# FOOTHILL COLLEGE
## INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH & PLANNING

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DATE:         May 1, 2020

TO:           Kristy Lisle, Executive Vice President of Instruction & Student Success Services

FROM:         Lara Triona, Institutional Research & Planning

RE:           Program Review Evaluations: Writer Template Survey

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**Introduction**

The revised Program Review process was initiated in Fall 2019 with 10 instructional programs. These programs followed a template and answered a series of questions about their data. There was also a CTE addendum template only those programs with CTE components completed.

After submitting their program review, writers were invited by email to participate in a survey and provide feedback about the new template. Survey questions focused on the ease of use of the program review template, the ease of getting questions answered, the clarity of the template questions, and the types of problems that the program review writers might have encountered.

The survey link was sent to 14 writers for a writer response rate of 79% (11 out of 14). All 10 programs were represented in the survey results for a 100% program response rate. The CTE addendum program writer response rate was 80% (4 out of 5). The survey was accessible online between March 6, 2020 and April 24, 2020.

**Results Overview** (N= 11 writers)

- Most writers (8) responded that the program review template was very easy or somewhat easy to use. All of the writers who responded (10) found it very easy or somewhat easy to get their program review writer template questions answered.
- Some writers (5) responded that there were questions on the program review template that were difficult to understand. In elaborating further, the writers mentioned redundancy in the answers (3) or trends and statistics (2).
- The most common issue writers selected was adhering to the word limit (8).
- Other issues that writers mentioned included collaboration amongst the department faculty (sharing drafts for feedback and part-time faculty compensation) (5), developing action plans (2), template navigation (scrolling, data presentation layout, etc.) (2), and the dean feedback process (preferring face-to-face dialogue) (2).
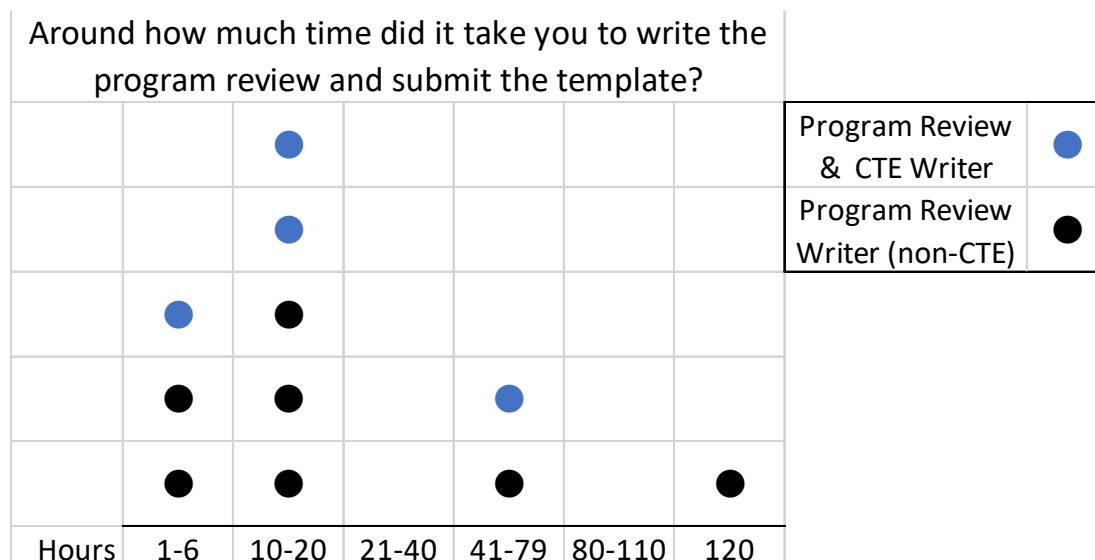
**Results Detail**

*Time to Write Program Review*

Responses to the question, "About how much time did it take you to write the program review and submit the template?" ranged from 1 to 120 hours. The average length of time was 30 hours and the median length of time was 14 hours.

CTE program review writers (4) indicated it took on average 19 hours (median: 12 hours) to complete their addendum. Non-CTE program review writers (7) reported an average of 35 hours (median 16 hours) needed to complete the template. Figure 1 shows writers' responses and the amount of time needed to complete the template. Blue dots indicate the writer also wrote the CTE addendum.

**Figure 1: Amount of Time to Write the Program Review**

Around how much time did it take you to write the program review and submit the template?

| Hours | 1-6 | 10-20 | 21-40 | 41-79 | 80-110 | 120 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ● (blue) | | | | |
| | | ● (blue) | | | | |
| | ● (blue) | ● (black) | | | | |
| | ● (black) | ● (black) | | ● (blue) | | |
| | ● (black) | ● (black) | | ● (black) | | ● (black) |

Legend:
- ● (blue) = Program Review & CTE Writer
- ● (black) = Program Review Writer (non-CTE)

*Ease of Template and Finding Answers*

Most of the writers (8) responded that the online program review template was very easy or somewhat easy to use. The remaining writers found the template very difficult (1) or somewhat difficult (2). Figure 2 is a bar graph of writers' responses about the ease of use for the template.

