

A View from Outside: Some Reflections of an NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor

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As an NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor, I have had the privilege and pleasure to serve as an external program reviewer or consultant for a wide variety of NCHC member institutions—large research universities, small and mid-size colleges, and two-year institutions—since 1998. My visits to nearly fifty campuses have revealed predictable similarities in honors education at all institutions as well as sometimes troubling variations, as a result of which I have come to believe even more strongly that the NCHC has an important role to play in improving the quality of honors education nationally. In furtherance of that role, I want to encourage NCHC members to take advantage of the site-visitor program and so have distilled my experiences into a general overview that I hope will encourage more NCHC colleagues to become involved with this rewarding process and have composed a set of practical advice for those who choose to do so.

UNSURPRISING SIMILARITIES

COMMITMENT OF THE HONORS ADMINISTRATORS

One of the striking similarities among honors programs and colleges, regardless of their institutional context, is the remarkable dedication of those entrusted with their administration. With rare exceptions, these individuals regularly provide service beyond the call of duty in their efforts to provide educational opportunities for their students whether the honors program is run on a shoestring budget or is generously funded.

In many ways, these honors deans, directors, or coordinators embody the highest ideals of academia. With a vision of what honors education can do for their students, they work tirelessly to develop curricula, offer honors advising, and provide opportunities inside and outside the classroom. Sadly, however, as they continue to go far beyond the normal expectations of academic professionals, their institutions often take advantage of their dedication, leading to burn-out and to the frequent turnover among honors directors that is so noticeable in the attendance at our national conferences.

ENTHUSIASM AND QUALITY OF THE STUDENTS

One of the highlights of every site visit is the opportunity to meet outstanding honors students and discuss their honors experiences with them. Almost without exception, they prove to be bright, motivated, and curious—traits that we would wish to find in every college or university student. Honors students are not afraid to ask probing questions, and they are curious about forms of honors education that take place outside the confines of their particular institution. As I have typically argued during site visits, these honors students can be some of the most effective advocates of the institution, but they also can be the institution's most articulate critics if they come to believe that they are the victims of false advertising in the recruitment process.

HONORS CURRICULA AND COURSES

One of the pleasures of being an NCHC Site Visitor is exploring the many ways our honors colleagues have designed their honors curricula in general and honors courses in particular. Site visitors can get a sense of how successful the educational program is from the enthusiasm of faculty and students about their honors experiences. Some site visitors feel that sitting in on an honors class or seminar provides important additional evidence, but, while I respect the argument for visiting an honors class, I come down on the other side. When I sit in on a seminar, I find that the students' awareness of my presence—or, even more, the presence of a team of site visitors—changes the tenor of the discussion, and not for the better.

Other means of evaluating the academic integrity of an honors program or honors college are unobtrusive and, in my view, more effective than class visits. Looking over course evaluations, particularly those with significant narrative sections, provides valuable clues about what transpires in the classroom. Reviewing a few honors theses can also be instructive. Attending a research day is an ideal opportunity to visit with honors students about posters that showcase their academic research or other creative endeavors.

IMPORTANCE OF HONORS ADVISING

NCHC institutions employ a wide variety of models for honors advising. In some smaller programs, the honors director is expected to provide honors advising for all of the students while, in some large universities' honors colleges, several full-time professional staff members perform this role. Some institutions use key faculty in academic departments to provide honors advising, and others use honors-student peer advising. Whatever the approach is used, a consultant or program review team needs to meet with those who provide honors advising, have access to student advisor evaluation information, and consult with honors students about their experiences with their honors advisors.

APPRECIATION OF HONORS BY THE INSTITUTION'S RECRUITERS

At every institution I have visited, the staff members of the admissions office have recognized—to a greater or lesser degree—that the honors program or honors college is an important factor in recruiting high-talent students to the institution. For this reason, honors administrators need to keep their admissions office up to date about the program or college while going out of their way to assist with recruiting events and the development of recruiting materials.

Some tension may exist, however, if the admissions office insists on making the selection of new honors students. While understanding the importance of the honors program as a recruiting “chip” and encouraging close cooperation, I almost always urge that the decision about whom to admit to the honors program rest with those who administer the program rather than with campus recruiters.

