



Support Services Review Policy

1. Purpose

St. Mary's University (the "University") aspires to be a centre of academic excellence that provides a vibrant and engaged student experience. Regular reviews of departments that provide services or support the academic operations and student activities of the University help support this vision. These reviews ensure alignment with the University's mandate and strategic framework; assess the quality and impact of the service or support provided; and identify opportunities and challenges of the department.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy relates to all departments within the University that provide services or support to academic operations and employs at least two full-time staff. As departments within the University can change over time, those subject to review are determined through a consultative process in the preceding academic year.
- 2.2. This policy does not apply to the review of Academic Programs, which are governed by Academic Policy and CAQC requirements including the 2.S-2016 Cyclical Program Review Policy.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. Proposed solutions to recommendations - a concise outline of strategic and operational activities and goals to be undertaken within a specified timeline and by specified individuals.
- 3.2. Executive Officers - members of President's Council or designate.
- 3.3. External Reviews - an assessment of a self-study report and a department undertaken by an expert or experts who are independent and at arms-length from the University.
- 3.4. Department Review Report - a critical, evidence-based assessment of a given department.
- 3.5. Support Services - Support Services are non-academic departments at the university that are not directly involved in teaching or research. These departments provide essential services that help the institution operate smoothly and support students, faculty, and staff.

Approval Authority	Responsible Office	Effective Date	Date Last Revised	Review Frequency
President's Council	Vice President Academic	January 21, 2026		Every 5 years

4. Principles

- 4.1. The University values continuous improvement and academic excellence, using regular departmental reviews to identify opportunities, address challenges, maintain high-quality services, and strengthen the student experience and institutional effectiveness.
- 4.2. It upholds accountability and alignment by ensuring each service or support department contributes meaningfully to the University's mission and strategic direction.
- 4.3. The policy reflects a commitment to fairness and transparency through consultative processes that determine which departments undergo review in which years and by whom.
- 4.4. The University values evidence-based decision-making by incorporating external assessments, internal feedback, and structured recommendations into each review.

Appendix A: Procedures for Review of Departments

Appendix A provides the procedures for the review of units that support the academic operations and student activities of the University. The procedures stated are inclusive of all employees involved in supporting the academic operations and student activities of the University.

Procedures:

1. The President and the President's Council will determine the department(s) to be reviewed prior to the upcoming budget year.
 - 1.1. The Support Services departments of the University are:
 - 1.1.1. Alumni Relations,
 - 1.1.2. Athletics,
 - 1.1.3. Campus Ministry,
 - 1.1.4. Community Relations and Signature Events,
 - 1.1.5. Donor Management,
 - 1.1.6. Facilities,
 - 1.1.7. Finance,
 - 1.1.8. Fund Development,
 - 1.1.9. Government Relations,
 - 1.1.10. Human Resources,
 - 1.1.11. Indigenous Initiatives,
 - 1.1.12. Information Technology,
 - 1.1.13. Institutional Research,
 - 1.1.14. Library,
 - 1.1.15. Marketing and Communications,
 - 1.1.16. Recreation,
 - 1.1.17. Recruitment,
 - 1.1.18. Registrar, and
 - 1.1.19. Student Success.
 - 1.2. The President and the respective executive officer will agree on the scope of the review.
 - 1.2.1. The department review will normally consist of an external review, feedback from the President's Council, and proposed solutions to recommendations.
 - 1.3. Department reviews should consider, and not duplicate, the work of any other parallel review process.
2. The President's Council will determine an external consultant to review the applicable upcoming department and negotiate the contract.
 - 2.1. Department reviews are cyclical and normally conducted once every seven (7) years within a fiscal year or as determined by the President's Council.
3. The consultant will work with the Institutional Researcher, leaders, and members of the department to gather data and evidence for a Department Review Report. The consultant will be asked to provide a comprehensive summative and formative study that will aid in the overall quality of the service provided by the department and respect the roles of the employees.

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4. The President's Council will review the report, then the department will review the report. When needed to protect individuals, a sensitized version of the report will be prepared prior to the review by the department.
5. The executive officer of the reviewed department will develop proposed solutions to the recommendations and present them to members of the President's Council and the department.