

WKU Academic Program Review **CERTIFICATE** Review Guidelines (updated 6/13/23)

Certificate Program Review (CR) follows a process that is an abbreviated and streamlined version of the APR Degree Degree (DR) process that evaluates degrees and majors. A College Certificate Review Committee, without external reviewers, conducts the review of the self-study.

Certificates are reviewed every five years. All program review is coordinated by the Office of the Provost and that office maintains a web page that includes all information to support the CPR process, including a schedule. The Office of the Provost also creates an annual cohort group of programs undergoing CR to facilitate cooperation, communication, collaboration, and the ability to identify program strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Certificate Program Review Process Steps

Certificate Program review is a five-step process.

Step 1: Initiation of Program Review

Each year, in late spring, the Provost's Office will ask the dean's offices to provide an update on certificate program review activity in their colleges. The information provided in this response is used to compile annual reports to CPE.

When a Certificate Review is pending, the dean will issue a program review charge memo to the lead member of the program faculty, usually the department chair, and cc Provost's Office. The charge will include

- A request that the self-study/studies be written,
- A list of the department's certificate program(s) to be reviewed,
- A link to the guidelines for structuring the self-study report (university guidelines),
- Information on additional resources to guide and inform the review, including data resources (link to resources),
- A description of specific items or issues to be addressed (if any),
- The due date for completion and submission of the self-study, and
- A copy of the dean's final summary from the most recent review of the academic program (if applicable).

Step 2: Self-Study Report

The program faculty prepare a self-study report according to the instructions in the charge memo. In using the template provided, faculty should respond to the italicized directions at the beginning of each section giving careful attention to the bulleted questions below.

A typical self-study report should be in the range of 7-12 pages for for certificates, not including appendices. Guiding principles for the self-study report include:

- Focusing on the recent past and key points over the review period as context for present and future improvements,
- Concentrating on the academic program and student experience,
- Reviewing program learning goals and assessment of learning,
- Understanding the current student experience about academics, advising, climate, and career development,
- Demonstrating the specific and overall value of the certificate,
- Identifying program strengths and recommendations for improvements.

CR is conducted using data provided by the Office of Institutional Research via Visual Analytics and follows curricula approved at the college level. Program faculty and administrators are encouraged to consult with Institutional Research, the Graduate School (as appropriate), and other relevant units for information and additional support in gathering information. **Any low levels of enrollment or certificate production must be specifically addressed in the review.**

When the self-study is complete, the program faculty formally endorse the report and submit the self-study to the dean.

Note: In rare circumstances, program faculty may decide that the certificate program should not be continued either before preparing the self-study, or in the process of conducting it; in such cases they may submit a formal request to the dean to discontinue the program.

Step 3: Review Committee

Each dean appoints a single College Certificate Review Committee (CCRC) to review batches of certificates annually. The committee is typically comprised of four or more faculty members and chaired by an associate dean or senior leader in the college—deans should review the review cycle and avoid selecting programs under review if possible. Committee members who are in the same department as the certificate or who teach for the certificate will be recused. 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 of a committee.

Typically, the CCRC chair will arrange an organizational meeting with the committee, share self-study reports, and then schedule meetings with program faculty to learn more about the certificate program. The CCRC chair is responsible for setting the meeting agendas, making any specific assignments to review committee members, overseeing the process, producing the report, getting feedback from the committee, and submitting the final report to the dean.

Committees are asked to use the Certificate Review Committee Guidelines, Template, and Rubric (attached) and to respond to the italicized directions in each section. Most review

committee reports are brief, 3-5 pages. Ultimately the review committee report must be written and include

- A summary of the activities of the review committee and materials reviewed,
- An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the program,
- Advice to the program, dean, and/or provost for improving the program,
- Recommendations for future directions, and
- Specifications for any necessary follow-up action.

The review committee submits the report to the dean.

Step 4: College Discussion and Dean's Final Summary of Review

The dean discusses the certificate program review documents (i.e., self-study report, review committee report, and any program response) with program faculty and leads a discussion about the certificate review. Faculty will have an opportunity to identify any errors of fact at this meeting. The dean then prepares a final summary of the review. This summary identifies program strengths and recommendations for improvement or any requirements for follow-up reports that the dean may choose to make to the program. The dean's final summary must include the following elements:

- A list of the academic certificates reviewed,
- A summary of the review committee's findings, including an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses for the/each program, and
- Recommendations for future directions, and, if applicable, a commitment to provide resources.

This final summary document becomes a public summary of the review and is a useful document for reference over the time between reviews and at the point of initiating the next program review in the APR cycle. The dean sends the final summary of the review, the self-study report, the review committee's report, and the program's response, if any, to the Office of the Provost and (when appropriate) the Graduate School.

Step 5: Completing the Review

For all programs (graduate and undergraduate) Academic Affairs provides a response to the program coordinator and faculty that the review has been completed. Academic Affairs uses these documents to report on Academic Review Processes to the CPE.

Planning for the Duration of a Review

The amount of time certificate review takes, from start to finish, can vary by program and/or college. The charge memo is sent late spring before the self-study is to be completed, the program typically has five years of data and student experience to reflect upon during the

review, and the program has the summer and fall semester to submit the self-study and the process is completed by the end of March.

Timeline:

June	Deans send charge memos to programs to be reviewed the following academic year
July/August	Certificate Program Review Training Opportunities CR data made available to programs Deans create College Certificate Review Committee
September	CR Cohort Meeting 1
October	Programs complete drafts of self-studies APR Cohort Meeting 2
December	Self-study reports due to deans by December 15
January	Dean's office calls college committee and shares self-studies by January 7 Committee has organizational meeting & reviews documents by January 31
February	Dean's Office coordinates with department chair, program coordinator, and program faculty and review committee to arrange February visits Review Committee Reports due to dean by February 28
March	Deans meet with program faculty to prepare final summary Dean sends final summary and complete package of documentation to department chair and copies Provost's Office by March 31