THE OUTSIDER PHENOMENON

A site visitor can make the same comment that the local honors administrator has been making—sometimes literally for years—and find a willing audience among higher-level administrators, perhaps demonstrating once again that an expert is someone from more than fifty miles away. Whatever the reason, the voice of the consultant or external review team can sometimes cure administrative deafness to the needs of the honors program.

SOMETIMES TROUBLING DISSIMILARITIES

LEVEL OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

One of the striking dissimilarities among honors programs and colleges is the level of budgetary and other support provided by the institution. While some programs are generously funded, others exist on a shoestring that is frayed to the breaking point. From time to time, a frustrated honors director will post a query to the NCHC listserv about an administrative request that the honors program generate its own funding. The immediate and overwhelming response from experienced honors colleagues is that, unless this is the model for the English department and other academic units, it is unreasonable to ask the honors program to become self-supporting. At the same time, however, a growing segment of honors programs and honors colleges have added honors student fees. Reportedly, honors students do not resent such fees if they are used to fund student events, travel, and other fringe benefits that might not otherwise be possible.

An important component of the site visitor's role is to place a particular institution's budgetary support of its honors program or college in a wider context. Frequently the site visitor (or team) will contact honors colleagues at institutions similar to the one being reviewed to obtain specific budgetary information for inclusion in the site visit report by way of comparison.

UNDERSTANDING OF HONORS BY SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

Site visitors almost always request an opportunity to meet individually with the institution's president, the provost or academic vice president, and any other high-level administrators that the local honors administrator believes to be key to the well-being of the honors program or college. One of the questions I like to pose in these individual meetings is, "What would [this institution] lose if we were to recommend abolition of the honors program [or college] and our recommendation were to be followed?" The question almost always prompts a listing of the obvious losses to the institution—in recruiting, retention, reputation, and faculty satisfaction—and gives the site visitors the opportunity (if necessary) to raise the question of the appropriate level of budgetary and other kinds of support.

Sadly, some top administrators have little grasp of what the honors program or college at their institution is all about. To some degree, honors administrators may be at fault if they have not regularly conveyed detailed and accurate information up the administrative ladder, but some upper administrators have made it clear that providing such information is neither necessary nor desired. One honors director reported that a former provost preferred once-a-year oral reports and directed that any written annual reports be limited to a single page.

Site visitors do their job best when honors administrators convey, well in advance of the site visit, their candid view of the support received from the central administration and also suggest how upper-level administrators are likely to respond to straight talk about perceived problems as well as strengths.

TENURE AND FTE OF HONORS ADMINISTRATORS

Many of the most successful honors administrators in NCHC have served for twenty years or more at the pleasure of the provost or some other administrator without having any particular term of office, and in most instances I believe this to be the best model for success over time. The other extreme is the intentional revolving-door approach of three-year terms (sometimes renewable, sometimes not) for honors directors, which I believe leads to instability and constant reinvention the honors wheel.

Some honors administrators have been expected to develop and run an honors program on a quarter-time release during the academic year without summer salary support. Barring extenuating circumstances, my advice to these honors directors is quite simply "Quit!" On one occasion, in which the situation was not quite so dire but still untenable, the honors administrator took this advice from the site visitor team with the result that the administration urged her not to resign and she suddenly received the resources that she had been seeking for several years.

IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

THE VALUE OF NCHC'S BASIC CHARACTERISTICS

At one time, many in NCHC resisted the development of NCHC's Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program because of the fear (unwarranted, as it turned out) that they would become a straitjacket, standardizing honors education and eliminating the flexibility enjoyed by honors students, faculty, and administrators. Today, however, the Basic Characteristics for a Fully Developed Honors Programs and the Basic Characteristics for a Fully Developed Honors College (see Appendix A for the current wording) seem to be received wisdom among the members of NCHC. From the perspective of a site visitor, they provide invaluable support for honors programs and colleges.

If external honors review teams or consultants simply state their own views on the nature of the local honors program or college, administrators might well dismiss recommendation contained in the final report as simply the opinions of one, two, or three individuals. If, however, the report carefully incorporates NCHC's Basic Characteristics into its narrative and evaluation, administrators will have a harder time dismissing it because the Basic Characteristics have been adopted by a national organization made up of more than 800 colleges and universities of all types and sizes. I cannot overstate the value of referring to an official national perspective on many aspects of quality honors education and administration.

ONE SIZE MOST DEFINITELY DOES NOT FIT ALL

Providing a national perspective does not mean or imply that one size fits all in honors education. Site visitors always need to determine what a particular institution is seeking to achieve with its honors program or college, information that is essential to an appropriate review and evaluation. The role of site visitors is not to impose their views of the perfect honors operation even though they might well call attention to other honors programs and colleges as potential models or examples.

THE POSSIBLE VALUE OF VOLUNTARY NCHC CERTIFICATION

NCHC has been weighing the pros and cons of a voluntary certification program for honors programs and colleges. Without chiming in on this debate, I would like to provide one cautionary tale derived from an external review where I was one of a three-member site visit team. At this large university, our team was ushered into the president's office, and his first question was, "Is NCHC an accrediting body for honors colleges?" We answered that it was not, and, before we could launch into an explanation of the guidelines established in NCHC's Basic Characteristics, his eyes had glazed over and his body language suggested that any meaningful conversation had come to an end. One can only wonder if the evaluators from the accrediting groups for the College

of Engineering or the College of Business would have been so summarily dismissed, but from my experience over the years these organizational evaluators command a great deal of respect and their reports are influential in affecting the allocation of resources on campus.

SOME PRACTICAL TIPS

FOR THE HONORS DIRECTOR CONSIDERING A SITE VISIT

Bringing an NCHC consultant or external review team to a campus involves significant expenditures that may seem particularly daunting to one of the “shoestring” honors programs mentioned above, but this problem can often be surmounted.

First, consider having your honors program or college included in your institution’s regular, periodic, program-review process that is typically funded from a central source rather than from the budget of an individual unit. In addition to providing a possible funding source for a site visit, inclusion in the regular program-review cycle with other academic programs on campus is a way to affirm the academic importance of the honors program or college and to assure that it will receive at least periodic attention from those higher on the administrative ladder.

Second, even if your honors program is not part of a regular program-review cycle, you can try to convince your institution’s chief academic officer that the value of bringing nationally recognized site visitors to campus justifies the upper administration’s funding of such a visit. This strategy has two benefits: your program budget will not have to absorb the costs of the site visit, and high-level administrators sometimes seem more impressed by a report that they have funded.

Third, you might be wise to let your chief academic officer select the members of the site visit team from the list of NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors that is available on the NCHC website <<http://nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/site-visitors>>, or you might suggest a half-dozen names from the list and leave the selection up to him or her. This strategy can dispel any concerns that you might be bringing your honors friends to campus, thus adding credibility to the site visitors’ report.

Fourth is the matter of specific costs for a site visit. If you are seeking informal consulting advice from a site visitor at a nearby institution, the costs may be minimal. A good number of site visitors have made such visits, typically limited to a single day including travel, for nominal compensation. If, on the other hand, you are seeking a formal site visit that involves considerable pre-visit reading, significant travel, and a comprehensive formal report, you should expect to compensate each member of the team \$1,000 to \$1,500 per day on campus with a minimum two-day visit and with the host institution providing all travel-related expenses. While this stipend may at first seem like handsome compensation for your NCHC colleagues, each site visitor typically must read

hundreds of pages and participate in numerous email exchanges and telephone calls before ever setting foot on campus, and the visit itself is a proverbial treadmill, with meetings from early morning until late at night. In the month or so following the campus visit, many more hours are spent reviewing notes, negotiating language for the written report with other members of the team, and then sending a confidential working draft of the report to the honors administrator for correction of inadvertent factual errors. If any significant objections are raised to the confidential working draft, further editing and often rewriting of the report ensue, and, even after the final report has been submitted, the visitors can expect follow-up questions over the following weeks and sometimes months. All in all, the hourly compensation rate for NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors is unlikely to be the envy of any academic acquaintance, but site visitors are committed professionals who perform this service because they are dedicated to the advancement of honors education.

Finally, because of the amount of time involved in a site visit, site visitors are rarely willing to take on more than one or two visits in any given academic term. Honors administrators are thus well-advised to contact desired site visitors well in advance because some are committed as much as six months to a year in advance.

FOR THE SITE VISITOR

NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors are by definition advocates for honors education, but they also must do their best to be candid in their on-campus interviews and written reports on their campus visits. University presidents and others often use these reports as part of a strategy to generate external resources, and on one occasion a president told us not to write another dull report that was destined to sit on a shelf but instead to give him action items to consider. Needless to say, we welcomed that task, and the ultimate result was that the president brought in a ten-million-dollar gift to name the institution's honors college.

A year or two after another site visit, I was asked to provide a written review of a proposal being submitted to a prospective major donor. I found a great deal that seemed worthy of support, but, having been told by the honors dean to point out any problems, I also reported weaknesses in the proposal. He told me later that my having been candid about my reservations as well as my endorsements of the proposal had been persuasive to the donor, who was pleased that my report did not simply say, "Everything is coming up honors roses at University XYZ." The result of the proposal was a multi-million-dollar gift to the institution's honors college.

Let it appear that every site visit results in a windfall for the host institution, let me note that sometimes little or nothing happens as a result of a site visit. If the honors program or college is already doing splendidly, the site visit may simply provide external verification of its excellence, not a bad result in and of itself. A less salutary situation occurs when an honors program or college

needs significant help but the administration pays little or no attention to the site visitors' recommendations. In such a case, the honors administrator need not give up hope completely because subsequent changes in the central administration may provide an opportunity to share the report with a more receptive incoming administration and provide a delayed positive outcome. Another cautionary tale illustrates the least appealing possibility: a site visitor recounted an occasion when he told the institution that it did not really have an honors program worthy of the name, and the result was that the administration agreed with him and abolished the program.

A site visitor needs to be cautious about campus landmines and check with the honors dean or director before setting foot on campus to learn what might blow up in the honors administrator's face after the visit. One provost "fined" me for daring to use the term "branch campus" (a landmine at that institution) rather than the preferred "regional campus" designation. Fortunately, the fine was only \$1.00, a sum I paid in cash after securing the provost's commitment that my dollar would make its way to the honors college.

Finally, site visitors should avoid the trap of being made *personnel* evaluators rather than *program* reviewers. On more than one occasion a provost or president has asked me whether the current honors dean or director is "the right person for the job," and in one instance this question arose in the first meeting of the first day of my campus visit. On that occasion I could say that it was too early in the process to make any judgments about the honors program in question, but over time I found that a better answer is to say politely but firmly that NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors are trained to review honors programs and colleges and not to evaluate personnel. On the other hand, if the site visitors conclude that the honors director or dean is doing a great job, they can find ways to draw attention to his or her strengths in the context of reporting on the program or college.

HOW TO BECOME AN NCHC-RECOMMENDED SITE VISITOR

I hope this essay encourages readers to become NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors and thus assist their honors colleagues around the nation and internationally. Retirements and other factors have led the number of site visitors to decline from about forty just a few years ago to twenty-nine in 2012. Adding the names of professional colleagues to the list is important to NCHC's continued organizational health and future development.

Qualifications and procedures are spelled out in NCHC Standing Order XVI (Appendix B). To be considered for designation as an NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor, you must be a current NCHC institutional representative or professional member and have held NCHC membership for at least five years. In addition, you must have attended three out of the last five NCHC conferences (including the one at which your application is considered) and

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also have completed the NCHC Assessment and Evaluation Institute for Site Visitor Training. These training institutes have been held in even-numbered years in Brooklyn (2000), Chicago (2002), Albuquerque (2004), Lincoln (2006), Portland, Oregon (2008), Atlanta (2010), and Lincoln (2012). Finally, you must submit an application form, an abbreviated curriculum vitae (limited to honors and assessment/evaluation activities), the names and addresses of three relevant professional references (at least two of whom must be from institutions other than your home institution and one of whom preferably will be a current NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor), and a one-page statement of your views on the role of a site visitor. The application must be submitted by the deadline specified by the NCHC Headquarters Office.

NCHC's Assessment and Evaluation Committee reviews site visitor applications once a year, and it recommends the names of new site visitors to the NCHC Board of Directors. The NCHC Board considers these recommendations from the committee during its fall meeting and votes on whether to approve those who have been recommended.

If you have questions about the process, you should feel free to contact the NCHC Executive Director at the Headquarters Office or one or both of the co-chairs of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee.

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APPENDIX A

NCHC STANDING ORDER XVII. BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FULLY DEVELOPED HONORS PROGRAMS AND HONORS COLLEGES

Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program (Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on March 4, 1994; amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on November 23, 2007; further amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 19, 2010)

Although no single or definitive honors program model can or should be superimposed on all types of institutions, the National Collegiate Honors Council has identified a number of best practices that are common to successful and fully developed honors programs.

1. The honors program offers carefully designed educational experiences that meet the needs and abilities of the undergraduate students it serves. A clearly articulated set of admission criteria (e.g., GPA, SAT score, a written essay, satisfactory progress, etc.) identifies the targeted student population served by the honors program. The program clearly specifies the requirements needed for retention and satisfactory completion.
2. The program has a clear mandate from the institution's administration in the form of a mission statement or charter document that includes the objectives and responsibilities of honors and defines the place of honors in the administrative and academic structure of the institution. The statement ensures the permanence and stability of honors by guaranteeing that adequate infrastructure resources, including an appropriate budget as well as appropriate faculty, staff, and administrative support when necessary, are allocated to honors so that the program avoids dependence on the good will and energy of particular faculty members or administrators for survival. In other words, the program is fully institutionalized (like comparable units on campus) so that it can build a lasting tradition of excellence.
3. The honors director reports to the chief academic officer of the institution.
4. The honors curriculum, established in harmony with the mission statement, meets the needs of the students in the program and features special courses, seminars, colloquia, experiential-learning opportunities, undergraduate research opportunities, or other independent-study options.
5. The program requirements constitute a substantial portion of the participants' undergraduate work, typically 20% to 25% of the total course work and certainly no less than 15%.

6. The curriculum of the program is designed so that honors requirements can, when appropriate, also satisfy general education requirements, major or disciplinary requirements, and pre-professional or professional training requirements.
7. The program provides a locus of visible and highly reputed standards and models of excellence for students and faculty across the campus.
8. The criteria for selection of honors faculty include exceptional teaching skills, the ability to provide intellectual leadership and mentoring for able students, and support for the mission of honors education.
9. The program is located in suitable, preferably prominent, quarters on campus that provide both access for the students and a focal point for honors activity. Those accommodations include space for honors administrative, faculty, and support staff functions as appropriate. They may include space for an honors lounge, library, reading rooms, and computer facilities. If the honors program has a significant residential component, the honors housing and residential life functions are designed to meet the academic and social needs of honors students.
10. The program has a standing committee or council of faculty members that works with the director or other administrative officer and is involved in honors curriculum, governance, policy, development, and evaluation deliberations. The composition of that group represents the colleges and/or departments served by the program and also elicits support for the program from across the campus.
11. Honors students are assured a voice in the governance and direction of the honors program. This can be achieved through a student committee that conducts its business with as much autonomy as possible but works in collaboration with the administration and faculty to maintain excellence in the program. Honors students are included in governance, serving on the advisory/policy committee as well as constituting the group that governs the student association.
12. Honors students receive honors-related academic advising from qualified faculty and/or staff.
13. The program serves as a laboratory within which faculty feel welcome to experiment with new subjects, approaches, and pedagogies. When proven successful, such efforts in curriculum and pedagogical development can serve as prototypes for initiatives that can become institutionalized across the campus.
14. The program engages in continuous assessment and evaluation and is open to the need for change in order to maintain its distinctive position of offering exceptional and enhanced educational opportunities to honors students.

A VIEW FROM OUTSIDE

15. The program emphasizes active learning and participatory education by offering opportunities for students to participate in regional and national conferences, Honors Semesters, international programs, community service, internships, undergraduate research, and other types of experiential education.
16. When appropriate, two-year and four-year programs have articulation agreements by which honors graduates from two-year programs who meet previously agreed-upon requirements are accepted into four-year honors programs.
17. The program provides priority enrollment for active honors students in recognition of scheduling difficulties caused by the need to satisfy both honors and major program(s) requirements. {March, 2004; November, 2007; February, 2010}

Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors College
(Approved by the NCHC Executive Committee on June 25, 2005, and amended by the NCHC Board of Directors on February 19, 2010)

The National Collegiate Honors Council has identified these best practices that are common to successful and fully developed honors colleges.

1. An honors college incorporates the relevant characteristics of a fully developed honors program.
2. The honors college exists as an equal collegiate unit within a multi-collegiate university structure.
3. The head of the honors college is a dean reporting directly to the chief academic officer of the institution and serving as a full member of the Council of Deans if one exists. The dean has a full-time, 12-month appointment.
4. The operational and staff budgets of honors colleges provide resources at least comparable to those of other collegiate units of equivalent size.
5. The honors college exercises increased coordination and control of departmental honors where the college has emerged out of a decentralized system.
6. The honors college exercises considerable control over honors recruitment and admissions, including the appropriate size of the incoming class. Admission to the honors college may be by separate application.
7. The honors college exercises considerable control over its policies, curriculum, and selection of faculty.
8. The curriculum of the honors college offers significant course opportunities across all four years of study.
9. The curriculum of the honors college constitutes at least 20% of a student's degree program. The honors college requires an honors thesis or honors capstone project.
10. Where the home university has a significant residential component, the honors college offers substantial honors residential opportunities.
11. The distinction achieved by the completion of the honors college requirements is publically announced and recorded, and methods may include announcement at commencement ceremonies, notations on the diploma and/or the student's final transcript, or other similar actions.
12. Like other colleges within the university, the honors college may be involved in alumni affairs and development and may have an external advisory board. {June, 2005; February, 2010}

APPENDIX B

**NCHC STANDING ORDER XIII.
NCHC-RECOMMENDED SITE VISITORS**

- A. The NCHC Headquarters Office shall maintain and make available to members a list of NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors.
- B. The Assessment and Evaluation Committee shall consider applications for the list during its meeting at the NCHC Conference. To be considered, an applicant shall:
 - 1. be a current institutional representative or individual professional member of NCHC
 - 2. have been an NCHC member for 5 years. {November 2006}
 - 3. have attended three out of the last five NCHC conferences (that may include the conference at which his or her application is considered); {March 2009}
 - 4. have completed an NCHC Institute for site visitor training; and
 - 5. have submitted an application form, abbreviated curriculum vitae (limited to Honors and assessment/evaluation activities), the names and addresses of three relevant professional references (at least two of which shall be from institutions other than his or her own home institution; one of whom preferably will be a current recommended site visitor), and a one-page statement of his or her views on the role of a Site Visitor. {November 2006}
- C. The Assessment and Evaluation Committee shall submit the names of persons recommended as new Site Visitors to the Board of Directors, which shall have the authority to direct the addition of names to the Site Visitors list. {December 2005}
- D. NCHC-Recommended Site Visitors shall, by January 31 of each year, report to the NCHC Headquarters Office by updating the required forms for the web page (and other NCHC materials) and including the institution(s) for which they have conducted site visits in the previous calendar year and shall designate for listing on the web page (and other NCHC materials) up to five most recent site visits (with the years of those visits). The listing shall also include: @ Information on additional site visits available upon request from this Site Visitor. {November 2006}
- E. To remain on the list, a Site Visitor must:
 - 1. be a current institutional representative or individual professional member of NCHC;
 - 2. have attended three of the last five NCHC conferences (on a rolling basis);

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3. update the required forms for the web page annually by January 31; and
 4. have conducted at least one site visit or have attended an NCHC Institute for site visitor training in the preceding six years.
- F. Neither the chair (or co-chair) of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee, nor any officer or employee of NCHC, shall recommend specific Site Visitors but shall instead refer those asking for such information to the list of recommended Site Visitors. Two exceptions to this policy shall be permitted when:
1. the chair (or co-chair) of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee, or an officer or employee of NCHC, has been selected as a Site Visitor and is asked to suggest names for additional members of the site visit team; or
 2. recommendations are made according to policies approved by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Assessment and Evaluation Committee. {June 2005}