As part of the Program Review process, programs are required to obtain an external review. Here are a few suggestions and guidelines to help you select, schedule, and work with an external reviewer.

**How to select a qualified external reviewer/team**

The reviewer(s) should have:

- Professional knowledge and experience related to your program/department
- Experience with programs similar to yours and institutions similar to UNC in mission, scope, and size
- Evaluation experience
- Independence and objectivity
- Understanding of current issues and trends within the profession and higher education
- Knowledge of CAS Standards (or the professional accreditation standards you are using)

Additional characteristics to consider:

- Knowledge of professional standards for your program
- Administrative leadership experience
- Expertise in an area or focus your program is considering developing or adding in the future

**Finding a reviewer**

Consider the following sources of information for finding a qualified reviewer:

- Professional organizations
- Faculty from higher education and/or student affairs graduate programs
- Administrators from peer programs
- Recommendations from UNC faculty and colleagues

**Preparing for the review**

Develop a clear understanding and written description of what you want and need from the reviewer prior to the visit. Create a list of particular questions you’d like to have answered and issues that must be addressed. Ask your Dean/AVP for guidance in developing any additional questions for the reviewer. Refer to the External Review Checklist for specific tasks that should be completed before the reviewer arrives on campus.

**During the review**

The following activities will be appreciated by your reviewer:

- Provide an agenda that includes times, meeting locations, and the names of people s/he will be meeting.
- Identify someone from the program to act as a campus guide during the visit.
- If possible, provide an office or workspace for the reviewer to use and have copies available of any documents or resource materials s/he has requested.
- Arrange for staff and/or students to have lunch and/or dinner with the reviewer.

**After the review**

- Expect to receive the reviewer’s report within 30 days of the campus visit.
- Be prepared to send any additional information s/he might request to complete the review.
- Prepare a response that will be included in your program’s self study report. In particular, address any factual errors and respond to any recommendations your program does or does not endorse.
EXTERNAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

Before the review
- Define the purpose and scope of the review
- Work with the AVP/Dean to select reviewer(s) and establish a budget
- Prepare contract (Standard Services Invoice)
- Develop a timeline for the review
- Verify travel arrangements and itinerary
- Develop a list of written questions the program wishes answered
- Determine what documents and information the reviewer would like to have in advance
- Send documents and information to the reviewer, including some or all of the following:
  - Program’s web address
  - Current self-study
  - CAS binder
  - Staff vitae/resumes
  - 3-5 year program data
  - Department/program budgets
  - Handbooks, program policies, newsletters
  - Assessment measures used by the program
  - Results of student learning outcome assessments, program satisfaction studies, alumni surveys
- Schedule times and locations for the reviewer to meet with program staff, students, the AVP/Dean, and any others you or the reviewer identify. If the reviewer has provided a list of questions s/he intends to discuss, provide these in advance.

The review visit itinerary
- Schedule an initial meeting with key stakeholders to acquaint all parties and review the itinerary (brief)
- Conduct individual and/or group visits with, staff, students, AVP, and any others you’ve identified
- Provide time for solo campus walk about
- Arrange for one or more meals with staff and/or students
- Conduct debriefing meeting or exit interview (preview what final report might look like)

After the review
- Expect reviewer’s report within 30 days of the review
- Complete paperwork for the reviewer’s fees and expenses
- Provide the report to staff and solicit feedback and information about any factual errors
- Address reviewer’s recommendations in the program’s comprehensive self study report

Checklist based on Howery (1999)