**Figure 2: Ease of the Program Review Template**
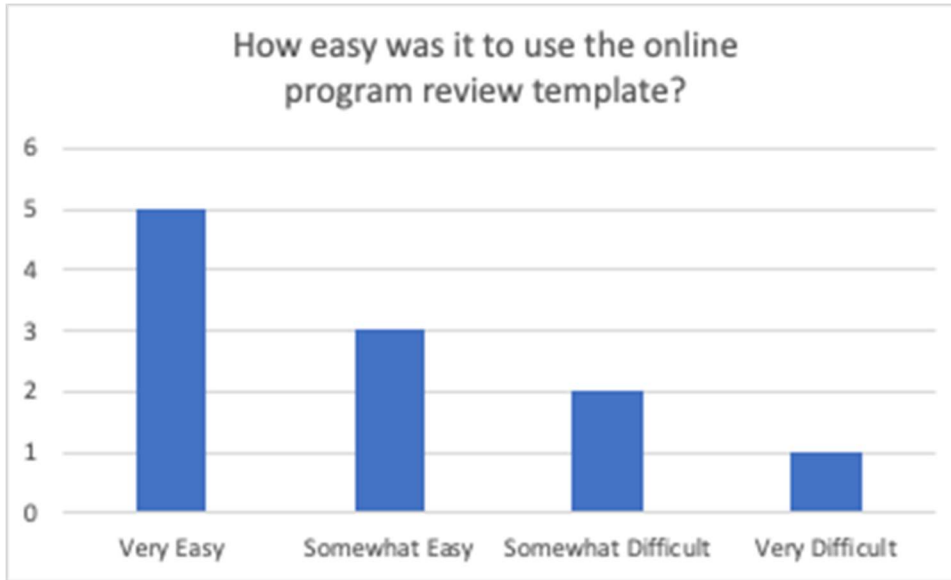


All respondents (10) selected very easy or somewhat easy when asked about finding someone to answer questions about the program review. Figure 3 shows the writers' responses about the ease of finding someone to answer questions. None of the writers responded that it was difficult to find someone to answer their questions.

**Figure 3: Ease of Finding Someone to Answer Questions**
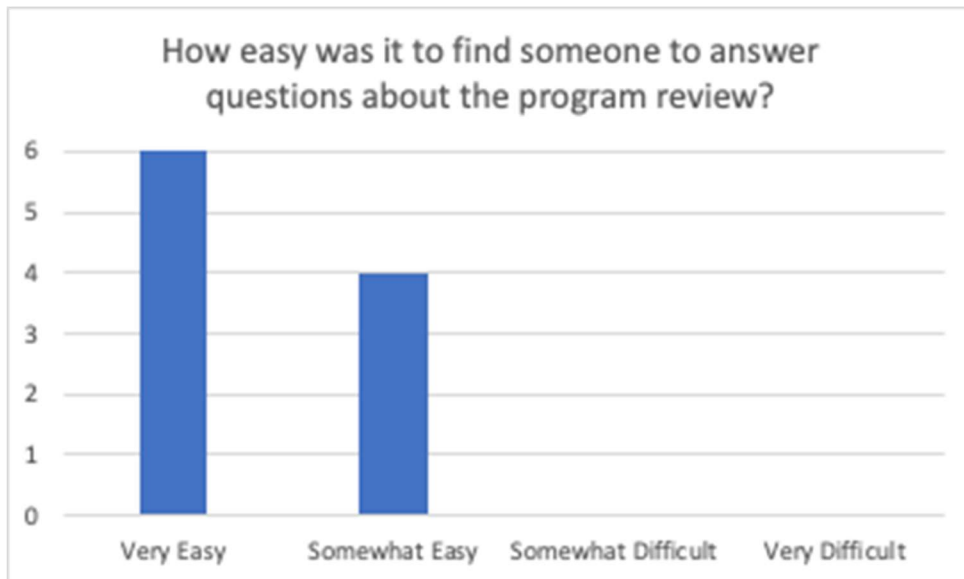
Some writers (5) responded to the follow-up open-ended survey question, "Which questions were difficult to get answered?" Their responses are below.

