

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW GUIDELINES
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Office of the Provost

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Academic Program Review Team

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Purpose of Academic Program Review

Academic program review is the process through which Northern Arizona University regularly reviews, evaluates and establishes plans for all undergraduate and graduate programs. A program review consists of a self-study conducted by the faculty and program leadership, followed by a review by a team of external consultants and a member of the university faculty.

Arizona Board of Regents policy (ABOR 2-208) requires review of all academic programs every seven years. The provost may schedule an earlier review in response to changes or for other reasons. Similarly, a dean may request an earlier review. On rare occasions, a review may be delayed at the request of the dean, subject to the approval of the provost.

The department or school is the basic unit of review. Normally, all programs within an academic unit are reviewed simultaneously. In some instances, externally accredited programs or programs that do not reside in a department or school are reviewed independently of academic units. Externally accredited programs are reviewed in compliance with the standards and procedures established by the accrediting organization. Externally accredited programs will follow the calendar of review established by the accrediting organization. The review conducted by the accrediting body will usually substitute for the academic program review process. A supplement to the review prescribed by the accrediting organizations may be required by the provost in cases where the review does not fully address university expectations for program reviews.

Program reviews are a means to ensure advancement of the quality of Northern Arizona University's academic programs. The process enables a comprehensive assessment of program goals, infrastructures, operations, and outcomes in relation to the mission and strategic plan of the university. The program review process facilitates dialogue among the provost, dean and program leadership that leads to the development of a plan for continued enhancement of the program.

The evaluative, directional and planning judgments resulting from program reviews are oriented within the context both of disciplinary/professional norms and department, college, and university missions and goals. The review should identify program strengths and weaknesses in the following areas:

- Student enrollment, retention, and graduation.
- Student advisement, engagement and support.
- Assessment of student learning.
- Curricula and curricular contributions to university programs (e.g., Liberal Studies, Honors, interdisciplinary programs).
- Faculty and department contributions in teaching, scholarship/professional activity and service.
- Diversity.

- Program governance and administrative support.
- Program operations and resources.
- Facilities, library and other educational resources available to and utilized by the department.
- Safety and adequacy of physical facilities.
- Service and engagement with the community, state or region.

In March, 2003 the Arizona Board of Regents added the requirement that Academic Program Reviews also assess the level of degree productivity within the department, in accordance with Board approved guidelines as set forth in the ABOR document entitled *A Methodology for Identifying Low Productive and Duplicative Programs*¹. The university will report to the Board programs with degree productivity below established thresholds on an annual basis. The report specifies what actions, if any, have or will be taken.

General Procedures

Program reviews are orchestrated by the office of the vice provost for undergraduate studies (VP-UGST). This office facilitates, monitors progress and retains all documentation for academic program reviews. The office of the VP-UGST also serves as the liaison for the provost to programs that are externally accredited.

Program reviews follow a specific series of steps.

1. **Notification of the Review:** In February-March of the year prior to the year of the review, the VP-UGST notifies the chair, director, or executive director (hereinafter referred to as chair) and dean of the academic department (hereinafter referred to as department) that a review is scheduled. A schedule of cyclic reviews is maintained by the office of the vice provost for undergraduate studies and is posted on the office's web site: www.nau.edu/undergrad.
2. **Program Review Orientation Meeting:** Following notification, the department chair participates in an orientation session conducted by the VP-UGST.
3. **Formation of the Self-Study Committee:** Following notification of the review, the department chair should form the committee that will conduct the self study within the unit. The committee should have primary responsibility for organizing the review process and preparing the self-study report. The self-study committee works in concert with the department chair, who provides leadership and oversight for the self-study and the review. At the request of the department chair, the VP-UGST will conduct an orientation session for the self-study committee.
4. **Standard Data Report:** The office of planning, budget and institutional research will prepare a standard program review data report which will be posted to the PAIR website by the end of July. This report contains longitudinal data regarding program enrollment, degrees awarded, personnel, budget, and external grant and contract activity

for the department.

(<http://www4.nau.edu/pair/AcademicProgramData/AcademicProgramData.asp>; follow “Academic Program Review” link.)

5. Cline Library will also provide to the academic department a report of library services and resources. This report will be provided early in the fall term.

The academic department does NOT need to request the reports. The office of the vice provost for undergraduate studies notifies the supporting units and facilitates the delivery of the reports to the chair.

