# NWCG Course Steering Committee Standard Operating Guidelines

***This document is a template. Please personalize for your individual Course Steering Committee.***

All course steering committees fall under the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Master Committee Charter (<https://www.nwcg.gov/sites/default/files/committee/docs/nwcg-master-committee-charter.pdf>).

## COURSE STEERING COMMITTEE MISSION/OBJECTIVES

The individual steering committee mission and objectives can be found on their NWCG webpages (<https://www.nwcg.gov/full-committee-list>). ***[insert link to specific steering committee on nwcg.gov]***

## MEMBERSHIP

All steering committees will adhere to the Committee Roles & Membership Information (<https://www.nwcg.gov/committee-roles-membership-information>).

## ORGANIZATION

Steering committees are assigned under a NWCG parent committee or subcommittee. The steering committee chair and National Advanced Fire Resource Institute (NAFRI) training liaison, if assigned, will serve as rostered liaisons to their parent committee/subcommittee. The parent committee/subcommittee will also assign a rostered liaison to the steering committee. Liaison roles with other steering committees or curriculum units may be established as appropriate*.*

Steering committee membership should broadly represent the NWCG agencies and the geographic areas.

Each member agency determines its membership needs. When an agency has multiple primary members, the agency will have one single stance in decision-making discussions.

Steering committees will have a chair (or two co-chairs), vice-chair and primary members. If the course is coordinated through NAFRI, a NAFRItraining liaison will be appointed. Other roles may be established as appropriate. For further information on these roles reference <https://www.nwcg.gov/committee-roles-membership-information>.

The chair will be nominated and selected by the primary members for a term of two years; thus the chair term will be for two course cycles if a course is offered annually, or for one course cycle if a course only offered every two years. The chair’s term may be extended if approved by the NWCG parent committee/subcommittee. If no person agrees to chair the steering committee, the responsibility to secure a chair lies with the parent committee/subcommittee in consultation with the Executive Board.

The vice-chair will rotate into the chair position following the two-year term (if chair is rotating out) and a new vice-chair will be selected.

Primary members will be from NWCG member agencies; however, the emphasis on membership will be focused on the subject matter of the course and the business needs of affected functional areas. The expectation is that primary members will be engaged in creating and delivering course content. The steering committee will recommend potential new primary members to the agency representatives on the parent committee/subcommittee, who may consult with their agency’s Executive Board member. Agencies will approve and support primary members for an indefinite term.

Advisors and liaisons will be identified by the steering committee on an as-needed-basis.

The NAFRI training liaisonwill be appointed from the NAFRI staff by the NAFRI Director for an indefinite term.

Primary members, including the chair and vice-chair, and NAFRI training liaison, if assigned, will take lead roles in areas of their expertise. Primary members are the lead subject matter expert for content, whereas the NAFRI training liaison is the lead subject matter expert for design & delivery. They will work cooperatively to reach consensus concerning the overall course content and delivery.

NWCG coordinators are assigned to each committee and subcommittee. Their role is to help facilitate coordination among and between the NWCG organization. As such, they will serve a support function to the steering committees as needed.

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chair (Co-Chairs):

* Ensures the steering committee is meeting established mission and objectives.
* Leads the course in maintaining high-quality course content, incorporating advanced principles of adult learning, and ensuring compliance with NWCG standards for both course content and instructor qualifications.
* Utilizes NWCG instructional systems to update and revise course material, scheduling, and delivery as needed.
* Assists parent committee/subcommittee with aligning course content with related NWCG courses. Engages with other steering committees or cadres as needed for consistency and continuity related to changes that may impact the fire community (e.g., changes may impact another course or a position).
* Ensures course content meets the needs of the target audience, as identified in the NWCG Training Catalog, mission statement, and primary objectives for the course.
* Organizes and tasks steering committee members.
* Schedules regular committee meetings. See steering committee meeting agenda/notes template; ensures notes are taken and provided to NWCG webmaster (BLM\_FA\_NWCG\_Webmaster@blm.gov) for posting on steering committee webpage. ***[Insert link to specific steering committee minutes page on nwcg.gov]***
* Ensures collaboration with parent committee/subcommittee, pertinent individuals, and entities to identify, address, and resolve course-related issues.
* Participates as an active primary member of the steering committee.

Vice-chair:

* Serves as the chair in the chair’s absence.
* Assists the chair in performance of duties.
* Participates as an active primary member of the steering committee.

