

Creating a Review Committee & Selecting External Reviewers for Non-Accredited Programs **WKU Academic Program Review** (rev. 8/31/2026)

The full APR Review Committee is comprised of

- Two external reviewers who are experts in the discipline of the program under review and have no affiliation (past or current) with WKU; and
- Two internal WKU faculty members who are not affiliated with the department in which the program is housed.

The college dean appoints all review committee members in consultation with the department chair. Deans should consider diversity of the group as they finalize committee selections.

Starter Tips for Department Chairs:

- Begin early—consider your/your faculty's/your dean's/the university's calendars when planning.
- Determine several windows of time in late February-early April when you/your department/your dean could host the site visit.
- Make preliminary, informal inquiries of potential external reviewers to gauge their interest in being in the pool and to determine their availability—this saves time/stress later.

Selection of Committee Members External to WKU/Disciplinary Experts

By October 15, the department chair should present at least 3 potential reviewers to the dean with each nominee's

- Name and Title
- University Affiliation
- Email address
- Work telephone
- Brief academic biography (several sentences) articulating their qualifications to serve

Nominees should meet the following criteria:

- Must not have or have had an affiliation with WKU (i.e., **no alumni, former or current employees**)
- Must not have a personal/professional relationship with program or departmental faculty (in cases with questions, department chair should disclose concerns to the dean)
- Must have appropriate academic qualifications relevant to the program under review and be from a regionally accredited program
- Must have experience as a program coordinator or department chair
- May be from a peer institution/program or from an aspirational program
- Be available to come to WKU in person to participate in the process (identify potential dates for campus visits in advance)

Note: Department chairs should make every effort to select qualified reviewers within driving distance or, in some cases, a direct flight, to help contain travel costs. In some cases, exceptions should be made. Chairs should make the diversity of the nominee pool an important consideration.

Compensation for Reviewers External to WKU:

Chair: \$1500, Member \$1000. External reviewers serving on two committees (i.e., AB and MA in Classics), each person receives \$2250 and each chairs separate committee. College is responsible for stipend and travel expenses. *Please note that external reviewers must pay for travel/accommodations and file the appropriate reimbursement paperwork.*

By November 1, deans will confer with department chairs to rank the candidates.

By November 15, department chairs will contact nominees in ranked order to check/finalize their availability for a campus visit and participation in the process. Ask each person if they would be willing to serve as chair. Committee Responsibilities are outlined in detail at <https://www.wku.edu/academicaffairs/apr/apr-review-committee-resources.php> as well as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities document.

After department chairs confirm external reviewers' willingness to serve and which people are willing to serve as committee chair, the department chair will notify the dean.

Selection of Committee Members Internal to WKU

In consultation with the department chair, deans will select at least two WKU faculty members who are not in the same department/school that houses the academic program under review and are not actively involved in the program. Most of the review committee should be tenure-track faculty. Academic staff, including research and pedagogical faculty, may be members of a review committee but should not comprise the majority. Appointees

- Should neither teach nor provide service for the department housing the program under review;
- Must not have a close personal relationship with program or departmental faculty (appointees should disclose concerns to the dean);
- Must have experience as a program coordinator or department chair;
- **Must be completely available for the ENTIRE site visit, having classes covered as needed.**

Note: For programs undergoing two or more program reviews in the same year, department chairs and deans may collaborate to create multiple committees with the same committee membership. For example, if undergraduate and graduate programs in Classics are to be reviewed in the same year, one external reviewer might chair the undergraduate review committee and the other would chair the graduate review committee, but otherwise the two committees could have the same membership. External reviewers' compensation would be increased in such an arrangement (see above).

Finalizing and Organizing the Committee

By November 22, deans will send charge memo and committee form to Review Committee, department chair, and cc Rheanna Plemons finalizing committee membership. Department chairs will coordinate the campus visit--communicating with Review Committee members, the dean's office, and the Provost's Office, making on-campus arrangements for external reviewers, managing logistics, and arranging/scheduling meetings and finalizing the schedule by early February.

Department Chair's Steps for Coordinating the Campus Visit Itinerary

- Consider any departmental or university scheduled events that would conflict.
- Be aware of dates for spring break at WKU and for external reviewers
- Check availability of review committee members, for February or March visit—have as many options as possible.
- Check availability of dean, Assistant Provost (Rheanna.Plemons@wku.edu), and Provost (Toni.Burnham@wku.edu)
- Please schedule final review meetings in WAB 227 so that the Provost can attend.
- Gradually schedule in all relevant constituencies, using campus visit template for guidance.
- Confirm tentative itinerary with all parties (reviewers, program faculty, dean's office, provost's office, student and alumni participants) before finalizing.
- Share final schedule with all parties with as much advance notice as possible.