6. Selecting the External and Internal Consultants: The provost selects two external consultants². The consultants are selected on the basis of their professional/academic expertise and experience. If the department is preparing for an accreditation review, the consultant selection process is subordinated to the appointment of accreditation reviewers by the accrediting agency.

The VP-UGST in consultation with the Provost selects an internal faculty consultant to serve with the external consultants as part of the review team.

Once the consultants have been secured, the academic department is then responsible to arrange the visit dates and associated logistics. The consultants’ visit should be scheduled in January through April of the academic year in which reviews are to be completed, and must be coordinated with the vice provost’s and provost’s offices (see Academic Program Review Team) to ensure that all appropriate personnel are available during the site visit. If the department offers a graduate degree, the dean of the graduate college should also be included in the site visit.

7. Preparing the Self-Study: All faculty should be involved in preparing the self-study in order to consider the current status and future development of their department and its programs. By November 15 of the review year, a draft of the self-study report should be distributed to department faculty, the college dean and VP-UGST for their comments and suggestions. This feedback should be considered during preparation of the final report. The participation of enrolled students, alumni, and professional staff should also be solicited. A final version of the self-study should be completed no later than January 30.

8. Submitting the Self-Study: Copies of the self-study report, with an executive summary, are forwarded simultaneously to the college dean, the VP-UGST, and the dean of the graduate college (if relevant). The department chair will also send a copy of the report to each external consultant and the faculty consultant at least one month in advance of the site visit.

9. Pre-visit Preparation: The schedule for the site visit should be developed in close consultation with the office of the VP-UGST. An entrance interview with the provost, the VP-UGST, the dean of the graduate college (if relevant), and the team of review

consultants should be scheduled early the first morning of the visit. An exit interview to include the provost, the VP-UGST, the dean of the graduate college (if relevant), the review consultants plus the college dean and the department chair should be scheduled late in the afternoon of the second day.

A copy of the final itinerary should be provided to the office of VP-UGST, office of the provost and office of the dean of the graduate college (if relevant). See Appendix V (Sample Site Review Team Itinerary).

10. Site Visit: Consultant travel, lodging, and meal expenses are reimbursed by the department and subsequently reimbursed to the department by the provost's office. The travel arrangements are to be made by the consultants with assistance from the department if needed. The honorarium is paid by the department to the consultants upon receipt of their written report. The department will be reimbursed for the honorariums by the provost's office.

11. External Consultants' Report: Within four to six weeks after their visit, the consultants will submit a joint report to the VP-UGST, who will distribute it to the provost, dean of the graduate college (if relevant), the college dean, and department chair. The department chair should also distribute the report to the faculty and hold meetings to discuss the evaluation and recommendations made by the consultants.

12. Department and College Response to Report: The department chair will consult with the college dean to determine whether to respond to the facts and recommendations made by the external consultants. A response should be presented to the office of the VP-UGST within 30 days of receipt of the external consultants' report.

13. Action Plan Development: After facilitating discussion of the self-study and consultants' report among program faculty, the department chair collaborates with the dean to develop a draft action plan, which is submitted to the provost. Following submission of the draft action plan, the department chair, college dean, provost and representatives from the provost's office meet to agree upon an action plan for the department in response to the academic program review. The plan addresses major issues raised in the reports (e.g., program strengths and deficiencies, student learning outcomes, resource needs, future plans) and relates these to the strategic plan of the department. By the conclusion of the meeting, the provost, dean, and chair identify actions to be taken in the future to advance the academic program(s). If agreement is not reached, another meeting may be required.

14. Finalized Action Plan: Within thirty days following the action plan meeting, the department chair submits proposed language for the finalized action plan to the college dean. The plan should reflect the discussion among all parties during the initial action plan meeting. Within 60 days of the action plan meeting, the college dean presents final language for the action plan to the provost. The provost will issue a memo endorsing a finalized action plan to the dean. The Action Plan will represent an agreement between

the department chair, dean and provost for actions to be taken over time, including commitment of resources.

15. Permanent Record of the Program Review: The self-study is forwarded by the office of the VP-UGST to the university archives in the Cline Library for permanent retention. Copies of the external consultants' report, department responses, and the action plan are retained in the office of the VP-UGST.

