



Curriculum Committee Guidelines

The **mission** of the Curriculum Committee is to provide WISE members with interesting, educational, and academically rich courses that tap into our curiosity as lifelong learners.

Disclaimer: The guidelines, scope, and details described herein are subject to change based on committee membership goals, structure, formation, turnover, and/or the changing needs of WISE.

Curriculum Committee Responsibilities and Scope of Work

*The Curriculum Committee is responsible for:

- Publishing the course catalog in partnership with the WISE office
- Identifying and selecting course topics
- Identifying and selecting instructors to deliver programs
- Preparing a well-balanced course schedule
- Selecting course delivery options, in coordination with instructors
- Advising and supporting instructors on the effective delivery of WISE courses • Evaluating courses and instructors

* Ref: WISE Roles & Responsibilities [16 April 2026]

******In collaboration with the Director and the Finance Committee designee, the Curriculum Committee designee consults on the budget for each year to include:

- a. The stipend for each Course Instructor in the Academic Year (Fall and Spring Semesters)
- b. The stipend for each Course Instructor in the Summer program, which must be in keeping with the stipend for Instructors in the Academic Year
- c. The stipend for each Coordinator of the Special Interest Groups, which must be in keeping with the stipend for Instructors in the Academic Year

The budgets are submitted to the Director for subsequent approval by the Finance Committee and the WISE Council

****** Ref: WISE Policies [16 April 2026]

These items are in scope for the Curriculum Committee:

- Defining the academic calendar (dates and timing) in partnership with the WISE office
- Solicitation of proposals
- Introducing new ideas for topics, courses, and instructors
- Proposal selection
- Evaluation and summary letters to instructors
- New instructor recruitment (with member community and beyond)
- Enrich course offerings by leveraging partnerships with community organizations
- Support, encourage, and advise instructors in the delivery of WISE courses (i.e., best practices in adult learning)

These items are currently not in scope for the Curriculum Committee:

- Instructor session kickoff with technical training [Director, Technology Committee]
- New member orientation and training [Director, Membership & Technology Committees]
- Deciding on changes/adjustments to instructor pay rates [Director, Finance Committee, WISE Council]
- Oversight of extra-curricular activities (SIGs, discussion groups, clubs) [Director, WISE Council]
- Spotlights [Director] and Brown Bag lectures [Events Committee]

Curriculum Committee Operational Guidelines

Committee Structure

- The optimal size of the committee is 14 to 15 members (max)
- There are no current term limits imposed for individual committee members; however, turnover is encouraged to ensure fresh perspectives

- The committee will be led by two Co-Chairs, each with a suggested non-concurrent term limit of 3 years
- One member will take on the role of Notetaker/Recorder
- Other roles may be identified and assigned as needed to support committee activities

Committee Member Recruitment

- New committee members will be solicited annually, prior to the annual meeting
- Prospective committee members are expected to:
 - Be current WISE members in good standing
 - Have taken at least two or three WISE courses (in person and/or online)
 - Submit a letter of interest stating why you would like to join us, and your experiences that would enhance this committee
 - Provide a reference (another WISE member or friend) and their contact information
- Current committee members will review the submitted letters of interest and make new member selections
- New members will be notified by the committee Chair(s) of their application status

Committee Member Expectations

- Responsible participation
- Share opinions openly; silence implies agreement

Committee Meeting Practices

- The committee meets monthly, unless otherwise specified
- Meetings take place on the first Wednesday of each month from 10 to 11:30 am
- Meetings are on campus, weather permitting; otherwise, meetings may be held via Zoom
- Committee Chair(s) is responsible for preparing the agenda and sending it to all committee members ahead of the meeting each month
- The notetaker is responsible for taking minutes and action items during the meeting and sending to all committee members after each meeting

Course Proposal and Selection Process

- The WISE office issues a formal Call for Proposal to all prospective WISE instructors ahead of each semester (Fall/Spring/Summer)
- Proposals can be submitted at any time throughout the year, but will be reviewed and approved in conjunction with the Call for Proposal timeline

- The WISE office will maintain an ongoing record of all submitted proposals and their status, and ensure committee members have access to each proposal for review
- The committee will meet to review, discuss, and approve (by general consensus) each proposal based on:
 - Educational value and interest to WISE members
 - Instructor credentials, experience, and merit
 - Aptness for the given semester, in conjunction with other courses, to ensure variety/diversity of offerings
 - Considerations noted in the most recent member survey
 - Whether there are any drawbacks
- Committee members unable to attend any proposal review meeting in person may submit written comments to the designated Chair(s) ahead of the meeting
- The committee Chair(s) or designee will notify the instructor that the course is approved, not approved, or if additional information is needed
- The WISE office will prepare the semester schedule for the approved courses, in consultation with the committee Chair(s)

Course and Instructor Support Practices

- The recommended minimum class size is 10 students. If fewer than 10 are registered for any given course, an exception could be made if there is a valid reason to do so. These exceptions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the WISE Director in consultation with the committee Chair(s).
- Members of the Curriculum Committee will participate in instructor orientation in conjunction with the WISE Director
- Course time slots are assigned on an as-needed basis. Some courses may overlap, such as a course on campus with another course elsewhere in Worcester (e.g., Hanover Theatre or WAM)