- "Kelaiah was extremely helpful when I encountered technical issues with the template."
- "Questions that required some sort of action or proposed solution. Any proposed action plan should be outside the program review and done in consultation, in person, with the Deans. This is a review to identify areas of concern. How to address them is another document."
- "In striving between colleagues to be as thorough as possible, there is still a fair degree of subjectivity in determining how something is to be answered or what is the target for response content."
- "Questions that asked us to give explanations as to causes.  Some are productive questions that made us dig deep. But some we were baffled by them.  For example, why we have more females than males enrolled in our courses."
- "Response to statistics"

*Difficult to Understand Questions on Program Template*

Five writers responded "Yes" to the question, "Were there any questions on the program review template that you had difficulty understanding?" The writers responded to the follow-up question, "Which questions about the program review template that writers had difficulty understanding, or felt needed more clarification?" with general comments about question difficulties and redundancy (3) and trends or statistics (2). Their responses are below.

Question difficulties and redundancy

- "From time to time, we were wondering what it is exactly asking. But now I don't remember which ones are causing confusions."
- "The whole template needs to be overhauled. Overall, way too much redundancy in the questions most of the "answers" could have been provided to the writer with a simple data search. Asking the writer to state a "trend" when a program could have done this is a waste of time. Too much time looking up and trying to pigeon hole the data in almost every question. The rubric was pages and pages of a pdf document with no logical page breaks to find the corresponding question. The question-specific rubrics should have been embedded in the template with the questions. Why not provide a summary report to the department for all the questions a database search could have easily answered? Institutional research should be digging through the data and providing summaries to each department."
- "Though it was less than in the past, it still seems slightly difficult to answer some questions without a sense of 'this may have already been answered elsewhere.'"

<u>Trends or statistics</u>

- "I emailed the research department because I had a question about what constituted 'a trend'. That was all."
- "Response to statistics"

*Most Useful Things about Program Review Template*

Respondents answering the question, "What were the one or two most useful things about the program review template?" commented about formatting, the inclusion of the data in the template, and the rubric document. Their responses are below.

- "Easy access of the data that's related to questions."
- "online submission"
- "Straight forward"
- "Very clear questions"
- "The program data was provided in the links. Word count was visible."
- "The rubric - wish I had looked at it while I was writing the PR but it was helpful for my revisions. The drop down data was awesome and I loved the word limitations."
- "I appreciate the effort made by the whole team who put a lot of thought and care into the new process."
- "Having data included in the template. Conciser formatting."
- "The discussions with my colleagues; I did not see any usefulness in its structure. It was confusing and tiresome to have to scroll up and down to look at things."

*Issues Encountered While Completing the Program Review Template*

The survey asked the program writers about eight potential issues and they were given the option to specify any other issues they encountered while completing the program review template. The most common issue was adhering to the word limits (8). Some of the writers had difficulty understanding the data (4), writing the content of the narratives (4), deciding on action plans (4), or navigating the template (3). Figure 4 shows the types of issues encountered by writers while completing the program review template.

Explanations from the writers who selected "other issues" are below.
- "Finding the relevant data was tedious. Questions were worded poorly and had numerous typos."
- "When I was first using the template the radio button selections did not save. This was fixed."
- "If collaboration/proof reading is required, PLEASE make the template available to multiple individuals."

**Figure 4: Types of Issues Program Review Writers Encountered**



Which of the following issues did you encounter while completing the program review template?
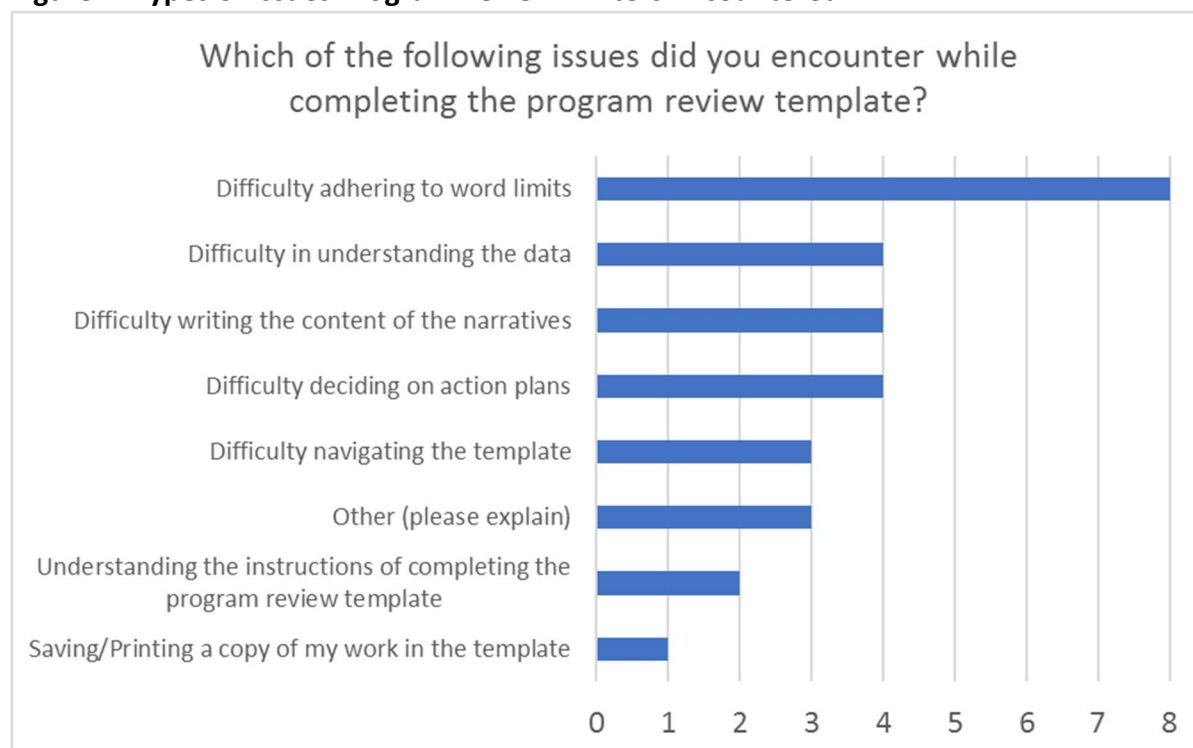
In answering the final survey question, "What were the one or two biggest issues that you encountered doing the program review template? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?" respondents talked primarily about collaboration (5) and increasing word limits (3). Writers responses are below organized by topic (the total is greater than 11 because individual writers mentioned multiple topics).

