



FOOTHILL COLLEGE

Institutional Research and Planning

DATE: March 16, 2021

TO: Kristy Lisle, Executive Vice President
Kelaiah Harris, Instructional Services Coordinator

FROM: Elaine Kuo, College Researcher

RE: Program Review Writers Survey Results

Overview

A survey invitation was sent to all individuals who participated in the writing of their unit's program review in Fall 2020. Thirteen faculty, classified staff, and administrators responded to the survey out of a possible 16, for a response rate of 81%. Only one unit was not represented in the results. Responses to all survey questions are included at the end of the memo.

Highlights

- The majority of respondents needed at least 16 hours to write their program review (61%).
- Writers found some questions difficult to answer due to “the multiple elements that influenced the data: AB 705, COVID-19, virtual courses.”
- Writers found it hard to know why trends were happening due to small numbers and action items being outside of department control (e.g. tutorial support, cohorts).
- Questions about productivity, student success rates by demographic groups, and action plans were more difficult to answer due to needing data from outside the template/not having enough data or information.
- The most commonly reported issue when completing the template was difficulty understanding data (38%) and difficulty writing the content of the narratives (31%).
- Writers asked that their program's accomplishments are acknowledged in the initial feedback along with its challenges.
- Suggestions for improvement include: (1) Increasing space on template to include program innovations; (2) Considering student success through additional prompts beyond questions on success by individual populations; (3) Expanding action plan criteria to include collaborations across departments/division and between instructional program/student success program(s); (4) Reviewing the rubric's variances to consider increasing its flexibility with smaller programs; (5) Considering an increase in word limit.
- Writers also recommended that the template language and wording be softened to encourage reflection as opposed to defensiveness.

Methodology

The Program Review Writers Survey was created using Remark survey software and administered from March 1, 2021 to March 12, 2021. All who participated in the writing of a program's program review were invited to participate in the survey. Out of the 10 programs reviewed (8 Instructional, 2 Student Success), 16 individuals were sent an email invitation with the survey link embedded. Only one CTE program was not represented. Two reminders were sent to those who had not yet completed the survey by March 8 and March 10.

Source

FH IRP, Remark Survey Software [WritersSurvey(Feb21).rmk; PR Writers Survey Responses AY21.bqy; WriterResponsesDataTables.xlsx]

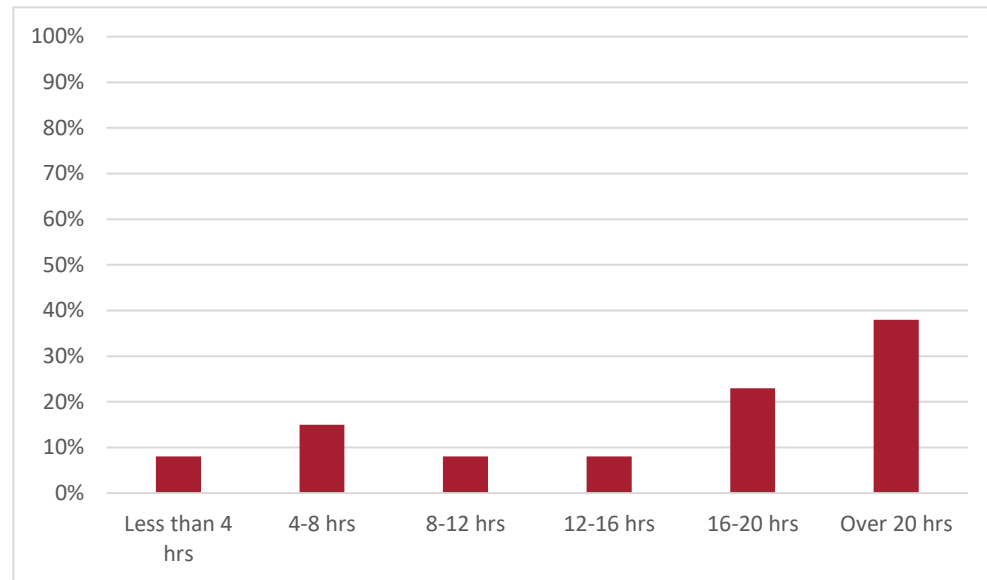
Program Review Writers Survey Results 2021

Survey Respondents: 13 out of 16

Response Rate: 81% (only 1 program had no respondents)

Q1: Around how much time did it take you to write the program review and submit the template?

Hours	N	Percent
Less than 4 hrs	1	8%
4-8 hrs	2	15%
8-12 hrs	1	8%
12-16 hrs	1	8%
16-20 hrs	3	23%
Over 20 hrs	5	38%
Total	13	100%



Q2: What questions were more difficult to get answered? If none, skip this question.

All actually because of the multiple elements that influenced the data: AB 705, COVID-19, virtual courses.

Enrollment by student demographics & Success by Student demographics (Sections E and F) because of (1) Small numbers made trends difficult to discuss; (2) Many of the action items are outside of department control such as providing tutorial support, cohorts or supportive communities.

I felt it was hard to know for sure why trends were happening.

Not hard, but had to go back and look at our accreditation report to see if my office was signaled out in the report.

Q2: What questions were more difficult to get answered? If none, skip this question.

Questions that addressed productivity and student success rates by demographic were the most challenging because at times we needed to include data from outside the program review template to provide a complete interpretation of the trends.

The Mission Statement - Too hard to craft something concise that met all the criteria.

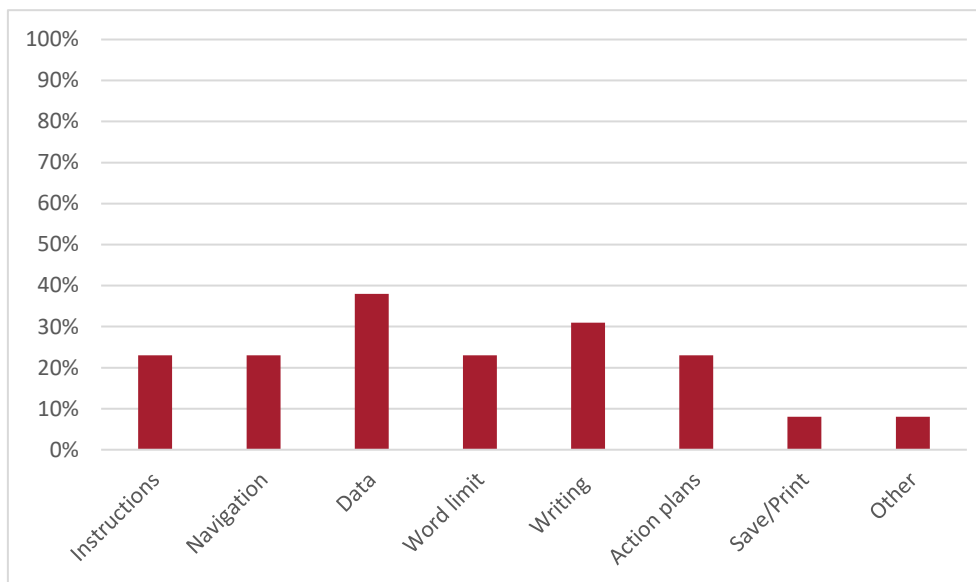
The department had difficulty answering questions about "success." The department discussed success from several different vantage points, sharing that a singular focus on through put or program completion might not capture true success, especially if the goals of the program relate to things like job acquisition rather than degree or certificate attainment. The department also had questions about how to report trends. Calculating trends required using a tool like excel, inputting data, and finding the trendline. These steps weren't immediately clear and required researching. Finally the department expressed concerns about reporting for both programs in our department. Our department was sure whether we were writing a single review for both components of our program, which entails ESLL credit course work and NCEL noncredit course work. Our department expressed feeling constrained with the word count when writing the narrative sections for both sides of the program. The department expressed concerns about completing the program review tool without having access to data for international students. The department was concerned that part of the enrollment decline is attributive to the decline of international students. But the data tool doesn't track international student trends. My colleagues expressed difficulty in answering questions about equity and race. They started with the idea that the term "African American" is a misnomer for our program since it is very unlikely that an African American students would take ESLL classes, being that African Americans are native-born English speakers. The department has raised concerns about students who categorically don't belong to the racial identity markers on the template. For instance, they weren't sure if Panamanian or Puerto Rican students would qualify as Black or Hispanic. Regarding this duplicity, the department expressed the hesitation they might feel if they had to ask such a student to choose just one identity marker.

The questions about action plans around gender disparities were more difficult to answer for our department. We did not have enough data or information on making an action plan and considered this a place for bias.

The questions regarding productivity and the questions surrounding success rates for various ethnic groups- because these data points did not align very well with our program.

Q3: Which of the following issues did you encounter while completing the program review template? Check all that apply.

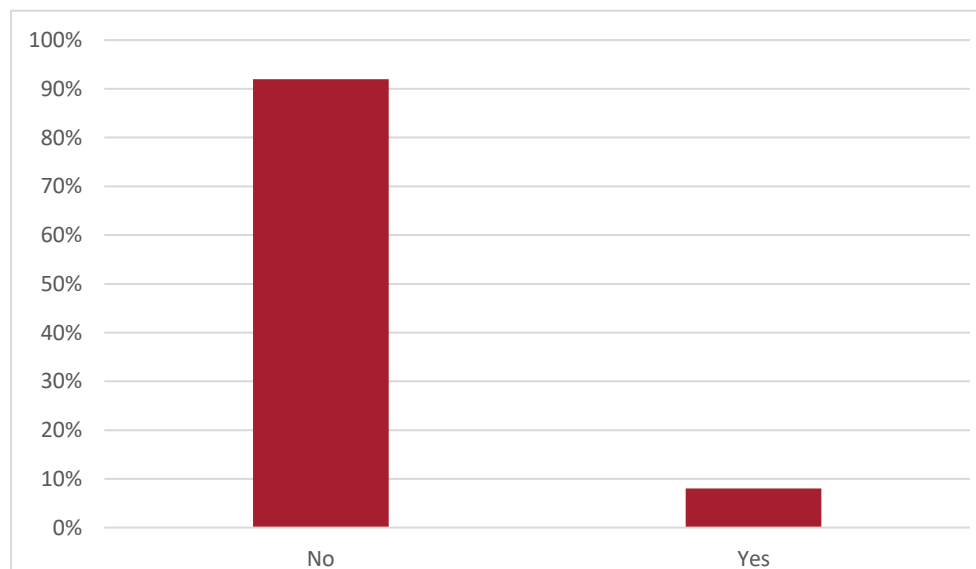
Issues	N	Percent
Understanding instructions to complete program review template	3	23%
Difficulty navigating the template	3	23%
Difficulty understanding the data	5	38%
Difficulty adhering to word limits	3	23%
Difficulty writing the content of the narratives	4	31%
Difficulty deciding on action plans	3	23%
Notified I did not complete the template when I thought I did	0	0%
Saving/Printing a copy of my work	1	8%
Other	1	8%



Note: 3 respondents did not experience any issues (23%)

Q4: Did you have questions about program review that you were unable to get answered?

	N	Percent
No	12	92%
Yes	1	8%
Total	13	100%



If you responded yes, what were they?

I had questions with the Dean's responses to our answers. We pointed out areas such as the service leadership we have done with Murals on campus and didn't get any response. We would like to have more acknowledgement of our accomplishments instead of our our deficits.

Q5: Do you have any suggestions for improvement in the next program review cycle?

Allow for the rubric to include service leadership and innovations. One reason why many of us work at Foothill College is for our innovations. The Program Review wants us to answer every question based on a scripted rubric. This doesn't allow for the creativity and innovations of programs and instructors at our school.

I felt it was a bit repetitive. Also do not like the focus on success rates as the primary metric.

I have several, but I can share at a later time when I have more bandwidth to clearly express my suggestions.

I would like to say that this current PR template is probably the best one I have worked on in the 21 years I have been here at FH. The data was easy to access, the questions were straightforward, and the overall length of the PR was reasonable. I believe we are on the right track, though the PR could use some tweaking. For starters, some of the language seemed overly accusatory. I would recommend softening the language to encourage faculty to reflect on their programs' shortcomings (if any) and come up with creative solutions to possibly solving those issues rather than putting faculty immediately on the defensive and making the PR a much more adversarial document. I would also recommend increasing the word count in the response boxes. Keeping the word count to 150 words makes it obviously easier for the readers. However, it does present challenges to the faculty, especially since there are multiple criteria that faculty are being asked to address in each segment of the PR. By restricting the word count, faculty can't adequately address some of the results/data that is being presented and explain what might be causing those outcomes to occur. Finally, I would recommend that we consider introducing a bit more flexibility into the rubrics. Having a 2% - variance or a 4% - variance between meeting the standard and needing major improvement seems overly punitive. For example, in one of the sections on student success, we had fewer than 10 non-binary students in the cohort. However, from last year to this year, two students were unsuccessful, which caused the non-success rate to increase by over 20%, which in turn caused the reader to immediately grade our program as "needs major improvement." However, this is absurd since we are just talking about two students out of a total of 1600 students served in that year. When these cohorts are extremely small, we might want to be a bit more flexible with the rubric as a small change in the actual number of students who are successful or not successful will have a significant impact on the percentage changes. We tried to explain this in our feedback, but again the 150 word limit made it difficult as we had to address other issues in that segment as well. Anyway, thank you for taking the time to read my feedback. I do appreciate it.

Our data coach was indispensable for advising us on how to use the template data in tandem with data we could access elsewhere with her help. I don't know if this would be possible, but having awareness of how this "extra data" could help us at the outset would have been useful -- we had to figure this out for ourselves after many attempts at digesting the data. Also, we noticed that having data from other connected programs was necessary; having easy access and prompts to do this would be helpful.

Word limit is much better this year (I also did PR in 19/20 for a different department). For Sections E and F consider shifting the blame for low success rates from department faculty only to a collaboration between departments and student support programs. Focus on how departments can better collaborate with support services to provide an integrated support web for at risk students. We need departments to engage with support services across the college in order to truly close the success gap. As it is written, each department's success rates are viewed in isolation and the actions of the faculty seem to be expected to be independent of the web of support that an institution should provide. Departments should be collaborating with college support services (tutoring, counseling, ethnic communities, DRC) to support the students across their courses, and PR should encourage departments to work toward integrated and collaborative support.



Program Review Evaluation 2021
Writer Template Survey

Please answer the questions below about using the program review writer template. This survey is being administered by Institutional Research and Planning (IRP). Your identity will not be shared in any of the evaluation reports. The college will use the evaluation results to improve the quality and effectiveness of Program Review.

If you have any questions, contact Elaine Kuo, College Researcher, at kuoelaine@fhda.edu.

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

- 4 hrs or less
- 4-8 hrs
- 8-12 hrs
- 12-16 hrs
- 16-20 hrs
- 20 hrs or more

2) What questions were more difficult to get answered? If none, skip this question.

3) Which of the following issues did you encounter while completing the program review template? Check all that apply.

- Did not experience any issues
- Understanding the instructions of completing the program review template
- Difficulty navigating the template
- Difficulty understanding the data
- Difficulty adhering to word limits
- Difficulty writing the content of the narratives
- Difficulty deciding on action plans
- Being notified that I did not complete the template when I thought I did
- Saving/printing a copy of my work in the template
- Other (please explain)

4) Did you have questions about program review that you were unable to get answered?

- No
- Yes

If you responded yes, what were they?

6) Do you have any suggestions for improvement in the next program review cycle?

Submit

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