# External Consultant Selection

The External Review provides an opportunity for program faculty and administrators to gain a perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the program from academicians and practitioners outside of the university. The primary charge of the External Consultant is to review the Internal Self-Study and make substantive comments in response to the critical questions posed by the program faculty, dean and the Office of the Provost.

The program faculty, unit head and dean should review the report, identified needs, areas for review and critical questions. A list of recommended external consultants should be compiled and a brief rationale should be written as to how each one would be able to address the identified issues. This information will be submitted as a part of the Internal Self-Study Report.

Based on the issues identified, consider suggesting at least 2 consultants per issue. Some have identified First Choice, Second Choice, etc. The first choice of consultant may not be available for your external review/site visit date. Thus, submit a list of 6-10 potential consultants. A team of 3-4 is the target number.

These are the considerations for consultants:

James Madison University **shall not** knowingly select an off-campus person as a consultant if that person:

1. Has been – within the last five years – a compensated consultant, an appointee or employee of the institution, or has been a candidate within the past five years for employment at the institution.
2. Has a close personal or familial relationship with persons at the institution or a strong bias regarding the institution.
3. Is a member of an association or professional activity that an impartial person might reasonably conclude would serve as an impediment to rendering an impartial, objective professional judgment regarding the accreditation of an institution.

One External Consultant must be a JMU faculty or staff member from outside of the program’s college. The JMU representative will serve as the chair or coordinator of the External Consultants. The External Consultants may also be academicians from peer institutions, preferably R2, with significant regional and national visibility in the discipline being reviewed. A unit may consider a practitioner member. This is someone employed in an area related to the program. They may be individuals who can provide valuable information relative to career demands and development.

A graduate of the program with at least five years of experience who can provide a perspective on the contribution of the program to their career may be selected. The graduate should be familiar with the program, have experience in the field, have a critical eye and remain objective.

The academic/administrative head should nominate potential reviewers in consultation with the self-study team. Several names should be submitted and priority should be indicated. Reviewers should be chosen based on the needs of the program. The number of reviewers required depends on the size and needs of the program, but an upper limit of 5 is set. The upper limit number is reserved for university-wide units. The only required consultant is that of a JMU faculty member, as stated above. Units should have three to four external consultants, including the JMU chair, depending on the issues to be addressed at the review.

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| Name | Title/Contact Information  Institution or Agency | Critical Question/Area Expertise and Rationale for Suggested Consultant |
| Use this format. |  |  |