

Academic Unit Planning – Unit Head Handbook

Responsibilities of the Unit

The responsibilities during Academic Unit Planning for the unit, the Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning, the Academic Unit Planning Committee, the Dean of Record, and the Office of the VPA are outlined in the [AUP Procedures](#). It is recommended that the unit head assign a working group of members from the unit to carry out the AUP activities throughout the process.

The responsibilities for the unit include:

Self-Study Report

- Substantive engagement with community (e.g. students, staff, faculty, alumni, industry partners, cognate disciplines): This engagement may be conducted through any methods that are appropriate for the unit, and may include surveys, focus groups, or town halls.¹ To inform the decision of which engagement method is most appropriate, units should review the [Considerations for Consultation with Students](#) document which discusses the options of surveys, focus groups, and town halls. Units should engage with students as early as possible in the self-study process to ensure the information gathered is timely and to mitigate the risk of delays.
- Collecting data and information: in addition to engagement with students, faculty, and staff, units should collect data and information relevant to their operations. CIAP provides an academic unit profile, annually, which conveys historical data related to course sections, enrolments and registrations, research grants and contracts, finance, human resources, and class size. If other data is desired, the unit should contact CIAP to discuss the options for acquiring such information.
- Writing the report: the self study report should be completed and submitted to the Dean of Record no later than one year after the AUP launch meeting. A template for the Self-Study report can be found in the appendices of the [AUP Procedures](#).
- Selecting the Writing Team: units are encouraged to appoint a committee of faculty, staff, and students to prepare the self-study report. This will mitigate the risk of delays due to turnover or loss of institutional memory during the AUP process.
- Staying on track: to mitigate the risk of delays, units are encouraged to plan the development of their self-study as early as possible after the AUP launch meeting. Planning should involve selection of the team, consultations with faculty, staff, and students, collection of data, and writing and review of the report.

Panel Visit

- Suggestions for potential panelists: the AUP panel visit will normally include four panelists: two internal to Memorial but external to the academic unit being review; and two panelists external to Memorial from disciplines found within the academic unit. The unit should provide, with input from the Dean of Record, at least five options for internal panelists and five options for external panelists. The names of these suggested panelists should be provided to CIAP as far ahead of completion of the self-study report as possible to allow CIAP to confirm panelists for the panel review. Given the nature of the academic year and faculty workload it is often challenging to

¹ Surveys of students must be approved by the Institutional Survey Oversight Committee (ISOC)

confirm panelists due to teaching and research responsibilities as well as competing priorities such as conference attendance or other panel reviews. It is possible that CIAP will request a second list of panelist suggestions if those on the initial list are unavailable.

- Development of panel itinerary: the unit head should develop a panel itinerary in consultation with the Dean of Record and CIAP. An itinerary template is provided in the [AUP Procedures](#). Units have the option of conducting the panel review on-site or remotely. While on-site visits allow panelists to visit the facilities and meet in-person, remote panels offer more flexibility, cost savings, and may allow for scheduling of external panelists who would otherwise be unavailable for an on-site panel visit. Units are encouraged to consider which option (on-site or remote) is most appropriate for their panel visit.
- Site tour: the unit head should provide a tour of the academic unit's facilities on the first day of the panel visit. If the panel visit is held remotely, CIAP will work closely with CITL to develop a virtual tour using 360° photography.
- Booking rooms for panel: panel meetings will normally be held in a seminar room in or near the academic unit.
- Attending panel meetings: panel visits will normally include meetings with unit head, faculty, students, and staff, as well as a breakfast and luncheon that the unit head will attend.
- Staying on track: to mitigate the risk of delays, coordination of the panel visit should begin as early as possible. This should include selection of panelists, development of itinerary, and booking of rooms. Panels should be held during the Fall semester when possible, and units with panels scheduled for the Winter semester should consider hosting the panel remotely to mitigate risk of weather disruptions.

Unit Response

The unit is responsible for preparing a response to the panel report within one month of receipt of the report. This report should respond to the comments and recommendations of the panel and will inform the development of the unit's action plan. When preparing the unit response, the panel report should be shared with members of the unit who should also be consulted throughout the development of the unit response. Faculty, staff, and students should be consulted, as possible, during the development of the unit response, bearing in mind that the unit response is due 30 days following the receipt of the panel report. Prior to sharing the report widely, the unit head should review the report to remove any sensitive information or private information.

Action Plan

After completing the unit response, the unit head should meet with the Dean of Record to discuss the preparation of a 3-year action plan. This plan should be informed by the self-study and panel review and should comprise goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. While only a 3-year action plan is required, units are encouraged to prepare a plan that will lead into the beginning of the next 7-year AUP cycle. Units should continue unfinished initiatives outlined in their action plan and to build upon successes of the first few years. A template for the action plan can be found on the [AUPC website](#).²

² <https://www.mun.ca/senate/standing-committees-of-senate/academic-unit-planning-committee/planning-process/resources-for-units/>

Lay Summary

After the Unit Response and Action Plan are reviewed and approved by the Academic Unit Planning Committee, the unit should prepare a one- to two-page lay summary of the process for online publication. A template for the lay summary can be found on the [AUPC website](#).³

One- and Three-Year Update Reports

One year and three years after the approval of the action plan, the unit should prepare progress reports outlining the status of the objectives. The template for the action plan, found on the [AUPC website](#), provides space for one- and three-year updates.

Understanding the Data Package

The Centre for Institutional Analysis and Planning provides an Academic Unit Profile annually to academic units. This report will normally be distributed in late Fall and will provide information for the past academic year regarding: course sections, enrolments, and class size; program enrolments; research; finance; and human resources. This data package can be used to inform unit self-studies, panel reports, and action plans, as well as to monitor progress throughout the seven-year review cycle. It should be noted that although information is provided in aggregate, it may be possible in some cases to identify or estimate an individual's annual salary in units with a small staff complement. Thus, this information should not be distributed beyond Deans and the unit head's office. You can find more detailed information on the academic unit profile in Appendix A.

Avoiding Delays

The Academic Unit Planning process is intended to take approximately 4.5 years from the date of the launch meeting to the submission of the three-year progress report. All extension requests must be reviewed and approved by the Dean of Record. When considering requesting an extension, units should review the [Implications of Granting Extensions](#) document on the AUPC website. To mitigate the risk of delays, we encourage units to consider the following:

- Assign a team of faculty and staff to oversee the AUP process for the unit. This will ensure multiple people have knowledge of the process and mitigate the risk of delays due to overturn in leadership. This will also encourage a distributed workload that will help the process adhere to its timelines.
- Plan student engagement as early as possible in the self-study process. Time considerations for student consultations are outlined in the [Considerations for Consultation with Students](#).
- Stay current with unit data. CIAP will provide an Academic Unit Profile annually which gives units the opportunity to keep their data up-to-date throughout the process.
- Submit the names of potential panelists for the panel review as early as possible. CIAP will contact the suggested panelists to invite them to participate in a panel visit scheduled one month after the self-study is due. It is often challenging to confirm panelists due to conflicting schedules, so providing a list of potential panelists to CIAP as early as possible is recommended.

Common Queries

Extension requests: extension requests must be approved by the Dean of Record for the unit. When considering an extension request, unit heads should consult the Dean of Record as early as possible. Unit

³ <https://www.mun.ca/senate/standing-committees-of-senate/academic-unit-planning-committee/planning-process/resources-for-units/>

heads and deans of record considering extensions should consult the document [*The Implications of Granting Extensions During the Planning Cycle*](#).

Panelists: while developing lists of potential panelists, unit heads should consult with the Dean of Record for the unit. If challenges are experienced during the selection of panelists, the unit should consult with the AUP Coordinator for advice.

Conflict of Interest: during the AUP process, there are multiple points at which a unit should consider potential conflict of interest. In particular, units should consider risk of conflict of interest during the selection of external panelists for the panel review. Inquiries related to conflict of interest should be directed to the AVPA for advice.

Sample Reports and Templates: templates for AUP reports are available on the [AUPC website](#). AUP reports are no longer published online (Lay Summaries of AUP processes are available [online](#)). Units wishing to review recent AUP reports from other units should contact the AUP coordinator who will contact the other unit in question to request permission to share the report. Due to the potentially sensitive nature of information found in AUP reports, the documents should not be shared widely.

Appendix A – Academic Unit Profile

1. Course Sections, Enrolments and Class Size

Data Source: Banner Student Report “SWRS515.”

Time period: Academic year (Fall semester-Winter semester-Spring semester).

Definitions:

- Course Section is a discrete Course Reference Number (CRN) for a course with one of the following course delivery modes:
 - Lecture
 - Lecture/Lab Combination
 - Clinical
 - Ensemble
 - Online/Distance
 - Seminar
 - It **excludes** Honours Dissertations and Theses, Internships, work terms, classes with zero enrolment, and individualized instruction so that it is a more accurate measure of average class size.
- Course Enrolments are the number of students that are registered in that section at the **end of term**.
- Cross-listed course sections and enrolments are grouped as one section under the department of record.

2. Program Enrolments

Data Source: Banner Student. Special Data Extract.

Time period: Enrolment is captured at the end of the regular registration period in each Fall semester.

Definitions:

- One enrolment represents an individual student who has declared a major in a program. This contrasts with “Section Enrolments” which corresponds to the number of course registrants. For instance, one student may have registered for 10 different courses.
- Includes only students that have registered for courses.
- Undergraduate Students: Those students who are level “01” in Banner. (e.g. MD and PharmD are counted as Undergraduate enrolments in Banner).
 - To avoid double counting, only first majors are counted at the Faculty/School level. However, second majors are included in the totals at the departmental level, as some departments (e.g. Physics, Economics) have a proportion of total majors that are listed as second majors. Thus, the summed total enrolments in departmentalized faculties will be higher than those presented in the Faculty Summary Sheet (for HSS and Science).
- Graduate Students:
 - Masters Students are those students who are level “02” in Banner, excluding those pursuing a doctorate (PHD or PsyD). It thus includes graduate diploma enrolments.
 - Students in interdisciplinary programs involving multiple faculties and schools are proportionally counted in the units that offer the program (e.g. Master of Arts and Education is 50/50 between HSS and Education).

3. Research

Data Source: Romeo, Research Grant and Contract Services.

Time period: Fiscal Year.

4. Finance

Data Source: Banner Finance and Office of the Provost Budget Records

- FAST – 5-year Annual Trend Reports by Level 3 org (e.g. 40B, 40C)
- Budget Allocation Spreadsheets (*Faculty/School level only*)
- Other Correspondence

Time Period: Fiscal Year

Definitions:

- Expenditures and revenue categories are as reported in the Financial Information System (Account Codes).
- Budget Allocations:
 - Base Budget: the incremental base operating allocation of the Unit, prior to any one-time allocations in that fiscal year.
 - One-Time Allocations: allocations from the Academic Reserve or other Central pools of money to support unit activities. These exclude transfers from unit carryover accounts, or transfers from cognate units.

5. Human Resources

Data Source: Instructional Assignments Data (Faculty); Banner Finance (Staff).

Time Period: Academic Year (September-August), to align with the MUNFA collective agreement.

Definitions:

- Faculty represent “Instructional Faculty” only, as per the Instructional Assignments Template. ASM-CFEs are counted among the FTE Staff.