

ACADEMIC SENATE GUIDELINES FOR THE SITE VISIT (Revised June 2007)

1. Introduction

The site visit is an essential part of the academic program review process at UCLA. It brings together off-campus disciplinary experts and UCLA faculty and students to meet with students, faculty, staff, and administrators associated with the program being reviewed. Prior to the site visit, review team members will have studied the program's self-review report and other written materials. Through interviews, examination of written materials, and discussion among themselves during the site visit, the review team will further develop its understanding of the program. The aim is to arrive at a balanced assessment of the academic program's strengths and achievements, its future goals and plans, and areas in need of improvement. Such an assessment is important to UCLA's efforts to recognize, support, and promote excellence in all its undergraduate and graduate academic programs.

2. Site Visit Structure

The basic elements of the site visit are established well in advance by the Undergraduate Council (UgC) and Graduate Council (GC), the UCLA Academic Senate (faculty) committees responsible for program reviews. Decisions are made in consultation with the academic unit whose program is being reviewed, relevant academic administrators, and other Senate sources.

A. Composition of the Review Team. The composition of the review team is flexible, depending primarily on the size and complexity of the academic program. A review team examining both undergraduate and graduate programs may be composed of: 1) 1-2 UgC members, 2) 1-2 GC members, and 3) 1 or more External Reviewers. The norm is 2 of each type. The immediately incoming and immediately outgoing UgC and GC Chairs will be responsible for identifying each program review team and its chair, who will be one of the UgC or GC members.

B. Duration of the Site Visit. The duration of the site visit is also flexible, again depending on the size and complexity of the academic program. The norm is two days, with a review team dinner before the first day. However, site visits may be scheduled for longer and shorter periods. The immediately incoming and immediately outgoing UgC and GC Chairs will establish the duration of the site visit. Normally, all review team members conduct the full site visit together.

C. Preliminary Site Visit Schedule. The chair of the review team and the chair of the unit whose program is being reviewed will meet to set a preliminary schedule for the site visit (see section 5). The review team may alter the schedule if that seems desirable during the site visit.

3. Student Participation

At the pre-site visit meeting, the review team chair should consult with the unit chair as to how all students in the department will be informed about the site visit meetings. Students should be informed that they may request directly to the review team to meet either before or after the site visit. The Graduate Student Association student representative assigned to the review is encouraged to contact students in the unit under review and inform them of the process and encourage participation.

Graduate Student Association representatives appointed to the UgC and GC have the opportunity to participate in several aspects of the program review process. They serve as a link between

students in the academic programs under review and the review team and as a voice for student concerns. Specific contributions of the student representatives may include the following: a) serving as contact persons for students who wish to provide information to the review team, b) summarizing this information for the review team, and c) attending meetings with undergraduate and graduate students during the site visit and providing written comments to the review team. Because they attend all UgC and GC meetings, the student representatives also have the opportunity to participate in all Council discussions of the review and its outcomes, unless they are in the department under review.

4. Information Provided Prior to the Site Visit

Prior to the site visit, review team members shall receive a packet with the following information: a) any letters sent to or prepared by UgC and GC summarizing issues identified as important for review by the Council on Planning and Budget (CPB), UgC, GC, relevant academic administrators, the unit chair, and/or unit faculty, b) the self-review report of the unit whose programs are under review, including relevant statistical information, c) the prior review report and closure (previously termed follow-up) report, d) Appendix XVI, e) this document, f) a roster of review team members, including contact information, and g) the preliminary site visit schedule.

Not included in the packet, but available to review team members in the Senate's program review office (and on-site during the site visit) will be the faculty CVs and any available faculty surveys. Student surveys as well as an explicit statement regarding methods for obtaining the survey data, response rate to the survey, and any information necessary for clarifying the degree to which the survey can be viewed as representative of the total sample of students involved with the program will be distributed to the review team and the unit chair. Open-ended comments will be shown to the unit chair only if the respondent has authorized the release of this information

Prior to the site visit, the internal review team (at least two members) should meet with the relevant dean and chair before the site visit to discuss problems, areas of focus, and needs for additional information. This will help to focus the review, although the review team need not limit their inquiries and recommendations to the areas identified by the chair and dean.

