Preamble: External review of existing academic programs is a standard practice in higher education. The purpose of external review is to garner additional perspectives on program strengths and weaknesses from academics and professionals in the field or a closely related field who are affiliated with other institutions.

1. The review of existing academic programs shall include both self-study (internal review) and external review.

2. As much as possible, the institution should link its reviews of existing academic programs to specialized accreditation processes and dates. An external review associated with reaffirmation of specialized accreditation or with initial accreditation may, if completed within one year of the review date, satisfy the external review requirement.

3. When review of the academic program will not occur as part of the specialized accreditation process, each institution should develop its own process for garnering external reviews. The method for identifying and selecting specific individuals who will serve as external reviewers should be determined.

4. External reviews may consist of written responses to the self-study and supporting documents and/or may include on-campus visits during which team members interview students, faculty, and administrators.

5. The final product from external reviewers should be a report that explicitly identifies program strengths and suggests improvements.