NAFRI Training Liaison:

* Works hand-in-hand with chair and NWCG parent committee/subcommittee on the long-term direction for the course. This may include updates to the course goals, objectives, target audience, hours, type of delivery, content requirements, and prerequisites.
* Works hand-in-hand with chair in course and content design.
* Provides updates to Course Overview information (description, objectives, target group, prerequisites, course hours, minimum instructor qualifications, and revision history) on the NWCG website, thru established approval process. ***[Insert link to specific course page on nwcg.gov]***
* Lead subject matter expert for content delivery in all forms – virtual, classroom, field/hands-on, blended, etc.
* Manages the course content in the Wildland Fire Learning Portal as well as other online platforms.
* Provides training in online platform use to the committee and faculty as needed.
* Ensures course coordinator duties are accomplished including but not limited to outreach, recruitment, nomination, selection, pre-course work, course materials, securing facilities, room set-up and contracts/ agreements.
* Manages the NAFRI funds/budget for the course and coordinates with cooperators who may contribute supplemental funding.
* Provides updates to steering committee roster to NWCG webmaster (<https://www.nwcg.gov/nwcg-roster-update>) as membership changes. ***[Insert link to specific steering committee roster page on nwcg.gov]***
* May delegate certain NAFRI training liaison duties to other NAFRI staff.
* Serves as a notetaker, or identifies notetaker, for meetings and submits final draft notes to chair for approval.

Primary Members:

* Assists the chair and vice-chair with maintaining mission and objectives of the course, as well as tasks related to course development, learning environment, and managing course instructors.
* Solicits input from peers and other field personnel on course content and advancement.
* Represents agency in which they are affiliated, by providing an agency voice while maintaining course content, instructor qualifications, and course mission and objectives.
* Participates in steering committee calls and meetings, as well as the course delivery.
* Promotes and mentors future steering committee members to ensure successful and smooth transitions.

Websites/Webmasters:

NWCG

* Updates steering committee rosters based on edits provided by NAFRI training liaison or steering committee chair.
* Posts steering committee meeting notes as provided by steering committee chair or chair’s representative.
* Updates Course Overview information (description, objectives, target group, prerequisites, course hours, minimum instructor qualifications, and revision history) on nwcg.gov. Prepares for embedding information into NAFRI & Wildland Fire Learning Portal (WFLP). Changes must be approved by steering committee’s parent committee/subcommittee and the Incident and Position Standards Committee.

NAFRI

* Links NAFRI website to steering committee and course pages on the NWCG website and on the WFLP, as appropriate.

WFLP

* Maintains student rosters, pre-assessments and pre-course work in the portal.
* Maintains current course materials.
* Maintains session offerings list.

## TASKINGS/ASSIGNMENTS

The steering committee or parent committee/subcommittee may establish ad-hoc task teams to maintain or further develop curricula. The task team can be made up of steering committee members, members of the parent committee/subcommittee, as well as other subject matter experts (SME). Inclusion of outside expertise is a good way of sharing steering committee vision and mission and can support building depth and succession within the cadre and the steering committee.

Tasks should be in writing and assigned a lead, a target timeline for completion, and should establish scheduled progress reports. Status should be reported upon during steering committee meetings or calls.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

NAFRI provides training course support for invitational travel, contracts and contract support, materials development, SME time and advisory services, facilities, and logistical support. Each steering committee will need to work with the NAFRI training liaison to determine specific needs and support.

## COURSE CANCELLATIONS

Any changes or cancellations to scheduled courses will be made via consensus among steering committee members, NAFRI (if applicable) and the steering committee’s parent committee/subcommittee. The parent committee/subcommittee will communicate the decision and rationale to the field via memo.

## MEETING MANAGEMENT

Meetings will follow NWCG Meeting Standards (<https://www.nwcg.gov/committee-roles-membership-information#MS>)

### Meeting schedules

The steering committee will meet throughout the year. This may include in person meetings or virtual meetings. Consider an in-person meeting at the location of course delivery so steering committee members can become familiar with the facility layout and technology options.

During course delivery, the steering committee will meet daily and will have an AAR with members and course faculty immediately following the completion of the course.

### Meeting Protocol

Follow established meeting agenda (see Course Steering Committee Meeting Agenda/Notes Template). This template should be used to create both the agenda and then the meeting notes.