5. Site Visit Schedule

Each review team shall conduct its site visit at UCLA. The site visit will begin with a closed organizational session for team members only and end with an exit meeting in which team members share their reactions with selected UCLA faculty and administrators. In between, a variety of required and optional elements will be scheduled. Sample schedules are attached to the end of this guide.

A. Initial Organizational Session. This meeting is for review team members only. It has the following goals: a) to introduce review team members, b) to identify major questions that need to be examined during the site visit, c) to review the preliminary schedule for the site visit, and d) to determine how the review team would like to structure the site visit to complete the work. The review team chair is responsible for the meeting and for any follow-up site visit arrangements that need to be made. This session can be held either the night before the first full day of the site visit or early in the morning of the first full day of the site visit.

B. Other Required Site Visit Elements. The following elements shall be part of each site visit: private time each day for the review team to discuss its work; private meetings with the unit chair, academic dean; individual or group meetings with a representative sample of faculty; individual or group meetings with representative samples of students

in each degree program under review; open time for faculty and students to sign up for individual or group meetings (as they choose); and unscheduled time in the latter part of the site visit when the review team may meet alone or with other individuals as needed. Due to differences in the expertise of different members of the review team, as well as the broad coverage required in the site visit, site visitors may choose to divide some tasks up and meet in subgroups to ensure that adequate opportunities exist to speak with as many individuals and groups as possible.

C. Optional Site Visit Elements. Several other elements are often part of the site visit. They include meetings with staff undergraduate and graduate advisers; meetings with faculty responsible for undergraduate and graduate programs; tours of program facilities (e.g., offices, labs, studios, computer facilities, lounges, libraries); reviews of student projects, papers, or performances; and an administrative luncheon. Some may be part of the preliminary site visit schedule. The review team may choose to delete them or add others.

D. Exit Meeting. An exit meeting will be held at the close of the site visit. Participants will include: the review team; the unit chair; the academic dean to whom the unit reports; the academic administrators responsible for graduate and undergraduate programs (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Dean of the Graduate Division); the Executive Vice Chancellor; the Executive Dean of the College when appropriate; and the Chairs of UgC and GC. The exit meeting will normally be chaired by the Chair of the Council to which the review team chair belongs.

The Exit Meeting allows the Council chairs, and appropriate administrators to hear the review team's, and especially the external reviewers', initial assessment of the program under review. It allows for a last exchange of information (or correction of misinformation) before the external reviewers depart to compose their written reports. The review team recommends any immediate action that might be required before the final report; the team's comments also allow Council chairs and administrators to plan ahead for the rest of review process by indicating the degree of seriousness of any problems identified during the site visit.

The Exit meeting may, at the Council chairs' discretion, be divided into several parts. A first part, when the program is assessed and facts checked, will include all participants, including also the chair of the program under review. A second part, held without the program chair, may cover leadership issues. A final part, involving the review team and Council chairs alone, may be needed to discuss Council procedures and issues about the report.

The Council Analysts will attend the exit meeting and prepare an extended summary. This summary may serve as a basis for part of the review report.

6. Special Concerns

The review process requires judgment and sensitivity on the part of review team members. A few special issues that the review team may confront are raised here.

A. Representative Samples. During the site visit, the review team needs to be certain it has discussed the program with representative samples of faculty and students. While the meaning of representative will vary according to the program, it most likely will include consideration of subdisciplinary area, degree program, faculty rank, and student year in a program. In many cases, it will also include gender, ethnicity, and (particularly for graduate students) international vs. resident status. A representative sample will

rarely be achieved if interviewees are all self-selected. The team and unit chairs will have made an effort to arrange the preliminary site visit schedule to include representative samples of faculty and students. When numbers are small, all faculty or all students in a given program may be scheduled. As the site visit progresses, the review team may decide it needs to schedule additional or different interviews to be certain it has heard from a representative cross section of faculty and/or students about the program in general or about any particular matter that has arisen during the site visit.