16. Program Review Follow-up: Evaluation of progress made toward accomplishing action items agreed upon in the review process will be integrated into the normal long-range planning cycle of the academic department. A progress report will be requested by the provost's office approximately 3 years after completion of the academic program review. The progress report will include a brief summary of progress relative to the action plan.

Accreditation Reviews Conducted in Lieu of Academic Program Reviews

When an academic department elects to do so, they may replace an academic program review with an accreditation review. In this scenario, the provost may elect to request a supplement to the self-study and review required by the accrediting body. Since evaluation criteria, self-study expectations, and site visit procedures can vary widely among accreditation visits, the university procedures will be modified in deference to the accreditation organization's requirements.

When an academic department has both undergraduate and graduate programs, or more than one major, and the accreditation applies to only some of the programs, the regular academic program review process is required for the programs not covered by the accreditation.

Program Review Process – Timeline

- ¢ February/March of year prior – Notify department chair
[Recommended: Formulation of APR Committee]
- ¢ March/April – Workshop for chairs
- ¢ July - Program data report and library report to department chair
- ¢ November - List of potential external consultants to provost's office
- ¢ November 15 - Draft of self-study report to department chair
- ¢ December 15 - Draft of self-study report to the dean and the VP-UGST

- ¢ January 30 - Final report to provost (copy to dean of the graduate college if relevant)
- ¢ February/March– Site visit
- ¢ April/May 15 – External consultants’ report to department chair and dean. Develop joint response
- ¢ May/June - Action plan meeting (provost, dean, chair)
- ¢ July/August - Action plan to provost (chair and dean)
- ¢ September - Report of action plan to program/department faculty

The Self-Study Report

Introduction

The self-study is a comprehensive, written report prepared by the academic department scheduled for a program review. The self-study examines the current status of the academic department and evaluates achievements since its last program review. The document identifies strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction, student learning outcomes, research/scholarly activities, operations and infrastructure, service and engagement, and special features or services provided by the department. It serves as the vehicle by which the department, in conjunction with the university, plans for the future. The self-study should be an honest evaluation and present feasible mechanisms for advancing the quality of academic programs and service of the department to the university and community.

Guidelines for Preparing an Effective Self-Study

The self-study should be written as an interpretive document incorporating information committee members believe is important to the department and its programs. Resource allocation is an important matter to all academic departments. However, if the self-study report becomes primarily a budget request, the department misses an excellent opportunity to provide the administration information on its strengths, weaknesses, plans, and goals. Likewise, an unduly self-serving document lacks credibility.

The self-study report should be comprehensive, yet not encyclopedic. The report should focus on key issues and address central questions in clear and succinct prose. Reports should be clearly organized and as brief as is feasible. Data and other supplemental information should, generally, be presented in appendices.

Please consider the following guidelines for preparation of a self-study report:

Preparing a Self-Study Report

The self study report should be framed by the university, college and program mission. The focus of the report should be an assessment of academic programs that leads to a strategic plan for future program development:

- Mission and goals of program; relationship to university mission and goals
- Assessment of program strengths and weaknesses
- Short term and long term strategic plans

There are no specific format requirements for your report. The length and content will vary depending on the nature and scope of the program being reviewed and your personal preference. We encourage you to comment on any program aspects you believe important to program quality and future development. We suggest you begin the report with your overall view of the program and conclude with a summary and specific recommendations for the future.

The self study should address the following central questions (as relevant):

- What is the relationship of the program to NAU's mission and strategic goals?
- What is the quality of the program?
- Quality of the faculty and curricular offerings
- Evidence of teaching effectiveness and innovation
- Faculty contributions to discipline or profession through scholarly, creative or professional activity
- Assessment of student learning/success
- Program diversity and student engagement with diversity
- Mentoring and research activity of graduate students
- Student/Alumni evaluations of program
- What does the program contribute to the region, state or local community?
- What are the program's strategic plans for the future?

Characteristics of a Useful Self Study

- **Responsiveness:** The report should adhere to the outline (see below) and be thorough while succinct and readable. Address issues of program quality and weakness; ignore extraneous issues.
- **Documentation:** The report should be data based. Valid internal and external peer comparisons are very helpful. Simplistic, selective, and out-of-context data summaries are useless or counterproductive. Data should be interpreted and evaluated, not just included in the document.
- **Tone:** The report should be constructive in tone. Do not dwell only on problems. Focus on successes, challenges, aspirations, and goals.

