Divine Word College
Office of Academic Affairs

Guidelines for
External Review of Academic Programs

Fall, 2010

(This is a revised Version of *Program Area Review Guidelines, Spring, 2008*; The revision is intended to clarify and better organize the *Guidelines*.)

Purpose

A program review is intended to provide the program faculty and the College an opportunity to assess the program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for improvement as well as challenges, and thus ultimately benefit the students of the program. The review process also will help validate and benchmark our programs in relation to similar programs offered at peer institutions. Recommendations resulting from the review should lead to appropriate changes to the program and its delivery where indicated.

Timetable for Review

Each program will be reviewed every five years on a rotating basis according to the following table:

Year	**Program Area**
2008-2009	English as a Second Language (ESL)
2009-2010	Cross-Cultural Studies (CCS)
2010-2011	Philosophy
2011-2012	General Education (Gen Ed)
2012-2013	Religious Studies (RS)
2014-2015	ESL
2015-2016	CCS

The cycle continues in this sequence.

Structure and Process

The Program Review Committee will consist of the faculty, chaired by the program Chair. After consultation with the program faculty and the VPAA, the Chair leads a self-study (described below). The Chair also identifies, in consultation with the faculty, three external reviewers who are not connected to DWC. The reviewer should be a qualified faculty member or administrator who is highly knowledgeable in the area under review and willing to work within the College's timelines and budget. The Chair, in consultation with the VPAA, selects and contacts one of the three potential reviewers and works out the details of timelines and budget.

Timeline

Just as each program area is different from others, it is assumed that the program review process and the outcome of the process will be slightly different for each area. Therefore, it should be kept in mind that this document is intended as a guideline. Variations are expected. However, major variations from this timetable or process should be approved by the VPAA in advance.

- Self-study: First draft, with input from Program faculty, completed by **October 20.**
- Provide a copy of the revised draft for comments to VPAA. Discuss and revise the first draft of the self-study by **October 30.**
- Finalize self-study by **November 20**.
- The finalized version of the self-study should be filed with the VPAA **by Thanksgiving;** only approved copy should be sent to an external reviewer.
- *While the process can start earlier, the outside reviewer should be identified and contracted by November 1 of the academic year of the review.*
- The VPAA should provide written feedback to the Program Chair **before Christmas break.**
- The reviewer should receive the self-study and other supporting documents **a month prior to the campus visit.**
- The reviewer should provide a written report to the Program Chair **before spring break**.
- The Program Chair and the VPAA should meet and develop an action plan **as soon as possible after the spring break.**
- Implementation of the action plan should begin **in the fall semester of the following year.**

Self-Study

Self-study is the department's written effort to assess its own strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities (SWOT) in light of available data. While additional subtitles and sections may be added, minimally, the self-study must contain the following topic areas:

1. Introduction (General overview of the program; overview of program changes since last review, if applicable)
2. History of the program
3. Curriculum, program structure, and program goals
    a. Appropriateness of the curriculum
    b. Sequencing of courses to meet student needs
4. Program's core learning outcomes
    a. Appropriateness of program goals
    b. Appropriateness of course goals
5. Student profile
6. Faculty profile
    a. Faculty qualifications
    b. Faculty scholarship, service, and leadership
    c. Faculty interaction with students
    d. Institutional support – professional development, technology, etc.
7. Instructional methodology
8. Facilities and resources
9. Assessment practices

10. Assessment results
11. Use of assessment data
12. Program strengths
13. Program's weaknesses (if any)
14. Opportunities for program's growth and improvement
15. Potential threats to the program and plan to address those threats
16. Conclusion

Campus Visit

Prior to the campus visit, the reviewer will study all documents made available to him/her by the Review Committee. The campus visit, normally lasting one day, will be organized by the Chair in consultation with the VPAA, and it must including the following:

- Interviewing:
    - Program Chair
    - Program faculty
    - Students (over lunch for the sake of convenience)
    - Vice President for Academic Affairs
    - President
- Tour of program facilities including classrooms and library.

Reviewer's Report

Based on the Self-Study and the campus visit, the Reviewer will produce a written report. The report will address the following points (please also see the Appendix):

- Overview of the program
- Overview of the program area changes since the last review (if applicable)
- Appropriateness of curriculum and how it compares with peer institutions' programs
- Content and quality of courses
- Appropriateness of learning outcomes
- Effectiveness of assessment and use of assessment data
- Appropriateness of teaching strategies
- Effectiveness of student advisement
- Faculty scholarship and professional involvement
- Strengths of the program as seen by the reviewer
- Weaknesses of the program as seen by the reviewer
- Opportunities for program growth/improvement as seen by the reviewer
- Challenges and threats as seen by the reviewer
- Recommendations for improvement

Action plan

After the Department receives the Reviewer's report, the Program Chair meets with the VPAA to discuss the report to develop an action plan and find ways to implement, to the degree possible and necessary, the report's recommendations.