Collaboration

- "Asking part-time faculty to participate without pay."
- "The requirement for collaboration/proof reading/review of the PR prior to submission is a good idea. However, it was extremely difficult and inefficient as the template was only accessible to one writer."
- "No ability to easily share the review with the faculty. I moved the whole template into a Google doc just so other faculty had easy access and could edit. The review should not be done online in a web browser. Remove the template from a browser interface."
- "Allow other faculty to have access to the template so they can make changes too."
- "(2 hours of additional time was spent on "copy and pasting" all the contents onto a google doc so individuals could contribute their comments and suggestions. This process was frustrating and a waste of time. PLEASE make the template available to multiple individuals who are required to work on the Program Review."

Increase Word Limits

- "Difficulty adhering to word count as additional relevant information for certain sections had to be excluded due to the limit. Word limits in certain sections should be increased."
- "It was sometimes ironic for the rubrics to be over 100 words. I will have more suggestions after my initial draft is reviewed and commented on. Thanks!"
- "Word limits - while having initial word limit offered a comforting target, and we would qualify that as a good thing, that was quite problematic in responding to the Dean's comments. Perhaps lift the word limit in Dean responses or create a specific section for Dean responses because having to place those all in the general response area was murky, confusing and problematic. "

Action Plans

- "One of the difficult part is the action plan. There are many factors about low enrollment, or low enrollment in specific race group, or a gender group. It's hard to come up with a "plan" to solve or improve the situation. "
- "Interpreting the data and being asked to take action to correct it when we don't understand what's causing it."

Navigation

- "Navigation to the template and locating the data in the sidebar was tedious.... I could go on, but you get the picture. Not a useful template."
- "Navigation - have to constantly scroll up and down the page between data and responses between areas that looked similar was rather arduous--though better than having to look the data up elsewhere. Perhaps color coding data boxes so they pop more while scrolling."

Dean Feedback

- "Feedback from the dean via the template was almost useless. How about a face-to-face discussion with the dean?"
- "Word limits - while having initial word limit offered a comforting target, and we would qualify that as a good thing, that was quite problematic in responding to the Dean's comments. Perhaps lift the word limit in Dean responses or create a specific section for Dean responses because having to place those all in the general response area was murky, confusing and problematic. " (This quote also listed in Increase Word Limit topic.)

Department Control Limited

- "The template assumed that departments have control over course offerings and scheduling. This is not the case. Departments can suggest schedules but ultimately it is the dean/VP that decides what sections and how many sections are offered. In the past several years the administration has cancelled classes that we were scheduled to teach

and denied requests to add sections to meet student demand (full sections with full wait lists). This is outside of department control, yet the template assumed that all enrollment/success/productivity issues were caused and could be fixed at the department level. Please revise wording of the template to recognize that departments can only suggest course offerings and scheduling, and productivity and enrollment is a partnership between departments, deans and VP."

<u>Narratives</u>

- "narratives"

<u>Required Removing Assumptions</u>

- *"This wasn't an issue but I realized I needed to erase my previous assumptions and biases that I had and look at the evidence and data to determine program improvements."*

**Methodology**

The Program Review Writer's Survey was sent to 14 faculty on March 6, 2020, which was shortly after they submitted their program review. While there were 10 programs who submitted a program review, some programs involved more than one dedicated writer. Seven programs had one possible respondent; two programs had two possible respondents; and one program has three possible respondents. The survey was closed on April 24, 2020, after all of the programs had at least one respondent providing feedback. There was one program that had both their writers respond.