National Sea Grant Site Review
16-17 (Tues/Wed) June 2015

Site Review Process

Once every four years, a site review team (SRT) visits each Sea Grant program. The SRT assesses, discusses, and reports on broad issues related to: 1) Program Management and Organization; 2) Stakeholder Engagement; and 3) Collaborative Network/NOAA Activities. These three categories encompass the majority of the criteria for a Sea Grant College listed under Sea Grant's Federal Regulations listed under *15 CFR 918.3: Eligibility, qualifications and responsibility of the Sea Grant College Program (Section b, 2 - 7, and 9).*

The SRT produces a site visit report (See comments from 2010-2011 SRT), which does not include ratings, but instead describes findings and makes suggestions and recommendations to improve the Sea Grant program's operations. Although the SRT is not responsible for rating the program on any of these three areas, the report should include a finding addressing whether the program meets the *Standards of Excellence*. The report is transmitted to the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO) and to the Sea Grant program.

Based on the SRT report and the Sea Grant program's response, the National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) Director makes the final determination whether the program meets the Sea Grant *Standards of Excellence*. All Sea Grant programs are expected to meet this standard.

SRT Composition

Each SRT is chaired by the Federal Program Officer (FPO, Gene Kim), co-chaired by a member of the National Sea Grant Advisory Board (Advisory Board, Amber Mace), and includes a Sea Grant Director as a review team member (Sylvain De Guise, Connecticut Sea Grant). The SRT co-chair is selected by the NSGCP Director in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Board. Working with the co-chair, the FPO will select one or two external members, ideally from the program's region (as long as there are no conflicts of interest), who may include:

- Representatives of appropriate commercial and industrial entities;
- Directors of institutes, centers, and laboratories;
- Leaders of city/county, state and federal resource agencies, and programs (including NOAA);
- Senior officials of other academic institutions;
- Directors of cooperative extension programs or experiment stations;
- Other National Sea Grant Advisory Board members; and
- Recognized practitioners in appropriate fields (research, extension, education, communications, etc.).

The Site Visit Structure

Sea Grant's regulations describe the characteristics and responsibilities of Sea Grant Institutional and College programs. The SRT will focus on those aspects that fit within three broad categories:

- Program Management and Organization (organization, program team approach, and support),

- Stakeholder Engagement (relevance, advisory services, and education and training), and
- Collaborative Network Activities (relationships and coordination).

Ample time should be dedicated to all three of these areas to ensure the SRT receives enough information. The SRT will meet with the Sea Grant program's management team, advisory committees, university administration, stakeholders and others as determined by the Sea Grant program Director being reviewed.

Programs are encouraged to provide the SRT with an overview of the state Sea Grant program at the start of the site visit. Following this introduction, the SRT should receive information largely from presentations and structured or unstructured discussions in a relatively informal setting.

The Site Visit Schedule
The site visit is designed to be completed over a two-day period (e.g., Tuesday/Wednesday or Wednesday/Thursday), with the first day and a half dedicated to assessing the program. The last half day is devoted to drafting the site visit report and briefing the program management team 3 and appropriate university officials. A site visit will only span two full days and cannot begin the afternoon of one day and end the afternoon of the third day.

Best Management Practices
Identified in the 2010-11 Cycle of Site Visits

Louisiana Sea Grant
- The LASG has shown ability to rapidly respond to the recent Deepwater Horizon and other disasters. The flexibility and nimbleness of this Program is a model for other Sea Grant Programs.
- The education program "Ocean Commotion" is an exciting and engaging interactive program for students, parents, and teachers. Other Sea Grant Programs could learn from the design and implementation of this program.
- The direct marketing program "Delcambre Direct" is a model for other Sea Grant Programs interested in new models for their fishery and aquaculture producers.
- The storm surge visualization project is an effective tool to educate communities regarding the hazards and risks associated with storm events on local shorelines.
- The Climate Community of Practice project is an excellent example of regional partnership and collaboration to develop educational and outreach programs for local communities.
- The hiring of ethnically compatible extension agents is an excellent practice in interacting with the diverse ethnic groups living in coastal Louisiana.
- The oral history project is another excellent example of integrating outreach activities with social history for a rapidly changing coastal population. These elements are part of the coastal community and should not be ignored.
- Student engagement in projects was impressive and the tracking of graduate students trained and support by Louisiana Sea Grant was also impressive.
- The Louisiana Coastal Hazards Mitigation Guidebook is exemplary and a potential model for other Sea Grant Programs.