

Appendix 1g: Introduction Letter to External Reviewer

Dear Professor XXX,

Based on your professional qualifications, we have identified you as a potential reviewer for Whittier College's _____ department's comprehensive program review. All academic programs go through the review process every five years to confirm compliance with Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) standards. We would like to ask you if you would be interested in participating as the External Reviewer for this department.

If you agree to participate, we will send you an outline of the criteria for evaluating the program and your responsibilities and expectations as an External Reviewer. At least one month prior to your visit, we will send you a copy of the department self-study. During your visit, you will have the opportunity to interview and meet with department members, key administrators, and students. Following the visit, you will be asked to submit a final report summarizing your findings, commendations and recommendations.

For your assistance, the college offers an honorarium, in addition to covering the cost of all travel, lodging and meals. If you agree to participate, we will follow-up with more details and advise you about hotel accommodations and transportation.

We look forward to hearing from you (please reply to all).

Sincerely,

Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty

cc. Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

cc. Department Chair of _____

Appendix 1h: Invitation Letter to External Reviewer

[On Whittier College letterhead]

Date

Address

Dear

Whittier College requests a comprehensive program review of all academic programs every five years. Our _____ department is scheduled for a program review during this academic year. We would like to formally invite you to participate as the external reviewer for this department.

As an external reviewer:

1. Whittier College and the Department ask you to examine the program's self-study to confirm compliance to WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) standards.
2. Prior to the visit, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment will send you a letter of instruction that will outline the criteria for evaluating the program and your responsibilities and expectations as an External Reviewer. The department also receives a copy of this letter.
3. At least one month prior to your visit, the department chair will forward a copy of the self-study and supporting documents.
4. In order to obtain as accurate an assessment as possible, you have the authority to examine all records relevant to these instructions. You are further authorized to seek additional information from personnel relevant to the department's self-study.
5. Your final report should include a summary of your findings, identifying areas of strength and making suggestions for continued growth and development. You will be provided a template to formulate your findings, commendations, and recommendations. This report will be forwarded to the Dean of Faculty, the Department, the Faculty Assessment Committee, and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment.
6. Prior to your arrival, the department chair will create an agenda for your visit that will give you the opportunity to interview/meet department members, key administrators, and students.
7. Elizabeth Ibarra, Administrative Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs will advise you about hotel accommodations and transportation.

We look forward to hearing from you about your participation as the external reviewer for the _____ department at Whittier College.

Sincerely,

Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty

cc. Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

cc. _____ Department Chair

Appendix 1i

Confirmation to Letter to Participate as an External Reviewer [On Whittier College ltr. Head]

Date

Address

Dear

As I mentioned to you [on the telephone / by e-mail] on [date], Whittier College requests a comprehensive program review of all academic programs every five years. Our _____ department is scheduled for a program review during this academic year. [The program is preparing or has prepared] its self-study and will be ready for an External Reviewer to visit our campus [during the XXXX semester or on Month-Date-Year]. This letter verifies that you have agreed to participate as the External Reviewer for the _____ program.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of an External Reviewer include reviewing the departmental self-study, confirming the information through dialogue with department members and constituents during the visit, and preparing a 3-5 page report according to the provided guidelines. The report is shared with the Dean, the department faculty, the Faculty Assessment Committee and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. As you are aware, department reviews are very important for student and college level planning; your consultation will influence the future direction of the program.

Criteria for the Report

In preparation for your visit to Whittier College, please review the enclosed criteria and guidelines for the visit and report. The categories under review, and around which you should structure your report, are below for your quick reference:

1. Institution and Department
2. Quality of the Curriculum
3. Quality of the Faculty
4. Quality of Resource Adequacy
5. Quality of Students and Learning Environment
6. Progress toward Goals and Objectives
7. Overall Program Summary

Role of the External Reviewer

The External Reviewer discusses with the department the strengths and the challenges identified in the self-study, and provides suggestions that enhance departmental growth. We ask you, as a consultant/evaluator, to focus on program strengths and ways we can build upon them, rather than prescribing mandates about curriculum content and/or departmental functions. Examples of role misunderstandings and boundaries violations include:

1. Advocating for particular readings, curriculum, and pedagogy;
2. Entertaining “side bar” conversations from student, faculty, or other community members without the knowledge and consent of the department/program chair;
3. Expanding the scope of the review beyond the areas of the letter of invitation and the review guidelines;
4. Identifying individuals rather than focusing on departmental actions; and
5. Failing to disclose conflicts of interest, including status as a former or current mentor or friend of faculty members, faculty members or administrators who are currently or formerly employed at Whittier College, intention to apply for a faculty or administrative position at Whittier College or other institutions in immediate competition with the academic programs of Whittier College.

In the event that there are violations of the boundaries of the External Reviewer role, we have the right to ask you to clarify and revise the report you submit.

Process and Procedures

We appreciate the time and talent you have agreed to invest in the program review process. Please note the procedures following your visit and review:

1. Submit your written report within [three] weeks of the site visit. Please submit electronic copies to the individuals below, and mail a signed paper copy to the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty.
 - a. Darrin Good, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty, dgood@whittier.edu
 - b. Susana Santos, Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, ssantos3@whittier.edu
 - c. [Name], _____ Department Chair, [email address]
2. Upon receipt of your report, the College may take up to three weeks to review the document and/or request revisions.
3. The College offers a \$XXX honorarium, all travel, lodging and meal costs.
4. The honorarium and expense reimbursement will be paid upon acceptance of the consultant’s report. Elizabeth Ibarra, Administrative Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, will assist you.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXX

Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty

Enclosure:

Departmental Reviews and Assessment of Educational Effectiveness: External Review Outline and Summary Sheet

Cc: Department Chair

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment