

Appendix F: External Review Team Procedure and Letter of Agreement

External Review Team Guidelines

In a program review questions may arise regarding program currency, rigor, academic quality in curriculum and assessment. External Review Team members have the following characteristics:

- A terminal degree in the discipline being reviewed, strong academic credentials, and administrative experience;
- Prior experience in conducting academic program review;
- Leadership in the discipline based on publications, executive position with professional organization, or other recognized basis of expertise;
- Professional work at a university similar in mission and enrollment to PLNU or at a nationally recognized similar program;
- Experience in curriculum development and assessment;
- **No affiliation with the program under review nor should they have past connections such as a program graduate or former faculty.**

The external review typically occurs a month or two after the Academic Unit submits its Self Study report to the Provost at the end of their visit. The Committee works with program faculty and the College Dean to identify an External Review Team. The External Review Team may include individuals from PLNU, but outside the program being reviewed, as well as at least two reviewers from outside PLNU. The review team should be comprised of 3 to 4 individuals with appropriate expertise in the academic field under review or in the program review process. The College Dean offers final approval regarding the External Review Team membership.

The Academic Unit is expected to make External Review Team membership nominations with accompanying curriculum vitae, and rationale for the recommendation. Once the College Dean has determined who will be invited to serve on the External Review Team, the Provost (or designee) will extend the invitation to the review team members. The Academic Unit, with the assistance of the Office for Institutional Effectiveness, arranges the logistics for the visit: the delivery of all written materials to the external reviewers, administrative support, assistance with travel plans and hotel reservations, payment or reimbursement of expenses, including arrangements with the business office for the external reviewer's stipend (typically \$ 500 to \$ 1000 per person, plus expenses).

External Reviewers' Tasks

The external reviewers provide insight on programs from the external perspective of the outside expert in program content. The team's written critique, when combined with the Academic Unit's Self Study and Program Review Committee's analysis provides a thorough and credible review of the quality and effectiveness of the program, services, resources, and operations. To facilitate the process the reviewers are asked a series of questions that have surfaced during the Self Study and are areas of particular interest to the university.

Questions may include:

- Do course content, program course sequence, and faculty knowledge and experience cover the current knowledge and best practices in the field?
- Do the faculty experience, CVs, and qualifications demonstrate the appropriate range required for the program being offered?
- Does the curriculum demonstrate the appropriate rigor for an undergraduate or graduate level of instruction?
- Are students being offered the appropriate services and academic experiences for the program?
- Do assessments align with student learning outcomes and program learning outcomes?
- Is the Academic Unit's assessment plan appropriate for the program and learning outcomes?
- Are the assessment data appropriately measured, collected, reviewed, analyzed and used for continuous program improvements?

External reviewers focus their analysis on three primary areas: curriculum, assessment of learning outcomes, and the student educational experience. The External Review Team's visit includes meetings with the program faculty, students, administrators, members of the Program Review Committee, College Dean, and Director of Institutional Effectiveness. A review team's visit should take one or two days and end with an exit interview with the Provost. A typical schedule might include the following:

The External Review Team is provided a copy of the program review Self Study and the Program Review Guidelines well in advance of the Team's interviews with the department (WASC recommends 30 days prior to scheduled visit). During the interviews the Academic Unit provides the Team access department faculty, staff, students, alumni, academic advisors, program coordinators, appropriate administrators, and the Program Review Committee. The Academic Unit provides any additional information requested by the Team and supports the Team's logistical arrangements.

According to WASC, "The review team visit typically lasts for two days, during which time the review committee members meet with department faculty, academic advisors, students, the campus program review committee, and select administrators. The review team typically takes part in an exit interview just prior to concluding its departmental visit and is expected to submit its written evaluation to the Provost prior to departure and at the conclusion of the visit. Upon submission of the report, the off-campus reviewers generally receive a stipend and travel expense reimbursement" (*WASC Resource Guide for 'Good Practices' in Academic Program Review*, September 2009, p. 13).

After the External Review Team's interviews with the Academic Unit they will meet with the Provost, Program Review Committee and others as indicated by the Provost. The Team is expected to provide the Provost a written report prior to departure from the campus. The Academic Unit under review is provided a copy of the External Review Team's report and given the opportunity to write a unit response addressing any factual errors or misperceptions and, if appropriate, incorporate the findings or recommendations in a revised report to the Program Review Committee.

Sample Itinerary for External Review Team

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Time	Responsible for arrangements	Description	
Day 1			
	8:00 am	Academic Unit	Breakfast with the College Dean, Department Chair, Program Review Committee liaison
	9:00 am	Academic Unit	Tour campus including program facilities
	9:30	Academic Unit	Review program exhibits including student work
	10:00 am	Academic Unit	Meet with program faculty
	11:00 am	Academic Unit	Observe class session
	12:00	Academic Unit	Lunch with students
	1:30	Academic Unit	Discussion with honors students and alumni
	2:30	Academic Unit	Guest lecture by external reviewer
	4:00	Academic Unit	External Reviewers meet in consultation
Evening	Academic Unit	Dinner with department chair/ dean, faculty, alumni	
Day 2			
	7:30	Office Institutional Effectiveness	Breakfast with President, Provost, and College Dean
	9:00	Office of IE	Meeting with Program Review Committee members
	10:00	Office of IE	Meeting with Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Vice Provost for Academic Administration
	11:00	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	Report writing begins and concludes before departure
	Noon	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	Box lunch provided
	Afternoon	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	Report writing continues
Prior to departure	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	Meet with the Provost to deliver External Review Team report	

Letter of Agreement with the External Review Team members

Dear _____;

Thank you for serving on the Program Review External Review Team for Point Loma Nazarene University's (school/department). The Program Review process is among the most important measures of academic quality and educational effectiveness. The Program Review is central to the continuous improvement of the University's academic programs, resource allocation and strategic prioritization.

As a member of the External Review Team you will be given an honorarium of _____ for your service and provided administrative and logistic support for your visit including travel arrangements, hotel, and meals. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will serve as your point of contact for all arrangements during your site visit.

A month prior to your visit you will be provided a copy of the Academic Unit's Self Study, program related data, Program Review Handbook, and any additional materials deemed appropriate for your visit. You are also asked to participate in a pre-visit conference call with the Academic Unit's faculty to identify issues and concerns with the Self Study. During the site visit you will meet with faculty, students, alumni, Program Review Committee and senior administrators. In addition, the Program faculty will provide questions to the Review Team that addresses specific areas of concern. Other issues the External Review Team may want to consider:

- Are the references in course syllabi current and adequately cover the knowledge in the field
- Do the faculty have the appropriate qualifications and expertise
- Does the curriculum demonstrate the appropriate rigor, quality and instruction for the graduate/undergraduate level
- Do the annual assessments and assessment plan appropriate and align with the Students Learning Outcomes
- Are the assessment results used to make continuous improvement to the program
- Does the program represent Best Practices in the field of expertise

The External Review Team is asked to write a Findings and Recommendations report at the conclusion of the site visit and present this to the Provost prior to departure. The Team's report provides credibility to the quality and effectiveness of the programs, services, resources, and objectives of the programs under examination. The report should include three sections:

- (1) Executive Summary with general observations and thoughts regarding questions posed during the process
- (2) Commendations about what the program is doing well
- (3) Recommendations for future direction, program improvements, resources, services, etc.

In order for there to be complete candidness during the visit it is asked that every member of the External Review Team adheres to strict confidentiality. This confidentiality agreement includes anyone outside Point Loma Nazarene University and using your findings for research publications or other purposes deemed inappropriate by the University's Provost.

If the External Review Team learns of any allegations of misconduct, harassment, falsification of records, the team is asked to report this to the senior administrators who will in turn take the appropriate actions.

If you agree with these terms, please sign and date the agreement and fax back to the Office of the Provost, Dr. Kerry Fulcher (619-849-2651).

Sincerely,

Dr. Kerry Fulcher
Provost and Chief Academic Officer
Point Loma Nazarene University
3900 Lomaland Drive
San Diego, CA 92106

Cc: Program Review Committee
College Dean
Dean/ Chair Academic Unit

EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM REPORT

I. Executive Summary

- a. Provide a brief executive summary of major findings for this program
- b. General observations and comments on the program and curriculum, quality of student learning and the achievement of student learning outcomes, the annual assessment plan, faculty, students, facilities and resources
- c. Summary of responses to questions posed by faculty, students and administrators

II. Commendations

- a. Identify those things the program is doing well including, curriculum, assessment, student's educational experience
- b. Discuss the services provided to students that enhance their educational experience

III. Recommendations

- a. Provide comments to guide future direction for faculty to use to improve student learning. Provide evaluative feedback that would improve the program and recommendations. The report will specifically include examples of similar programs at other universities that can be used as exemplars
- b. Educational effectiveness topics may include the following: suggest improvements in specific learning outcomes, analyze/ evaluate direct and indirect evidence of student learning, offer suggestions to improve assessment process, evaluate assessment plan, and evaluate the process for continuous program improvement

