



Administrative Program Review

Handbook for the External Reviewer

Office of Institutional Planning & Effectiveness

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WCU Campus Profile

Western Carolina University is a premier regional university with nationally and internationally recognized teacher-scholars dedicated to student learning. A constituent member of the University of North Carolina, WCU deploys its resources statewide either singly or collaboratively with other institutions to address state needs. The university offers courses in the arts, sciences, technologies, humanities, and professions through degree programs at the bachelor's, master's, educational specialist levels and a doctorate in Educational Leadership. Western offers the advantages of a large university while maintaining its small college atmosphere.

The Regional University

As a regional university, WCU is committed to serving constituents within its geographic domain by offering services and appropriate educational programs that serve bona fide needs. Wedded to its region, WCU strives to take advantage of its locational advantage by capitalizing on assets unique to the region. As a result, WCU's educational portfolio and services will be strongly influenced by its location and the opportunities within it. Although WCU has a defined region as specified below, it will utilize venues outside of the region including national and international sites for educational purposes and training.

WCU's Region

WCU's core geographical region is defined as the 17 western most counties of North Carolina. As such, it is obligated to work most closely with educational, governmental, and business entities in this area. Historically, WCU has provided educational programs and services to an extended region as far east as the I-77 corridor when invited to do so. WCU will continue to serve its extended region selectively when called upon and when it fits within the university's resources and programming. Further, WCU has multiple programs that will interact with its larger economic region extending from Atlanta in the west, Raleigh in the east, Knoxville in the north, and Greenville/Spartanburg in the south.

Promise

Western Carolina University helps those who aspire to make a difference in their world.

Mission

Western Carolina University creates engaged learning opportunities that incorporate research and service through residential, distance education, and international experiences. The university focuses its academic programs, educational outreach, research and creative activities, and cultural opportunities to improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in the region, state, and nation. (Approved Mission, June 2, 2006)

Vision

Western Carolina University will be a national model for student learning and engagement that embraces its responsibilities as a regionally engaged university.

Website: www.wcu.edu

Founded: 1889

Location: Cullowhee, North Carolina, near the Great Smoky and Blue Ridge mountains, fifty-two miles west of Asheville.

Character: A coeducational residential public university within the University of North Carolina system.

Enrollment: Approximately 9,400 students from the United States and from Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. Student body is 56% female and 44% male.

Academic programs: More than 220 majors and concentrations for undergraduates in addition to over 42 graduate-level programs of study.

Campus: 600-acre campus (approximately).

Calendar: Two semesters (August to December and January to May) and multiple summer sessions.

Faculty: Almost 500 full-time faculty members; 76% hold doctoral or terminal degrees.

Class size: More than 75% of classes have fewer than 30 students; the average freshman class size is 23; the student/faculty ratio is 13 to 1.

Accreditations: Western Carolina University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097; telephone number 404-679-4501; www.sacscoc.org) to award bachelor's, master's, education specialist, and doctor's degrees. Also, the university holds 21 special program accreditations and is a member of more than 30 state and national associations and organizations to which its professional programs are related.

Roles and Responsibilities of the External Reviewer

The centerpiece of any meaningful review of administrative programs or academic support units is the evaluation of program strengths and weaknesses by qualified experts in the field. At WCU, we assume that external reviewers have the breadth of knowledge and expertise necessary to assist staff in advancing the quality of their unit's programming and services. To that end, WCU solicits the service of three external reviewers to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of each administrative program and academic support unit every seven years. At least one of the selected reviewers will be external to the University and one to two will be a WCU faculty member or staff member not affiliated with the program under review.

Your role as a part of the external review team is critical to the ultimate success of this endeavor. The duties and tasks expected of you include:

- ▶ conducting an on-site visit to the campus where you will meet with key program constituents including faculty, staff, administrators, students, and, when possible, program participants;
- ▶ evaluating all program materials provided to you prior to and during the campus visit for consistency and quality; and
- ▶ producing, in consultation with other selected reviewers, a report summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the program under review as well as making suggestions for improvement no later than 30 days following the campus visit. See Appendix A for a suggested format/outline.

Determination of the quality of an administrative program or academic support unit is a complex undertaking and must be considered not only in terms of national or professional standards but also in light of the institutional context and program-specific mission and goals. To assist you in your evaluation, we will provide you as much information as possible on WCU, the UNC System, and the program under review. See Appendix B for a list of additional resources. In this handbook, you will find the WCU Criteria for Administrative Program Review and a list of numerous web links to key institutional and program documents. In addition, you can expect to receive the following documents 30 days prior to the scheduled campus visit.

- ▶ A copy of the program's internal self-study document.
- ▶ A copy of the required documentation outlined in the WCU Program Review Criteria.

Your visit to campus will be designed to accommodate several key activities including interviews with selected University administrators, meetings with important program constituents, and a private work meeting between the external reviewers. A typical visit schedule can be found in Appendix C. The final itinerary and schedule for your campus visit will be sent to you prior to your arrival on campus.

Travel and Honoraria¹

Travel Arrangements

Staff from the Office of Institutional Planning & Effectiveness (OIPE) in the Academic Affairs Division will work with you to make travel arrangements to and from Cullowhee. Lodging on or near campus will be arranged for you in advance of your visit. OIPE office staff will assist you in making flight arrangements. Program faculty or other University staff will provide ground transportation during your visit.

Travel Expenses

WCU will reimburse documented travel costs per The State of North Carolina and UNC travel policies. Typical expenses include airline fare or mileage and meals not provided by WCU for the duration of the campus visit². All travel expenses must be submitted through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Planning. Reimbursement typically takes 2-3 weeks once all completed forms are submitted to WCU Accounts Payable.

Stipend

Each non-WCU reviewer will be paid a stipend for his or her services. The stipend will vary based on the size of the unit and the extent of review. The stipend will be submitted for payment following receipt of the External Review Report, which is due no later than 30 days following the campus visit.

¹ Travel and honoraria guidelines are applicable only to reviewers not employed by WCU.

² Meals' reimbursement cannot exceed the \$32/day.

Goals of Administrative Program Review at WCU

1. Maintain high-quality programs and services that are competitive and consistent with the University's mission.
2. Encourage and support unit self-improvement by:
 - highlighting strengths of programs,
 - identifying opportunities for strategic change,
 - validating that units are meeting the changing needs of stakeholders,
 - identifying areas for improvements and supporting improvement changes, and
 - providing data necessary in the process of allocating resources.
3. Advance the mission of Western Carolina University by:
 - reaffirming the relationship between the mission of the unit and the mission of the University,
 - fostering cooperation and collaboration between units, and
 - meeting the needs of the University students, faculty, and/or staff.
4. Provide a formative and summative review of unit effectiveness.

WCU Program Review Standards

The standards outlined below are used by unit staff as a template to complete the internal self-study. Units are asked to limit their narrative to 15 pages and to provide the required documentation in appendices. These documents will be provided to you at least 30 days prior to the campus visit.

History and description of unit

1. State the primary purpose and key functions of the unit.
2. List the top 3-5 goals/priorities of the unit.
3. Summarize the history of this unit on campus.
4. Describe the structure of the unit and how it is situated organizationally within the institution.
5. Provide an organizational chart of the unit with every employee identified by title and name. Attach a brief (3-4 bullets) list of the primary duties carried out by each employee on the chart. Also, for each full-time staff member provide a full *curriculum vitae* or 2-page *vitae/résumé* summary.
6. If applicable, describe the number and contribution of student employees or graduate assistants to the unit's programs and services.

Alignment with WCU Mission, Vision, Values

1. How does the unit mission align with the University mission with specific reference to support of the University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *UNC Tomorrow* and the academic colleges/schools? (see links to QEP and *UNC Tomorrow* in Appendix A)
2. How has the purpose of the unit changed in the past 5 years?
3. How do you expect the purpose to change in the next 5 years?

Demand for the program

1. Who are the key users/participants of the unit's programs or services?
2. How do you identify and measure demand for the unit's programs or services?
3. List those other units on campus that interact most with this unit. Briefly describe the nature of those interactions.
4. List other units on campus that provide related programs and services.
5. Describe the unique contributions of this unit.

Quality

1. How do you identify and measure quality of the unit's programs or services? List the top benchmarks used to assess quality.
2. How do you use the results of quality assessments to improve programs and/or services? Provide specific examples.

3. What were the major accomplishments of the unit in the past 5 years? Include those directly related to unit functions AND/OR other contributions related to University goals.

Cost Effectiveness

1. How do you identify and measure cost effectiveness of this unit? List the top benchmarks used to assess cost effectiveness.
2. Attach an itemized spreadsheet outlining ALL revenues/resources generated and expenses incurred (including salaries) for the unit for the past 3 years.

Opportunity Analysis

1. How can programs or services offered by the unit be enhanced? Examples might include:
 - Automation of processes
 - Collaboration with other units on campus
 - Outsourcing to a independent contractor
2. How do the activities of other units advance or hinder the effectiveness of your unit? Focus should be on those units that were identified in item #3 in the section on “Demand for the Program”.
3. What programs and services offered by the unit are redundant or outside the scope of the unit’s primary purpose?

4. What are similar units at peer or aspirant institutions doing that this unit would like to do or should be doing?
5. What additional cost-savings could be achieved in this unit?
6. What external funding opportunities (grants, contracts, etc.) exist that could be pursued by this unit? If applicable, describe any efforts to pursue such funding to date?
7. What would it take to make the program exemplary?

Appendix A:

Additional WCU Resources

Home Page	http://www.wcu.edu
Undergraduate Catalog	http://catalog.wcu.edu/
Graduate Catalog	http://catalog.wcu.edu/ (select Graduate Catalog at top of page)
WCU Quality Enhancement Plan	http://www.wcu.edu/12284.asp
UNC Tomorrow	http://www.wcu.edu/6264.asp
College of Arts & Sciences	http://www.wcu.edu/607.asp
College of Business	http://www.wcu.edu/2517.asp
College of Education & Allied Programs	http://www.wcu.edu/3030.asp
College of Health & Human Sciences	http://www.wcu.edu/2215.asp
College of Fine & Performing Arts	http://www.wcu.edu/3918.asp
Kimmel School of Construction Management & Technology	http://www.wcu.edu/3624.asp
Hunter Library	http://www.wcu.edu/library/
The Honors College	http://www.wcu.edu/honorscollege/
Office of the Provost	http://www.wcu.edu/provost/
Coulter Faculty Commons	http://facctr.wcu.edu/
Office of Institutional Planning & Effectiveness	http://oipe.wcu.edu
International Programs and Services	http://www.wcu.edu/9237.asp
Education Outreach	http://edoutreach.wcu.edu/
Academic Policies and Procedures	http://www.wcu.edu/provost/resources/AcademicProcandReg.htm
Faculty Handbook (General)	http://www.wcu.edu/fachandbook/
University Policies	http://www.wcu.edu/chancellor/policies/index.html

Appendix B:
Tentative Schedule for Campus Visit

One week prior Conference call with External Review Team

Day One

5:00pm Arrival in Cullowhee

6:00pm Dinner with External Review Team

Day Two

7:30 – 8:30am Breakfast with Provost

8:45 – 9:45am Meet with Unit Director

10:00 – 10:45am Meet with Dean or Associate/Assistance Vice
Chancellor

11:00 – 11:45am Meet with selected faculty or staff

12:00 – 1:00pm Lunch with Students and/or program participants

1:15 – 2:45pm Meet with Unit Staff

3:00 – 3:30pm Open

3:45 – 5:30pm Private Work Meeting for External Review Team

6:00pm Dinner with selected unit staff

Day Three

7:30am Breakfast

8:30am – 11:30am Reserved for additional meetings as necessary

12:00pm – 2:00pm Private Work Meeting for External Review Team

~2:00pm Depart from Cullowhee

Appendix C:

Suggested Format/Outline³ for External Review Report

- I. Introduction
 - a. A description of visit length
 - b. A summary and description of meetings conducted by the review team
- II. Analysis of Program
 - a. Provide a brief synopsis of:
 - i. the primary unit functions (Are they appropriate for WCU's student body? Are they consistent with professional norms or standards?);
 - ii. the unit's programming activities and/or services (Are the programming activities and services appropriate to stated mission and objectives of the units? Are the programming and services adequate to meet the expressed needs of the unit's constituent groups?)
 - iii. the planning and assessment strategies (Can the unit document that its programming activities and services are having the intended effect? Are the programming activities and services routinely evaluated and the results used to make improvements? Do all staff have an opportunity to participate in planning and assessment activities?)
- III. Analysis of Staff
 - a. Qualifications – Provide a brief analysis of staff qualifications (i.e., Do the unit staff have the requisite degrees/credentials and skills appropriate to the program?)
 - b. Resources and Support – Provide a brief analysis of unit and institutional support for staff (i.e., Does the unit have adequate and appropriate processes and procedures for performance evaluation and promotion decisions? Is staff compensation appropriate and adequate? Do staff have access to adequate technological resources?)
 - c. Professional Activity, and Service – Provide a brief analysis of staff participation in professional development and university service (i.e., Does the

³ Review teams are encouraged to address issues that arise during the review that fall outside of this suggested template.

staff have adequate opportunities for professional development? Is the staff recognized by their peers for professional contributions to the field? Does the staff engage in an appropriate level of University service?)

IV. Analysis of Operational Facilities and Budget

- a. Does the unit have adequate facilities to fulfill its mission?
- b. Does the unit have adequate budget to fulfill its mission?

V. Summary of unit strengths and areas for improvement

- a. What is your general impression of the unit?
- b. Overall, what are the areas of strength?
- c. Overall, in what areas could the unit make improvements?

VI. Summary of Recommendations