B. Evidence. The review team needs to be sensitive to evidence, particularly for allegations of inadequate performance, misconduct, or wrongdoing. In some cases, the review team will need to ascertain whether an opinion (e.g., that a program is seriously under-funded or that the unit chair is inattentive to his or her duties) is widely shared. In other cases, the review team will need to be able to provide enough specifics (e.g., who did what when to whom) to permit verification or rebuttal. If such matters arise during the site visit, the review team should adjust the site visit schedule or make other arrangements (see below) to investigate them adequately before including them in any oral or written review report.

C. Confidentiality. Review teams will sometimes become privy to information that may need to remain confidential. Issues of confidentiality should be raised first with the person who presents the potentially confidential information. How to handle the information may then be discussed with the review team chair and/or the UgC or GC Chairs. Clearly confidential information needs to be respected in all oral and written communications of the review team.

D. Wrongdoing. Occasionally, allegations of serious misconduct (e.g., harassment, falsification, misappropriation) will be made during a site visit. It is not the review team's responsibility to handle these. They should be reported to the review team chair, who will discuss them with the UgC and/or GC Chair, who will refer them to the appropriate UCLA officials.

7. Review Team Report

The review team chair(s) is responsible for submitting the review report within 4 academic-session weeks after the site visit. External reviewers shall each submit an individual report within 2 weeks after the site visit. For details, see separate guidelines for the final report.

SAMPLE SITE VISIT SCHEDULES

Normal Schedule Offering Both Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Prior to Day 1

7:00 p.m. Dinner meeting: Initial organizational session for review team members only (to be arranged by ASO).

Day 1

- 8:00 Breakfast discussion with unit chair and vice chair. [Catering arranged by the Academic Senate Office.]
- 9:00 Meeting with Academic Dean.
- 10:00 Meetings with representative groups of faculty in major programs, by subdisciplinary area and/or degree program.
- 12:00 Lunch – review team members only [at the Faculty Center]
- 1:15 Meetings with representative undergraduate students in major programs.
- 2:00 Meetings with representative graduate students in major programs.
- 2:45 Review of Teaching Assistant Program. Meetings with selected faculty and students.
- 3:15 Review of Advising. UgC and GC members review undergraduate and graduate advising respectively.
- 4:00 Closed session for review team only.
- 5:00 Additional meetings if the team needs them, perhaps a reception or dinner especially for the external reviewers, or free time.

[Please note: A reception, dinner or other event on this evening may be hosted by the department. However, the Academic Senate will not reimburse the department for this expense.]

Day 2

- 8:00 Breakfast (review team members only)
- 8:30 Open individual meetings with faculty and students who want them. This may also include time for a tour of the department and affiliated facilities.
- 12:00 Lunch – review team members only [at the Faculty Center]
- 1:00 Meeting with other staff, lab personnel, development officers, etc.
- 2:00 Closed session (review team members only).
- 3:00 Final review team meeting with chair and vice chair(s).
- 4:00 Exit Meeting. Includes Review Team, Chair and Vice Chair of Department, Executive Vice Chancellor, Academic Dean, Graduate Division Dean, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, UgC and GC Chairs, FEC Rep, and CPB rep. To be arranged by ASO.

Note:

- 1) Please allow appropriate flexibility to permit sufficient time for student meetings, especially in a department that has multiple degree programs.
- 2) TAs will have the opportunity to meet without departmental faculty, staff, or administrators present to allow the review team the opportunity to speak frankly with TAs from the department.
- 3) The unit is encouraged to select TAs who represent a broad range of TA experiences (TAs who have taught large classes, small classes, labs (if applicable), introductory classes, upper-division classes, etc.)
- 4) The review team chair should make every effort to ensure sufficient time for all meetings scheduled.
- 5) The schedule should be flexible and accommodate review of any and all articulated, concurrent, and self-supporting programs.

Department Staff Contact:

Schedule for a Small Program or One-day Internal Review Offering Both Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Day 1

- 8:00 Initial organizational breakfast session for review team members only. [Catering to be arranged by the Academic Senate Office.]
- 8:30 Meeting with academic dean.
- 9:00 Meeting with unit chair and vice chair.
- 10:00 Meetings with all faculty, perhaps in small groups.
- 12:00 Lunch – review team members only [at the Faculty Center]
- 1:00 Meetings with representative undergraduate (UgC members and student representatives) students in major programs.
- 1:30 Meetings with representative graduate (GC members and student representatives) students in major programs.
- 2:00 Review of Advising. UgC and GC members review undergraduate and graduate advising respectively.
- 3:00 Additional individual meetings with faculty or student groups. Open time.
- 3:30 Closed session (review team only).
- 4:15 Final meeting with Chair.
- 5:00 Exit meeting. The meeting includes Review Team, Chair and Vice Chair of Department, Executive Vice Chancellor, Academic Dean, Graduate Division Dean, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, UgC and GC Chairs, FEC Rep, and CPB rep. To be arranged by ASO.