- **Objectivity:** The report should be appropriately candid, introspective, and analytical and should feature an honest look at the department's status and opportunities. The report must be credible to be useful.
- **Perspective:** The report should be forward looking, consistent with departmental, college, and university strategic plans, and neither an unconstrained "wish list" nor an exercise in self-congratulation. Address needs comparatively, with appropriate attention to priorities and sequencing.
- **Accuracy:** Errors of fact should be avoided. The committee responsible for preparing the self-study report must work in concert with the head of the academic department to ensure the accuracy of the statements contained in the document.
- **Brevity:** The success of the program review is not proportional to the weight of the self-study.
- **Utility:** Program reviews are time-consuming exercises. Therefore, every effort should be made to ensure that the full benefit of the process will be derived from the effort. Avoid posturing or the temptation to use either the self-study or the external consultants to "leverage" the institution. These strategies detract from and thereby diminish the value of the review. A thorough, accurate, and neutral self-study focused on the academic department provides the best guarantee that university leadership will understand and appreciate the needs of the academic department.

Suggested Outline for Self Study Reports

- Executive summary
- Brief history of department
- Brief summary of findings, recommendations, and actions resulting from previous program review
- Brief description of program(s) and assessment of student learning and curricular effectiveness: a) undergraduate b) graduate (Append catalog copy of program requirements and assessment plans & reports)
- Analysis and evaluation of program/course enrollment and degrees granted: a) undergraduate b) graduate
- Contribution of program and faculty to liberal studies, interdisciplinary programs, and distance learning (as appropriate)
- Faculty & faculty efforts (faculty workload patterns; teaching effectiveness; engagement in advising; research, creative and professional activity; sponsored research; university, professional and community service activity)
- Community, state and regional engagement
- Resources & facilities
- Future plans (in light of findings of self-study, what are the strategic plans within existing resources and programmatic initiatives the department would like to pursue that would require additional resources)

- Self-study appendices
- Faculty data
- Assessment plans & reports
- Standard data report
- Library report
- Department strategic plan
- Faculty Vitae³

Procedures for Selecting and Utilizing External Consultants

1. The dean or designee meets with the department chair and members of the department Program Review Committee to assist with the identification of the external consultants' tasks.
2. The department prepares a time schedule for the external review process which includes priority dates for the consultants' visit and receipt of the written report.
3. The department contacts their respective national/regional associations and professional networks to obtain names of individuals who are qualified to serve as external consultants. Desirable qualifications include:
 - prior program review service in or training for a consultant's role
 - sufficient time to devote to the task
 - recognized as knowledgeable in academic/professional area(s) appropriate to department's mission
 - experience with similar institutional/departmental context
 - no close relationships with faculty or other potential conflicts of interest
4. The department submits to the dean the names of 4-5 available consultants and indicates the top three departmental choices, including some biographical and/or other explanatory reasoning for the choices. The dean forwards the list to the VP-UGST and indicates his/her top three choices. The VP-UGST reviews the recommendations of the chair and dean, makes his/her recommendations and submits the entire file to the provost who makes the final selection of external consultants. The VP-UGST sends a formal letter of invitation to the individuals selected to be external consultants. Guidelines and other general information are also sent along with the invitation.
5. After the individuals have agreed to serve as external consultants, the chair or college dean contacts the consultants and arranges for services in accordance with the time schedule prepared by the department in item 2 above. These arrangements should result in a determination of alternative dates for the visit and establishing the duration of the visit - approximately 2-1/2 days (e.g., arrive Sunday evening and depart Wednesday morning), expectations relating to the written report (the consultant is responsible for any expenses associated with the production and delivery of the final report), and any other arrangements relevant to the visit. Before any visitation dates are finalized, the offices of

the provost, VP-UGST, and dean of the graduate college (if relevant) need to be contacted to ensure their availability.

6. The department chair, in cooperation with the offices of the provost, VP-UGST, and dean of the graduate college (if relevant), formulates an itinerary for the visiting consultants to include:

- An entrance interview including the provost, the VP-UGST, the dean of the graduate college (if relevant), and the external consultants and faculty consultant should be scheduled early the first morning of the visit.
- Additional entrance interviews should be scheduled with the dean and the department chair soon after the provost's entrance interview. (Confirm with both the dean and chair whether they want a joint or two separate entrance interviews.)
- An exit interview to include the provost, the VP-UGST, the dean of the graduate college (if relevant), the review team plus the dean and the department chair should be scheduled late in the afternoon of the second day.
- Some evaluators may request a private meeting with the provost before or after the larger exit interview, so provide some cushion in the schedule.
- Depending on programmatic relevance, consider interviews with the director of Academic Assessment, dean of Distance Learning, director of e-Learning Center, the dean of Cline Library or other representatives of institution-wide support units.
- Be sure to include interviews with faculty, students, staff (if relevant), possibly chairs of supporting academic departments and tours of facilities.
- Provide the draft itinerary to the external consultants and faculty consultant in case they want to request modifications.

7. The department is responsible for reimbursing the consultants for travel expenses (airline, lodging, meals). The department also pays a \$500 honorarium to the consultants upon receipt of the report⁴. The provost's office reimburses the department for travel and honorarium expenses related to the site visit. Other expenses (such as report preparation, postal costs, catering, or meals for non-consultant participants) are the responsibility of the department and will not be reimbursed by the provost.

8. The consultants' social security numbers, mailing addresses, signatures on the vendor registration forms and all required expense receipts must be obtained by the department.

Appendices

I. Checklist for Academic Departments

- o Review Academic Program Review documents.
- o Chair orientation workshop with vice provost for undergraduate studies (VP-UGST).
- o Academic department forms Program Review/Self-Study Committee.
- o Department Self-study Committee reviews the Program Review Guidelines.
- o Department self-study committee drafts the self-study.
- o Department chair recommends potential external consultants to dean.
- o Dean forwards recommendation for external consultants to VP-UGST.
- o Provost makes selection of external and faculty consultants.
- o VP-UGST sends formal letter of invitation and guidelines to external consultants.
- o Dean and VP-UGST review draft self-study.
- o Academic department revises/completes self-study.
- o Department sends 3 copies of finalized self-study document to VP-UGST office.
- o Department develops alternate dates for site review, working with scheduling constraints of the offices of the dean, provost, VP-UGST, and dean of the graduate college (if relevant).
- o Department chair contacts external consultants to arrange schedule for site visit.
- o Department sends self-study document to external and faculty consultants.
- o Department chair develops site visit schedule and distributes to the dean, provost, VP-UGST, and dean of the graduate college (if relevant).
- o External and faculty consultants conduct their site visit and review.
- o External consultants' final written report is distributed to the provost, VP-UGST, dean of the graduate college (if relevant), dean and chair.
- o External review report is shared with academic department faculty.
- o Academic department and dean's optional response to consultants' report submitted to the provost and VP-UGST.
 - Schedule action plan meeting with department chair, dean, VP-UGST, and provost.

II. Standardized Data Report for Program Review

The following data are included in the program review data report as of FY07. Additional elements are being added to this report each year.

Program Personnel and Budget (7 Yr Trend, Yr 2000 on)

Total Faculty FTE

TT Faculty FTE

Part-time Faculty Headcount

Staff FTE

Graduate Assistant FTE (State)

Total Faculty FTE/ Staff FTE

TT Faculty FTE/Staff FTE

Total Budget-non-personnel (State)

Budget (non-personnel)/ TT Faculty FTE

Budget (non-personnel)/ Total Faculty FTE

Notes:

1. Faculty = "Instructional Faculty" – does not include Administrative Faculty.
2. Budget data limited to state accounts in FY06; will include local & foundation accounts starting in FY07.

Enrollment and Courses (7 Yr Trend, except where noted)

FTE & SCH (Fall to Fall & Spring to Spring comparisons)

- Total
- Lower Division
- Upper Division
- Graduate

Total Faculty FTE/Student FTE

TT Faculty FTE/Student FTE

Total Faculty FTE/SCH

TT Faculty/SCH

Mean Class Size (Mtn Campus) by class level [primary sections only]

- 100
- 200
- 300
- 400
- 500 +

Degrees Awarded (All by gender & ethnicity)

- Undergraduate

- Graduate
- Distance Learning

Degree Seeking Headcount (Last AY, All by gender & ethnicity)

- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Distance Learning

Minors—Degree Seeking Headcount

BAILS Emphases—Degree Seeking Headcount

Certificates Awarded

Sponsored Research (7 Yr trend)

Grant & Contract Awards

Proposals (external) submitted

III. Sample Letter of Invitation to External Consultants

The following is an example of a letter of invitation sent by the VP-UGST to external consultants.

Dear _____,

Arizona Board of Regents policy requires a comprehensive program review of all academic programs at Northern Arizona University every seven years. Our _____ program is scheduled for program review during this academic year. The program has completed preparing its self-study and will be ready for external consultants to visit during the _____ semester. We would like to invite you to participate as one of two external consultants for the _____ program.

The responsibilities of the external consultant include reading the self-study report prior to the campus visit, meeting with various members of the university community during the visit, and preparing a final written report. An internal faculty consultant will be assigned to work with the external consultants during the site visit. We ask that you collaborate with the faculty consultant during the site visit and include him or her as much as is feasible in your discussions and preparation of the report. Although we expect the faculty consultant to have the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the report, the external consultants are responsible for its completion and submission. The report is shared with college and department academic leadership, program faculty, and central academic administration. Program review is very important for college and university level planning.

Your consultation will influence the future directions of the program. We ask that you consider carefully the evidence of program quality, effectiveness and service to students and other stakeholders as is consistent with our institutional mission, the university strategic plan, and the program mission. Information about Northern Arizona University's mission and planning can be obtained from <http://www4.nau.edu/president>.

In addition to reimbursement for all travel, lodging and meal expenses, Northern Arizona University offers a \$500 honorarium, paid after submission of the report. The department being reviewed will assist you with travel arrangements and reimbursements.

I hope you will be able to serve as an external consultant for our program and will be available during the above-mentioned time frame. Please reply to me by mail, phone or email (928-523-1580; Karen.Pugliesi@nau.edu). After you confirm your participation, the department chair will work with you to arrange visit dates and a schedule.

Sincerely,

Karen Pugliesi
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies

c: chair or dean
Attachment: External Consultant Guidelines

IV. Guidelines for External Consultants

The following guidelines are sent to external consultants invited to review Northern Arizona University programs by the VP-UGST.

Program reviews are conducted under a mandate from the Arizona Board of Regents with the most important purposes being to assure the quality of educational programs to identify opportunities for future development. As an external consultant you have an important role in this review process. Your objective input will help the department and university evaluate its programs and develop strategic plans for program development.

The following information provides background on Northern Arizona University's program review process, specific functions and responsibilities of external consultants, and suggestions for maximizing the effectiveness and outcome of the site visit and final report.

General Review Procedures

Academic programs at Northern Arizona University (NAU) are reviewed on a seven-year schedule. Normally program reviews include evaluation of undergraduate and graduate degree programs, other educational programming, and research activities housed within the academic department. The reviews are coordinated and conducted under the auspices of the provost's office by the office of the vice provost for undergraduate studies (VP-UGST).

Departments scheduled for program review prepare a comprehensive self-study report that includes:

- a brief history of the department and programs
- a report of actions in response to the findings and recommendations resulting from the previous review of the program
- a description and assessment of the academic department/program(s); contributions to university-wide programs; human, fiscal and physical resources; student enrollment; and research, professional, creative, and public service activity of the department
- assessment of student learning and other data about student accomplishments or placement
- program goals and strategic plan
- vitae for each faculty member and other relevant documentation

The self-study report is reviewed by the supervising dean and the VP-UGST prior to its distribution to the provost, external consultants and the university faculty consultant.

A member of the university faculty is assigned to serve as an internal consultant along with the external consultants for each program review. Normally two external consultants, selected by the provost's office from a list developed by the academic department and approved by the dean, are invited to the NAU campus to participate in a

two-day site visit. The external consultants and the faculty consultant constitute the review team.

Prior to the site visit, the external consultants are provided with:

- a copy of the self-study, departmental brochures and any other information the academic department believes will aid the consultants in understanding the department's environment
- URLs to the online University Catalogs and Northern Arizona University Strategic Plan
- these guidelines
- a draft itinerary for the site visit
- a list of questions, if any, for the consultants to address

During the two-day site visit, consultants meet with faculty, students, unit administrators, the dean, provost, VP-UGST, and dean of the graduate college (if relevant). The consultants also tour the University and examine facilities and services. The site visit begins and ends with interviews with the dean, the provost, the VP-UGST, and the dean of the graduate college (if relevant). At the exit interview, the department chair will also be present.

