

## External Consulting to Middlesex Community College's Program Review Process

The external consultant to a program review serves as an objective, discipline-based expert who provides an external perspective on the department's demonstrated effectiveness in the areas of supporting student success and academic achievement, productivity and resource management, as well as the department's use of external environmental trends as they impact future opportunities for students in the discipline. It is hoped that the external consultant may be able to contribute ideas related to new and innovative program enhancements, teaching methodologies, and organizational structures. The recommendations made by the external consultant are influential in decisions about the future directions of the program.

The external consultant will:

1. Review the program's self-study and accompanying documents prepared for the program review;
2. Conduct a site visit to MCC in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the program and its context within the college. This site visit should include meetings/interviews with:
  - Program Review Committee (includes Program Chair/Coordinator)
  - Division Dean
  - Additional full and part-time faculty teaching in the program
  - Students taking both lower and upper-level courses in the program
  - Provost/ Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
3. Within 2 weeks of the site visit, submit to the Program Chair/Coordinator and Division Dean a report that provides feedback to the program related to the following questions, including recommendations that will be used by the program for improvement.
  - *From your perspective, are there trends or conditions (enrollment and student success data, academic support and student services) that would present opportunities or threats to the program's ability to achieve its vision, mission, goals, and objectives? Please explain your response.*
  - *From your perspective, is the program prepared to meet the emerging needs of the field? Please explain your response.*
  - *From your perspective, is the program's infrastructure (human, physical, and financial) sufficient to achieve its vision, mission, and goals? Please explain your response.*
  - *From your perspective, are expectations for student learning appropriately rigorous and relevant, and does the evidence of student learning support the achievement of these expectations? Are there other expectations for student learning and achievement that the program should be considering? Are there adequate and appropriate opportunities within the curriculum for students to achieve the learning outcomes? Please explain your response.*
  - *Other specific questions relevant to the Academic Program under consideration.*

## Timeline for the Site Visit

### I. Before the Visit

- Division Dean sends external consultant the program self study and related documents at least one month prior to scheduled site visit.
- External consultant reviews self-study document and generates a set of questions for site visit meetings with Dean, Chair/Coordinator, faculty, staff, students, and other groups as needed. Any questions that potentially require additional documentation should be forwarded to the Associate Dean of Assessment in advance of the visit so that the documentation can be located and available to the consultant at the visit.
- External consultant provides suggestions regarding individuals or groups to meet with during the site visit in addition to established list.

### II. During the Visit

- External consultant meets w/ individuals and groups as previously identified to ask questions and discuss program.
- External consultant requests additional information as needed.

### III. After the Site Visit

- Within two weeks of the site visit, external consultant submits report to the Program Chair/Coordinator and Division Dean. This report consists of observations and recommendations, feedback that can be used by the program for improvement. Brevity is encouraged – bulleted lists with narrative are completely acceptable!
- Within one month of the site visit, Program Chair adds External Consultant’s report to self study appendices, integrates recommendations and action items as appropriate, and submits to Division Dean in preparation for final approval by Dean.
- Division Dean reviews and approves completed program review.
- Finalized self study sent to Provost by Dean.
- Provost, Division Dean, Program Chair/Coordinator, and relevant others (including program faculty) meet to discuss program review.
- Provost confirms recommendations for future direction of the program based on the findings of the program review. These recommendations are made within the context of future planning aligned with MCC’s strategic initiatives and budgetary decisions.

### IV. Reimbursement

External consultants will be reimbursed for mileage, provided with lunch, and paid an honoraria of \$800.00.

I agree to serve as an external consultant to MCC’s program review process as described in this document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

***Employees of the State of Massachusetts who are engaged by MCC as external consultants are advised to determine whether they need to file a disclosure form with the State Ethics Commission***