a draft report covering the examination of the department/unit's compliance with the section(s) or subsection(s) of the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Periodic Review Content Areas. A draft report must be completed by the end of the review and delivered to the department/unit's Head Administrator as scheduled. Team members should retain a copy of the draft for future reference and to serve as a replacement if the original is lost or destroyed.
5. All team members will be expected to contribute to the team's collective decisions.
6. A copy of the draft report will be sent to the team members. The team will be asked to review it and provide comments and suggestions to the Chair of the team.

### **Internal Review Team Organizational Meeting**

The organizational meeting serves as a general orientation for the Internal Review Team. During the meeting, pertinent information and consultation will be provided to prepare team members to perform their assigned responsibilities at the desired level of proficiency.

The meeting will be conducted according to the following:

1. An introduction of team members and a discussion of team assignments and responsibilities.
2. A review of the role of the Chair.
3. A discussion of the self-study process and document.
4. Specific factors or information about the self-study or that are pertinent to the team's review.
5. Suggestions that will facilitate the work of the team.
6. A review of the team's schedule.
7. Instructions for writing the draft report.
8. Housekeeping and specific instructions from the Chair.
9. Clarification of any uncertainties you may have concerning your role as a team member.

### ***Tips on Conducting the Interview***

1. Understand the purpose of the interview and how the findings will be utilized in the report.
2. Prepare in advance the questions to be asked and materials.
3. Ask for additional information and materials that respond to the guidelines and procedures and the assessment tool.
4. Ask for documentation if not already available.
5. Listen attentively and take notes.
6. Do not focus attention on your department/unit's experiences.
7. Maintain an open interview style.

8. Do not discuss any information relative to the Internal Review process with those being interviewed.
9. If possible, visit the interviewees in their perspective professional setting.

### ***The Report***

The report of the team, while edited and compiled by the Chair, represents the collective thought of the full team. It is the process by which the team communicates to the department/unit Head Administrator and to the department/unit its professional judgment as to compliance with the guidelines and procedures and the quality and acceptability of the self-study. The report should be concise, while simultaneously ensuring the scope of the study is represented.

Each member of the team, in consultation with other team members, is responsible for preparing the draft report on one or more sections or subsections of the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Periodic Review Content Areas. The draft must be given to the Chair at the end of the review as scheduled. The Chair receives the drafts and edits them into a meaningful, cohesive report. Drafts of the report are sent to team members for their review and suggestions and to the department/unit for review for factual accuracy.

A final written report of the findings of the Internal Review Team will be completed and submitted to the department/unit's Head Administrator and the Office of Planning Assessment and Research according to the schedule. This report should include a set of recommendations for improving the quality of the department/unit's services as they relate to the periodic review content areas

### ***Presentation of Findings***

A meeting should be scheduled by the Department/Unit Head Administrator and Chairperson of the IRT to formally present the final report. This meeting should include the Director/Assistant Director, Office of Planning, Assessment and Research (OPAR), and the UEC committee. The purpose of the meeting is to present the findings and recommendations of the IRT's review. The Department/Head Administrator should share results of the meeting with the faculty and staff. Any other departments desiring to observe the meeting are welcomed to attend.