



## 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 program and its services, including current trends
    - Experience in an institution/department similar to UNC's program and the university's characteristics
    - Experience administering a program
    - Experience with program evaluation and/or consultation
    - Ability to provide an objective evaluation of the program (former students or employees may not serve as external reviewers)
  - b. Programs should consult with their supervisor for any additional requirements
2. Negotiating the reviewer's stipend
  - a. The program director should negotiate the reviewer's stipend. Each program will receive up to \$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 operating funds.
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
    - Staff vitas/resumes
    - Draft of program review narrative report (if available prior to the review)
    - List of specific questions the program would like the reviewer to address
    - Any additional materials requested by the reviewer
  - b. While on campus, the reviewer should meet with the following groups and individuals:
    - Program director
    - Program staff
    - Students
    - Director's supervisor
    - Director of Assessment (optional)
    - Any other individuals or groups identified as relevant by the program and/or the reviewer

- 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 an Independent Contractor Agreement from the Accounts Payable website ([www.unco.edu/purchasing/accounts-payable/hiring-independent-contractors.aspx](http://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 contract and W-9 to the Office of Assessment, Campus Box 9. The FOAP(A) and appropriate signatures for the account will be added once the documents are received.
  - 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, programming, and resource decisions?

## *Program Services*

1. Are program services intentionally designed to achieve the program's mission and goals?
2. Has the program developed well-defined learning and developmental outcomes appropriate to the scope of services provided and student populations served?
3. Do services reflect current developments in the field and adequately prepare students to be successful?
4. Does the program have effective assessment processes for monitoring student learning and developmental outcomes and using assessment data to determine and refine program services?
5. Where appropriate, are services adequate to address the needs of off-campus and/or online students?

## *Staff*

1. Do all staff (full-time, part-time, graduate assistants, student hourly, interns, etc.) possess the appropriate credentials and experience for performing their assigned duties?
2. Are all employees appropriately trained, supervised, and evaluated in their job performance?
3. Do the latest staff hires represent careful planning with respect to the mission and goals of the program and its services?
4. How effective are the program's efforts with regard to professional development and growth?
5. How effective are the program's leadership, organizational, and governance structures and processes?

## *Students*

1. Does the program provide an appropriate learning environment that is welcoming and inclusive to all students?
2. What evidence exists that students are benefitting from the services provided?
3. Do students have sufficient opportunities to acquire the learning and developmental goals established by the program?
4. Do students experience any gaps or roadblocks in their ability to participate in or take advantage of services provided by the program?

### *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 services and promote learning and developmental outcomes articulated by the program?
3. Does the program have sufficient numbers and types of staff positions to fulfill its mission and goals?

### *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 field?
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 field or higher education environment that would impact the program in the future?
5. How would you describe the morale and atmosphere in the program?
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?