External Review Process and Payment Guidelines

External review is an important component of UNC's comprehensive program review process. For this reason, the University has allocated up to $2,000 per program to cover the costs associated with the external review visit. The process for selecting and paying the external reviewer is outlined below.

External Review Process

1. Selecting the external reviewer
   a. The ideal reviewer will possess the following characteristics:
      - Knowledge about the discipline, including current trends
      - Experience in an institution/department similar to your program and the university's characteristics
      - Experience administering a program at the chair or director level
      - Experience with program evaluation and/or consultation
      - Ability to provide an objective evaluation of the program (former students or faculty members may not serve as external reviewers)
   b. Programs should consult with the Dean's office for any additional requirements within the College
2. Negotiating the reviewer's stipend
   a. The program chair/school director should negotiate the reviewer's stipend. Each program will receive $2,000 from the Office of Assessment, which may be applied to a stipend and any travel expenses incurred by the reviewer.
   b. Costs exceeding $2,000 must be paid from the program's or College's operating funds.
   c. Costs for meals or refreshments during the campus visit are the responsibility of the program.
3. Conducting the review
   a. The program should provide relevant documents and information to the reviewer prior to her/his arrival on campus:
      - URL for the department's website
      - Program review data file (Insight report) for the last five years
      - Syllabi for all required courses
      - Faculty vitas
      - Draft of program review narrative report (if available prior to the review)
      - Program review data (Insight report)
      - List of specific questions the program would like the reviewer to address
      - Any additional materials requested by the reviewer (e.g., student work samples, doctoral dissertations, etc.)
   b. While on campus, the reviewer should meet with the following groups and individuals:

- Program chair/director
- Program faculty (including adjuncts and non-tenure track where possible)
- Students
- College Dean
- Director of Assessment
- Any other individuals or groups identified as relevant by the program and/or the reviewer (e.g., programs with Study Abroad requirements might include a meeting with the Director of the Center for International Education; interdisciplinary programs might include a meeting with chairs/directors of contributing programs or advisory committee, etc.)

 c. After the campus visit, the reviewer should provide a written report to the program no later than 30 days following the visit. The report should include the following:
- Reviewer's name, title, and affiliation
- List of individuals/groups with whom reviewer met on campus
- List of documents reviewed
- Description of program strengths
- Discussion of program weaknesses or challenges
- Recommendations for future action

4. Preparing and processing payment forms
   a. The department's administrative assistant should prepare the following forms for processing payment to the reviewer:
      - Download and complete am Independent Contractor Agreement from the Accounts Payable website (www.unco.edu/purchasing/accounts-payable/hiring-independent-contractors.aspx)
      - Have external reviewer complete form W-9 and attach to the contract
   b. Send the completed Independent Contractor Agreement and W-9 to the Office of Assessment, Campus Box 9. The FOAP(A) and appropriate signatures for the account will be added upon receipt of the documents.
   c. Payment should be processed after the reviewer's report is filed. In some cases, a program may elect to pay part of the stipend at the time of the campus visit. The full payment should not be processed until after the program receives the reviewer's report.

Question Bank for External Reviewers

External reviewers provide an objective perspective that is valuable for assisting both programs and the university in evaluating program strengths and challenges. Programs and their reviewers often find it helpful to use a set of questions as a framework for conducting the external review. Programs may draw from the sample questions below and/or add their own questions to facilitate a meaningful review. The question list developed by the program should focus on issues of interest and concern that emerge from the self-study process. Most programs and their reviewers will find it useful to limit the list to no more than ten key questions.

Questions about Program Mission
1. Does the program have a clear sense of its mission?
2. Do students and other stakeholders understand the program's mission?
3. Is there evidence that the program uses its mission to make planning, curriculum, and resource decisions?

Curriculum and Instruction
1. Does the curriculum reflect the appropriate depth, breadth, and challenge for the discipline and degree level?
2. Is the curriculum aligned to well-defined program-level learning outcomes and designed to ensure that every student enrolled in the major has an opportunity to attain these outcomes?
3. Does the curriculum reflect current developments in the field and adequately prepare students for future careers and/or advanced study?
4. Does the program have effective assessment processes for monitoring student learning outcomes and using assessment data to determine and refine curricular content?
5. For programs with campus-based, online, and/or offsite degree offerings, is the curriculum the same whenever and however it is delivered?

Graduate Programs
1. What is the overall quality of the graduate program?
2. How does the quality of the graduate program compare with high-ranking programs in other institutions?
3. Does the graduate program provide adequate opportunities for all enrolled students to acquire the research, teaching, and professional experiences appropriate to the discipline?
4. What is the demand for program graduates after they complete the degree?
5. For doctoral programs, are students producing high quality dissertations that reflect current and relevant research in the discipline?

Faculty
1. Do all faculty (adjunct, T/TT, lecturer, etc.) possess the appropriate credentials for delivering instruction in the discipline?
2. Are teaching assistants and adjuncts appropriately trained, supervised, and evaluated in their instructional activities?

3. Is there an appropriate number and balance among faculty subspecialties to fully deliver the program's curriculum, graduate and undergraduate degrees, and emphasis areas?
4. How does the research, scholarship, and creative work done by the faculty compare to faculty at peer institutions?
5. Do the latest faculty appointments and promotions represent careful planning with respect to the mission and goals of the program and its curricular offerings?
6. How effective are the program's efforts with regard to professional development and growth, particularly among junior faculty?
7. Is there an appropriate balance between teaching, research and service responsibilities for individual faculty and across all faculty in the department?
8. How effective are the program's leadership, organizational, and governance structures and processes?

Students
1. Does the program provide an appropriate learning environment and sufficient opportunities to interact with faculty in and out of the classroom?
2. Does the performance of students, as evidenced by papers, examinations, dissertations/theses, or other projects indicate satisfactory preparation in the discipline?
3. Does the program provide effective academic and career advising and guidance?
4. Do students have sufficient opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills appropriate to the degree level and discipline?

Resources
1. How do the resources (human, physical, fiscal) allocated to the program compare to similar programs at other universities?
2. Does the program have adequate technology to deliver its curriculum and promote learning outcomes relevant to the discipline?
3. Does the program have sufficient resources relative to the degrees and emphasis areas offered, students served, faculty, facilities, and demand for graduates?

General Questions
1. How would you describe the overall quality and performance of this program?
2. What are the program's strengths? Are there any characteristics that distinguish the program as a leader in the discipline?
3. What are the greatest weaknesses or challenges facing the program now and in the next five years?
4. What changes do you anticipate in the discipline that would impact the program in the future?
5. How would you describe the morale and atmosphere in the department?
6. Where should the program focus its energy and resources in the next five years?
7. What improvements would be possible without additional resources?
8. What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources?