



**JOHN PAUL
THE GREAT**
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Academic Program Review Handbook

Continuously Improving Academic Programs and Student Learning
Revised July 2014

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Introduction

Academic Program Review at John Paul the Great Catholic University (JPCatholic) is designed to strengthen programs through a comprehensive investigation of them. The Academic Program Review Handbook provides JPCatholic faculty, administrators, and external reviewers information and processes to support Academic Program Reviews. What follows are sections describing the process for which the outcome is essential to strategic planning, resource allotment, and decision-making.

Guiding Principles of a Program Review

The Program Review is guided by the following principles:

- A systematic process. A program review is a systematic process that analyzes the outcomes and performance of a program using quantitative and qualitative evidence.
- Open, professional dialogue. The review process involves open, professional dialogue among all participants: adjunct and full-time faculty, staff, students and alumni.
- Engagement. A successful program review depends upon the collaboration of faculty and staff in the rigorous self-study process. Programs will design assessment approaches that reflect their needs.
- Document influence. A program review will be consistent with the JPCatholic Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, program mission, and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges' (WASC) Standards and Criteria for Review.

John Paul the Great Catholic University Mission Statement

The mission of the University is to impact our culture for Christ by forming creators and innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs at the intersections of communications media, business, and theology, guided by the spiritual, moral and social teachings of Jesus Christ.

A program is an opportunity to carry out JPCatholic's Mission. Each of the six Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) guide academic planning and are tied to the Mission Statement.

The Institutional Learning Outcomes are:

- Values and knowledge based on the teachings of Jesus Christ as articulated by the Catholic Church
- Communication Fluency – Written, Oral, and Audio Visual
- Quantitative and Qualitative Assessment
- Leadership and Decision-making
- Information Literacy
- Critical and Creative Thinking

John Paul the Great Catholic University Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan 2018 is anchored in three strategic themes: 1) Student Formation; 2) Cultural Impact; and 3) Sustainability.

Program Review Purpose

The purpose of the Academic Program Review at JPCatholic is to enhance the quality of programs through a focused, in-depth self-study completed by faculty. The Review is a continuous, collaborative process of gathering, interpreting, reflecting upon and using data to inform decision-making. Completing the Review strengthens connections between the program and the university. An essential element of the Academic Program Review is the identification and evaluation of student learning outcomes.

Academic Program Reviews provide information for curricular and budgetary planning decisions. Governance responsibility for the development, implementation, and periodic review of the effectiveness of the review procedures is vested with the Faculty Senate. The program review procedures are dynamic, subject to continual examination and refinement as necessary to the Faculty Senate.

The Review is a self-study using evidence and examples with reflections from faculty, staff, students, and alumni. The registrar or Institutional Research can provide faculty with necessary technical data; faculty and Institutional Research will provide the assessment data. The review of data contributes to the analysis of the educational effectiveness of the program.

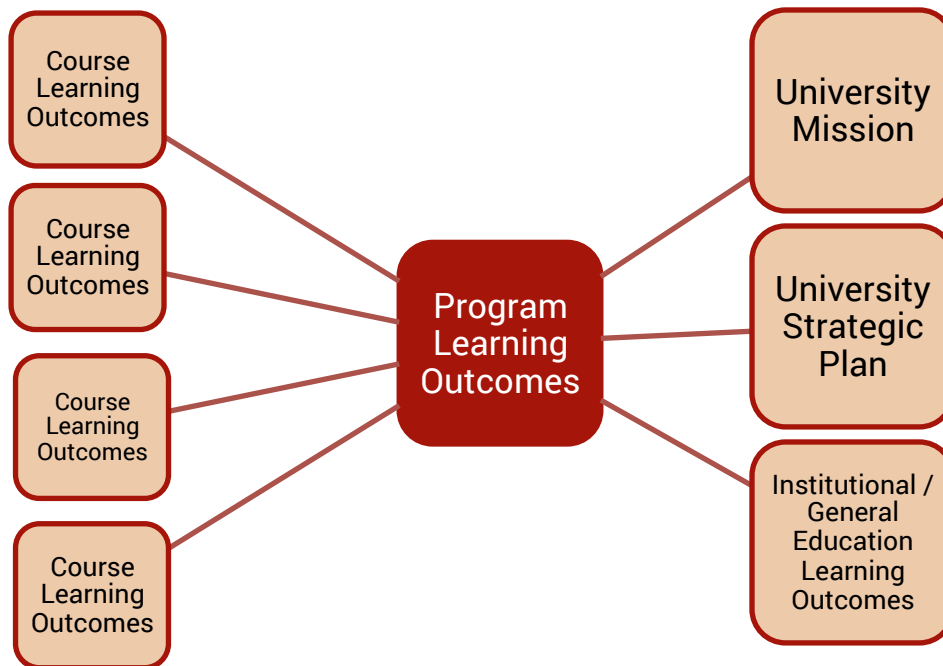
An academic program review involves a thorough analysis of:

- Program mission as aligned with the Mission of JPCatholic
- Program learning outcomes
- Data review of student profile and enrollment trends, and student learning outcomes assessment
- Faculty quality and strengths
- Students' preparedness for the intended career paths

Program Review Process

Academic Program Review is a continuous, collaborative process. An essential element of the academic program review is the identification and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes describe what students should be able to know and do in relation to what they have learned. Curriculum is the design of a course anchored in learning outcomes and includes instruction, educational experiences, and assessment. Collectively, Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) are represented in Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). The University Mission, Strategic Plan, ILOs, and General Education Outcomes inform PLOs, as illustrated below.



A Curriculum Map (Appendix 2) guides the alignment and relationships between PLOs, CLOs, assessments, assignments, experiences, and activities.

The process of reflecting upon and using data to inform discussions and actions contributes to decision-making and continuous program improvements. Faculty’s reflections and conclusions drawn from data derived from program and course learning outcomes are augmented with data provided by Institutional Research, the Library, and Information Technology. Varying roles and responsibilities are shared amongst program faculty, administrators, and external consultants.

Program faculty and chairs will identify resource needs, such as the need for faculty time to develop and conduct assessment activities of student learning and the identification of an external reviewer of the program self-study, in order to meet the requirements of program review. The importance and meaning of the review process is also acknowledged by WASC.

Overall, the academic program review self-study is a process consisting of:

- The department or program’s preparation of its self-study document, using assessment measures determined to be appropriate by the program or department.
- A site visit and written report from the external reviewer.
- A final report, including comments about the external reviewer’s report, and recommendations for future actions.

The final report is forwarded to the provost and president for review and action and will be made available to the University community.

Program Review Cycle

Faculty conduct an in-depth self-study once every three years. The study is a culmination of the continuous, ongoing annual review and assessment compiled into a Program Review Report. The provost will maintain the required three year review schedule for each academic program, as developed in consultation with the program chairs, and will inform the program chair when the time for program review is approaching (see Appendix 1 for schedule).

A self-study completed for an accreditation process, such as a substantive change proposal for WASC, provides the essential requirements of academic program review. Faculty may request the substitution of this self-study for the program review, with the understanding that certain questions or sections unique to the JPCatholic process will be required in addition. With the approval of the provost, the accreditation self-study may be accepted in lieu of a program review.

Program Review Report and Template

The self-study results in a Program Review Report which:

- Documents academic quality and the extent to which students are meeting learning outcomes;
- Demonstrates educational effectiveness by assessing student learning outcomes;
- Acknowledges program strengths; and
- Seeks ways of improving and enhancing the quality of a program (Implementation Plan).

The Program Review Report Template provides an outline of the report in six sections. The template identifies document information, data, and data review to be included. A concluding summary for each section is later incorporated into recommendations for future actions. Sections and their descriptions follow.

Program Introduction and History

Provide an overview of the program including program description and purpose in relationship to the JPCatholic Mission and Strategic Plan. Include reference to program outcomes, course content for the major and areas of emphases, and review highlights of previous program / accreditation reviews and changes made.

For a program with both an undergraduate and graduate component, the two components may be reviewed concurrently or separately. If reviewed concurrently, the faculty shall prepare its report so that the two components can be separated.

Program Learning Outcomes

- List Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs).
- Include a rationale for learning outcomes (e.g. standards/trends in the discipline, encouragement of diverse perspectives, expectations of equivalent programs at other universities, feedback from surveys of students/alumni)
- Curriculum Map: Include a Curriculum Map, the chart that illustrates connections between PLOs and course learning outcomes (as found in Course Syllabi). As illustrated in Appendix 2, a Curriculum Map is an example of planning that begins with the end in mind. The Curriculum Map also identifies to what level learning outcomes are taught in courses, and as a result, also serves to identify any redundancies and/or gaps in outcome coverage.
- List General Education (GE) courses required for undergraduate programs.
- Describe cross-listed courses and how these serve majors from other programs, if applicable.
- List effective teaching strategies and assessment measures for helping students achieve expected outcomes.
- Describe online components in courses and their evaluation.
- Analyze Program Exit Survey and Alumni Survey.

Include a summary of curricular changes and implementation plan findings/actions.

Data Review

Student Profile and Enrollment Trends

(Data are provided by Institutional Research.)

- Student headcount and demographic characteristics (cultural, ethnic, and social diversity)
- Retention and graduation rates
- Grade distribution
- The effectiveness of recruitment, retention and support practices for all students (addressing student quality, diversity, academic advising, mentoring, student accommodations to meet educational needs, career development and placement)

Assessment of Student Learning

Three levels of learning outcomes guide assessment. Relationships have been identified that connect course learning outcomes (CLOs), program learning outcomes (PLOs), and institutional learning outcomes (ILOs). Faculty reports of the results of student learning and the aggregation of these data will inform how students are progressing towards achieving JPCatholic's mission.

Data are derived from the faculty's assessment of student learning. This section should include a description of the assessment plan including signature assignments. An analysis of the educational effectiveness of the program using appropriate assessment data should also

be included. Reflections and actions to improve the effectiveness of the outcomes of the program are included (reported using Appendix 3).

Provide a summary of this section. Indicate trends observed in the data, identify areas of strength, areas for improvement and discuss the next steps in program assessment.

Faculty

Curriculum Vitae

Review and discuss full and part-time faculty expertise and academic credentials as needed for delivering the program's curriculum. Include faculty diversity, anticipated absences and other faculty issues important for program effectiveness.

Teaching

Evaluate collective faculty expertise for covering the breadth of the program's curriculum. Describe the teaching philosophies and instructional methods used within the program and evaluate how well these support achievement of program learning outcomes and promote student learning. Provide evidence of leadership in the discipline, outstanding teaching, and responsiveness to changes in the discipline.

Service

Evaluate the effectiveness of student advising / mentoring and faculty participation in academic governance.

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

Evaluate the effectiveness of collective faculty engagement across scholarship, research, and/or creative activity. Include faculty participation in development opportunities related to teaching, learning, and/or assessment, as well as awards and honors.

Faculty Headcount and Demographic Characteristics

Include cultural, ethnic, and social diversity. Data are provided by Institutional Research. Provide a summary of this section.

Resources and Services

Consult with the following to determine the adequacy of resources and services and their relationship to achieving student learning outcomes:

- Library (resources and information literacy)
- Technology (resources and support services)
- Students (resources and support services)
- Faculty development (resources and support services)
- Facilities (classroom space and equipment)
- Fiscal resources (budget review)

- Human resources and faculty senate (resources and workload analysis for both faculty and staff)
- External Reviewer's Report (see following section)

Provide a summary of this section.

Action Plan

During the review process, areas for improvement are identified and described in each section: Program Learning Outcomes, Data Review, Faculty, and Resources and Services. An Action Plan is developed based on findings and recommendations. This Action Plan may be modified based on input from the external reviewer. See the Post-Review Procedures section for requirements for the finalized Action Plan.

External Review

External Reviews are included during or after the self-study phase of the Academic Program Review. Described below are the External Review Purpose, External Reviewer's Profile, Visit Coordination, Tasks, and Report. Documents to assist with the External Review process are found in the Appendices: Sample Letter of Invitation (Appendix 4), External Reviewer's Sample Schedule (Appendix 5), and External Reviewer's Report Template (Appendix 6).

External Review Purpose

The purpose of the External Review is for a professional with expertise in the program field to read the Academic Program Review self-study and provide an objective assessment of the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, resources, and operations based on questions asked by program faculty. Typically, there will be one Reviewer; in some instances, more than one external reviewer may be invited to review a program. The Reviewer will assist faculty by providing a comparative and broader perspective on the program and student learning.

External Reviewer's Profile

As faculty prepare the Academic Program Review self-study, questions arise regarding program features, curriculum, assessment, marketing, and future initiatives. The initial criteria for choosing external reviewers includes their ability to answer faculty questions. In addition, universities identify external reviewers in several ways (Baker, 2005). Their qualifications include the following:

- A terminal degree in the relevant discipline
- Rank of associate professor or professor
- Strong academic and administrative credentials including a distinguished record in related teaching, research and scholarly activity, and service

- Experience in conducting academic program reviews
- Experience in curriculum development and assessment
- A code of conduct such that there is no conflict of interest. External reviewers should not be affiliated with the program under review nor should they have past connections such as graduates or former faculty.
- Ability to complete a site visit and submit a report within the prescribed timeline

External Reviewer's Visit Coordination

The provost is responsible for the overall coordination of the external review visit. Faculty share their nominations for external reviewers with the program chair. The nominees, including their curriculum vitae, are reviewed by the program faculty and chair and discussed with the provost. The department chair issues the formal invitation and coordinates the travel arrangements with the external reviewer in accordance with university guidelines. A consultant contract is then issued to the external reviewer (normally \$500 per day), plus transportation and one-night lodging, as required. The payment and refunds are processed upon receipt of the written report from the external reviewer and documented accommodation and travel costs, as previously approved. The chief financial officer issues the reimbursement.

External Reviewer's Tasks

External reviewers receive an electronic copy of the draft Academic Program Review self-study and data in advance. Accompanying data and additional materials found in supporting appendices are also provided and should be available in the department office for review during the site visit. It is essential that examples of student work are available for review as consistent with accreditation standards for direct assessment of student work.

External reviewers have expertise in program content and provide insight from their external perspective. Their critique, when combined with the internal review, lends credibility to the quality and effectiveness of the programs, services, resources, and operations. Reviewers study components of a program through a series of specific review objectives and answer questions as prepared by program faculty. Questions will vary depending on the type and size of the program; reviewers may be asked to respond to questions such as:

- Do references in syllabi adequately cover current knowledge in the field?
- Do CVs of faculty demonstrate appropriate qualifications for teaching in this program?
- Does the curriculum demonstrate an undergraduate / graduate level of instruction?
- Do assessments align with student learning outcomes?

Reviewers focus their visit in three areas: curriculum, assessment of student learning outcomes, and the student experience. A dinner the evening previous to the site visit to meet with the Reviewer, faculty, and administration is recommended as a way to begin the visit. Reviewers will then complete a site visit and conduct interviews with administrators, faculty, students, employers, and alumni. The site visit provides opportunities for the visitors to experience the university in person. Faculty and their chair should develop a schedule for a

site visit. A sample schedule is found in Appendix 5. Reviewers prepare a report responding to faculty questions and the prompts provided in the report template.

External Reviewer's Report

Reviewers are asked to write a report that includes general comments, singles out features of the program that merit commendations, and makes recommendations for improvement. The Reviewer's report varies in length between three and five pages. A preliminary report is generally completed on site prior to departure. The final report is completed within two weeks of the site visit. A Report Template is found in Appendix 6.

The report is organized in three parts:

- Executive Summary. General observations and comments are provided on the program and curriculum, quality of student learning and the achievement of student learning outcomes, the implementation plan, faculty, students, facilities, and resources. Reviewers respond to questions posed by faculty.
- Commendations. Reviewers provide comments about what the program is doing well.
- Recommendations. Comments provide future direction for the faculty to use to improve student learning. Evaluative feedback is offered as well as suggestions to improve any aspect of the program. Recommendations may require no new resources as well as those that do. The report may note recommendations that have been shown to be effective elsewhere.

The report is submitted electronically to faculty and the program chair and incorporated into the faculty's review of the program.

Baker, M.J. (2005). *Assessment and review of graduate programs*. Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

Post-Review Procedures

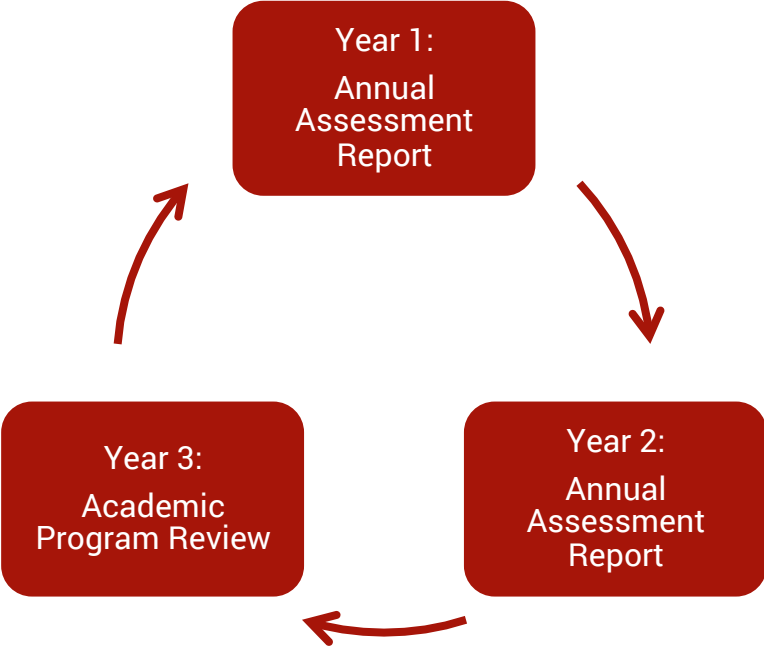
Once the external reviewer's report is received, the CFO will oversee payment of the external reviewer's expenses.

Faculty, administration, and staff will review and discuss the external reviewer's report. Recommendations from the external reviewer should be incorporated into the Action Plan prepared as part of the self-study. The finalized Action Plan should include a formal list of action items along with deadlines for completing those items.

Faculty will review the Action Plan yearly between Program Reviews and will record progress on the actions items as part of the Annual Assessment Report. These Annual Assessment Reports will then be used to inform the next Program Review.

Completed Academic Program Review Reports and Annual Assessment Reports will be archived by Institutional Research and shared with the university community as appropriate.

Continuous Improvement: Three Year Cycle



Appendix 1: Program Review Schedule

Academic Program Reviews will be completed on a three year cycle. Each department will complete their Annual Assessment Reports according to when they completed the last Academic Program Review. The following table shows the program review schedule.

Quarter	BS Communications Media	BS Business	MA Biblical Theology	MBA Film Producing	General Education
Winter 2014	Academic Program Review				
Spring 2014		Academic Program Review			
Summer 2014			Academic Program Review		
Fall 2014					Academic Program Review
Winter 2015	Annual Assessment			Academic Program Review	
Spring 2015		Annual Assessment			
Summer 2015			Annual Assessment		
Fall 2015					Annual Assessment
Winter 2016	Annual Assessment			Annual Assessment	
Spring 2016		Annual Assessment			
Summer 2016			Annual Assessment		
Fall 2016					Annual Assessment
Winter 2017	Academic Program Review			Annual Assessment	
Spring 2017		Academic Program Review			
Summer 2017			Academic Program Review		
Fall 2017					Academic Program Review
Winter 2018	Annual Assessment			Academic Program Review	

Appendix 2: Curriculum Map

The curriculum map shows which PLOs are taught and assessed in each course. The level at which the outcome is addressed is identified. In this case, the following scale is used: Introduced (I), Developed (D), and Mastery (M). Each PLO taught in a class should be assessed in some way by the professor. However, only certain assessment data is collected for the purpose of program review. This is also indicated on the curriculum map. Each course has one or more designated PLOs that should be assessed using a Signature Assignment, and the data submitted to Institutional Research at the end of the quarter.

Courses	Program Learning Outcomes						
	PLO1	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4	PLO5	PLO6	Continue...
Course 1	I	I			I		
Course 2			I	I		I	
Course 3	I	I			I		
Course 4			I	I		I	
Course 5	D		D	D			
Course 6		D			D	D	
Course 7	D		D	D			
Course 8		D			D	D	
Course 9		M		M			
Course 10	M		M		M	M	
Course 11		M		M			
Course 12	M		M		M	M	
Continue...							

Introduced (I), Developed (D), Mastery (M)

Key:

Outcomes assessment data collected for course-level analysis	Outcome assessment data collected for program-level analysis (Signature Assignment Data)
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Appendix 3: Signature Assignment Score Reporting Form

Signature Assignment Score Reporting Form Data Summary, Reflections, and Actions

The purpose of this form is for faculty to summarize data collected from the course Signature Assignment each quarter.

1 Complete course and signature assignment information.

Major/Program:	Instructor:	Quarter:
Course:	Program Learning Outcome Assessed (See Reference List in tab below)	
Signature Assignment Title:	Signature Assignment Description:	

2 List Criteria used to assess Program Learning Outcome (PLO).
Criteria can be found on PLO rubrics, or rubric used to assess Signature Assignment.

