Team Chair Role and Responsibilities Guide

The chair of a review team is usually a president, provost, or dean with broad experience and perspective in higher education. The chair is often from an institution similar in size and mission to the institution being reviewed.

If the institution is being reviewed for reaffirmation of accreditation, the chair is selected to lead both the Offsite Review and Accreditation Visit. If the institution is seeking accreditation, the chair is selected to lead the first and subsequent visits.

The chair leads the work of the team and has overall responsibility to see that the team assesses the institution’s responsiveness to concerns of the Commission and prior teams. The chair works with the team to draft a report that gives the Commission a clear picture of the institution in light of the Standards.

To carry out this charge, the team chair:

1. Establishes working relationships with the team members, the staff liaison, and the institution’s Accreditation Liaison Officer
2. Sets the tone for the discussions during the review or visit
3. Holds a conference call with the institution’s CEO prior to the visit
4. Moderates the discussions
5. Sets assignments for team members (in collaboration with the staff liaison)
6. For institutional visits, works with the ALO to develop a schedule for the visit.
7. Serves as coach and mentor to the team:
   a. Explains team member responsibilities
   b. Creates a coherent and motivated team
   c. Clarifies the accreditation process and Standards and CFRs
8. Provides options for the team recommendation(s) Focuses the review on evidence and the Standards
9. Facilitates the identification of key issues and questions
10. During visits, starts and facilitates key meetings and interviews, such as the meeting with the president and governing board.
11. Ensures that the review or visit is conducted in a professional and courteous manner.
12. Ensures that an effective team report is completed and delivered to the institution and Commission.
13. Reports the team’s commendations and recommendations to the institution.
14. Completes the Confidential Team Recommendation form, in consultation with the team. Represents the team’s findings to the Commission as it considers the team report and action on the institution.
TIPS FOR THE TEAM CHAIR

1. Work closely with the WSCUC staff liaison and assistant chair as you prepare for the review of the institution.
   a. Be clear what you want to accomplish.
   b. Use the forms and sample letters from the WSCUC staff and modify them to fit your style and the situation.

2. Be well organized and plan in advance
   a. Reserve the time on your schedule for preparation, conference calls, etc. to align with the timeline the staff provides.
   b. Have an agenda for each phone call and team meeting.
   c. Let WSCUC staff help you organize and prepare, as needed.

3. Use email or box.com to keep the team on track and informed:
   a. Share dates and deadlines.
   b. Circulate the team drafts for corrections and comment.

4. Expect something unexpected to happen and don’t be surprised when it does.

5. Contact the WSCUC staff liaison immediately with any questions or concerns that may arise throughout the process.

6. Ensure fairness, thoughtfulness, and thoroughness:
   a. Be sure the team is not swayed by a single voice.
   b. Prompt deep discussion to keep team from making unfair assumptions or moving to a conclusion too quickly.
   c. Keep asking, “How do you know this?” “What is the evidence?” “Can this evidence be verified?”