Four to six weeks after the site visit, the consultants submit to the provost a joint report that summarizes their evaluations and recommendations (see below). The external consultants are responsible for the preparation of the report. The faculty consultant should have input to the evaluation of the program; this may be obtained at the conclusion of the site visit or through communication subsequent to the site visit. The report is distributed to the academic department, the supervising dean, provost and VP-UGST for review and comments. The evaluation and recommendations are used in future planning by both the academic department and other affected campus units.

Guidelines for Preparing the Report(s)

There are no specific format requirements for your report. The length and content will vary depending on the nature and scope of the program being reviewed and on your personal preferences. We encourage you to comment on any program aspects you believe important to program quality and future development. We suggest you begin the report with your overall view of the program and conclude with a summary and specific recommendations. The visit and the report should address issues such as:

- the quality and suitability of degree program curricula
- qualifications of faculty
- effectiveness of the instructional programs as evidenced by student learning outcomes
- research, professional and/or other creative activity of the faculty
- opportunities for development, and weaknesses/deficiencies in the program
- quality of the support from the library and other support external to the department
- appropriateness of short and long-term goals

- prospects for program to achieve its stated objectives

In the course of the report we request that you give attention to the following:

- Both the undergraduate and graduate programs offered by the department.
- Based on your knowledge of the discipline, is the curriculum current and does it provide an adequate educational experience for graduates of the program?
- Are the qualifications of the faculty fitting with the programs offered?
- Has the department implemented an adequate process for assessing the learning outcomes of its students?
- What major limiting factors do you find impacting the department's future development or increased effectiveness?
- Are the quality and level of research and other scholarly and creative activities appropriate for the program?
- If national accreditation of the program exists and the NAU department is not accredited, do you recommend that the department seek accreditation, and if so, what is needed to bring the program into conformity with those accrediting standards?
- If the department is considering or has applied for a new degree program: (1) Is there potential for this to be a high-quality program? (2) Are qualified faculty in place? (3) Are there adequate resources and opportunities available to provide a quality program to quality students? (4) Are the library, laboratories, and other facilities adequate to support the proposed degree program? (5) In what ways could the department reorganize to support the new program?

Basic Principles for External Consultants

The best means of assisting the academic department is to make recommendations that are useful within the confines of the current budget. Thus, if a major initiative is needed, corresponding reductions should be suggested. If the current level of support is inadequate for the current program, indicate what could be eliminated from the program to correct the imbalance as well as what additional resources would be needed to adequately support the current program. Recommendations that will increase a department's effectiveness are especially helpful.

If you have any questions or concerns about the report, feel free to contact the vice provost for undergraduate studies, Karen Pugliesi (928-523-1580 or Karen.Pugliesi@nau.edu). We recognize the importance of your participation in the review process and sincerely appreciate your efforts to make the program review process a productive and valuable exercise.

V. Sample Site Review Team Itinerary

(Accreditation itineraries will include additional meetings mandated by accreditation teams)

DAY 1

8:00a – 8:45a Breakfast with dean and/or department chair

9:00a – 9:30a Entrance meeting with the provost and vice provost for undergraduate studies. Include the dean of the graduate college (if applicable).

9:45a – 10:15a Meet with dean

10:15a – 10:45a Meet with self-study committee

11:00a – 11:30a Meet with program faculty

11:30a – 12:00p Tour of facilities

12:00p – 1:30p Lunch with dean and/or department chair

1:45p – 2:15p Meet with undergraduate students

2:15p – 2:45p Meet with graduate students (if relevant)

3:00p – 3:30p Meet with student organization leaders

3:45p – 4:15p Meet with advisory boards (if relevant)

4:30p – 5:00p Meet with _____ at Cline Library (if relevant)

6:00p – 7:30p Dinner with _____

DAY 2

8:00a – 9:00a External consultants work on draft report

9:00a – 10:00a Open forum for faculty, staff and students

10:15a – 11:00a Meet with department chair and/or program coordinator

11:00a – 12:00p Meet with dean

12:00p – 1:30p Lunch with _____

1:30p – 2:30p Exit meeting with the provost, VP-UGST, dean and department chair. Include the dean of the graduate college (if relevant).

2:45p – 3:45p Wrap up with dean and department chair