Program Learning Outcome (PLO) Criteria

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	

3 Indicate if GPA scores were used in place of rubric, or if alternate descriptions were used.

Rubric Scoring Description	
1	Needs Improvement (poor)
2	Developing (low satisfactory)
3	Proficient (high satisfactory)
4	Outstanding (exceeds expectations)

Mark "x" if GPA scores were used.

4 Record each student's name.
5 Record each student's score for each PLO criteria.

Student's Name	LO Criteria					Average Score
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
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29						
30						

6 After reviewing data summary, record a summary of your reflections and actions.

Reflections and Actions:

7 Choose 2 or 3 student work samples from low to high scores to include with this completed form. Also include rubric used to assess work. Completed form, student work samples, and rubric should be turned in to Clare Oven or submitted electronically to coven@jpcatholic.com.

Appendix 4: External Reviewer's Sample Letter of Invitation

Date

Dr. XXX XXX

Address

Dear Dr. XXX:

I am writing to invite you to serve as external reviewer of John Paul the Great Catholic University's [program name/ degree level]. As part of the University's assessment effort, every academic program undergoes an Academic Program Review every three years. The review is intended to help us identify a program's strengths and areas in which it could improve, determine the program's educational effectiveness by assessing student learning, and provide data for informed planning.

The role of the external reviewer is to provide an objective assessment of the quality and effectiveness of the academic program, resources, and operations based on the program's self-study and questions asked by program faculty and administration.

We would ask you to read the [program name] self-study / materials provided and to visit JPCatholic [when] to meet with members of the department and administration as well as students. The reviewer will write a report based on the self-study / materials provided and interviews, responding to specific questions that faculty and administration might ask. The report will note what a program is doing well and make overall recommendations for quality enhancement.

I have attached three documents that should help address questions that you might have about the review: 1) the template for the external reviewer's report; 2) a typical schedule; and 3) a document describing the purpose of the review. The faculty have prepared some specific questions that I will send should you accept this invitation. In addition, we would send program materials and additional questions that I would ask you to address.

JPCatholic will pay your travel expenses and an honorarium of \$500 per day. I will follow up this invitation next week with a phone call to see if you are able to do this and to answer any questions that you might have; please feel free to call or write.

Thank you for considering the invitation. We would be very pleased if you are able to be our external reviewer. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Name] Chair, [Program]

Appendix 5: External Reviewer’s Sample Schedule

Program Review for
 [Program]
 [Date]

Interviews / Meetings		Location
Evening	Dinner at restaurant with faculty / provost / reviewer	Restaurant
9:00 – 9:30 am	Program Department Chair Tour of Campus / Facilities	Chair’s office
9:30 – 10:00 am	Provost	Provost’s office
10:00 – 11:00 am	Faculty	
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Mass	
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch with Students and Alumni	
1:00 – 1:30 pm	President	
1:30 – 2:00 pm	CFO / Admissions	
2:00 – 2:30 pm	Librarian	
2:30 – 3:00 pm	Assessment Committee	
3:00 – 3:30 pm	Institutional Research	
4:00 – 4:30 pm	Deliver Preliminary Impressions and Report	
4:30 pm	Departure	

Appendix 6: External Reviewer's Report Template

Program _____
External Reviewer's University _____
Date _____

This template is provided to assist external reviewers in the completion of their report.

External reviewers are asked to write a report that:

- Includes an **executive summary** of general comments, singles out features of the program that merit **commendations**, and makes **recommendations** for improvement.
- Varies in length between three and five pages.
- Is completed within two weeks of the visit.

Executive Summary

Provide a brief executive summary of major findings for this program. Include:

- General observations and comments on the program and curriculum, quality of student learning and the achievement of student learning outcomes, the implementation plan, faculty, students, facilities, and resources
- Responses to questions posed by faculty

Commendations

Provide comments about what the program is doing well. Note suggested topic areas below.

Recommendations

Provide comments to guide future direction for faculty to use to improve student learning. Provide evaluative feedback that would improve any aspect of the program and recommendations that require no new resources as well as those that do. The report may note recommendations that have been shown to be effective elsewhere. Note suggested topic areas below.

Educational Effectiveness Topic Areas for the Commendations and Recommendations sections include:

- Providing feedback / suggestions on any learning outcome
- Analyzing / evaluating direct and indirect evidence of student learning
- Offering suggestions to improve the assessment process
- Evaluating assessment plan
- Evaluating assessment impact