Note:

- 1) Please allow appropriate flexibility to permit sufficient time for student meetings, especially in a department that has multiple degree programs.
- 2) TAs will have the opportunity to meet without departmental faculty, staff, or administrators present to allow the review team the opportunity to speak frankly with TAs from the department.
- 3) The unit is encouraged to select TAs who represent a broad range of TA experiences (TAs who have taught large classes, small classes, labs (if applicable), introductory classes, upper-division classes, etc.)
- 4) The review team chair should make every effort to ensure sufficient time for all meetings scheduled.
- 5) The schedule should be flexible and accommodate review of any and all articulated, concurrent, and self-supporting programs.

Department Staff Contact:

Schedule for a Large Program Offering Both Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Prior to Day 1

7:00 p.m. Dinner meeting: Initial organizational session for review team members only (to be arranged by ASO).

Day 1

- 8:00 Breakfast discussion with unit chair and vice chair. [Catering arranged by the Academic Senate Office.]
- 9:00 Meeting with Academic Dean.
- 10:00 Meetings with representative groups of faculty in major programs, by subdisciplinary area and/or degree program.
- 12:00 Lunch – review team members only [at the Faculty Center]
- 1:00 Meetings with representative groups of faculty in major programs, by subdisciplinary area and/or degree program.
- 4:00 Meetings with representative groups of graduate and undergraduate students in major subdisciplinary areas of program.
- 5:00 Additional meetings if the team needs them, perhaps a reception or dinner especially for the external reviewers, or free time.

[Please note: A reception, dinner or other event on this evening may be hosted by the department. However, the Academic Senate will not reimburse the department for this expense.]

Day 2

- 8:00 Closed organizational breakfast session for review team only. [Catering arranged by the Academic Senate Office.]
- 9:00 Meetings with representative undergraduate (UgC members and student representatives) and graduate (GC members and student representatives) students in major programs.
- 11:30 Meeting with unit chair and vice chair(s). This may also include time for a tour of the department and affiliated facilities.
- 12:30 Lunch – review team members only [at the Faculty Center]
- 1:30 Meetings with selected faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students as determined by the review team in their breakfast meeting, presumably guided by the written materials available prior to the site visit and the external reviewers' experiences during Day 1
- 3:00 Review of Teaching Assistant Program. Meetings with selected faculty and students.
- 4:00 Review of Advising. UgC and GC members review undergraduate and graduate advising respectively.
- 5:00 Closed session for review team only.

Day 3

- 8:00 Breakfast (review team only). [Catering arranged by the Academic Senate Office.]
- 8:30 Open meetings with faculty and students who want them. Review team may split up, if necessary.
- 12:00 Lunch – review team members only [at the Faculty Center]
- 1:00 Meeting with other staff, lab personnel, development officers, etc...
- 2:00 Closed session for review team only.
- 3:00 Final review team meeting with chair and vice chair(s).
- 4:00 Exit meeting. The meeting includes Review Team, Chair and Vice Chair of Department, Executive Vice Chancellor, Academic Dean, Graduate Division Dean, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education, UgC and GC Chairs, FEC Rep, and CPB rep. To be arranged by ASO.

Note:

- 1) Please allow appropriate flexibility to permit sufficient time for student meetings, especially in a department that has multiple degree programs.
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- 3) The unit is encouraged to select TAs who represent a broad range of TA experiences (TAs who have taught large classes, small classes, labs (if applicable), introductory classes, upper-division classes, etc.)
- 4) The review team chair should make every effort to ensure sufficient time for all meetings scheduled.
- 5) The schedule should be flexible and accommodate review of any and all articulated, concurrent, and self-supporting programs.

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