

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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Guidelines for Conducting Evaluations of Academic Programs

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Preface

The University is responsible for developing and promoting academic programs of quality. The quality and effectiveness of programs, the extent to which planned objectives have been met, the priority that the University attaches to the programs, and the costs of these activities must be considered as the University proceeds with its continuous review and adjustment of institutional plans, activities, and resource allocation.

The goal of this system of program evaluation is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the University's graduate and undergraduate offerings. The evaluation process provides an opportunity for faculty and administrators to obtain insights regarding the level of excellence of the programs. As the University proceeds with its planning process, information is needed about the strengths and weaknesses of programs. It is expected that specific recommendations aimed at maintaining or enhancing the quality of programs will be an outcome of this evaluation process. In rare cases, as a result of the evaluation process, it may be determined that an existing degree program is no longer viable. In these cases, after such a recommendation is received, strategies may be employed to restructure or discontinue the program.

I. UNITS TO BE EVALUATED AND SCHEDULE OF REVIEWS

Responsibility for establishing a calendar for University-sponsored evaluation of programs in a school rests with the Dean, who reports this schedule to the Provost.

The Provost may request the Dean to initiate the evaluation of a particular unit.

C. New programs should be reviewed within five years of their implementation when this is recommended in the approval process.

D. Definition of units to be evaluated:

1. Evaluations will usually be based on a simultaneous and combined review of all academic programs offered by a department, or, for some schools, of all academic programs offered by a school. Evaluations of programs on a regional campus may be organized by Division. Graduate degree programs, undergraduate major programs, courses for non-majors, supervision of postdoctoral students, and any teaching program for which the unit is responsible will be included in the evaluation.

2. Interdepartmental or interschool programs offering doctoral degrees will be evaluated by this process, while interdepartmental or interschool programs offering an undergraduate major or a master's degree will be evaluated only if they are of a minimum size. Reviews of interdisciplinary certificate programs will not be conducted by this process.

E. Evaluation of each academic unit is required and normally takes place every ten years.

F. In the case of those departments or schools in which some programs are subject to evaluation by external accrediting groups, the scheduling of the evaluation may be coordinated with the accreditation. If some of the programs in a department or school receive a particularly thorough accreditation evaluation, the school or department may petition the Provost for an exemption of these programs from evaluation by the complete process.

II. RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR PROGRAM SELF-STUDIES

The self-study acquaints members of the review committees with the composition and functions of the unit and helps the unit to make an appraisal of its strengths, weaknesses, goals, and future directions. Descriptive statements will be most useful if documented as completely as possible. Self-studies should include consideration of the following:

A. Goals and Objectives

1. Goals of the various academic programs, including affirmative action goals, and how these are related to the School or campus goals and the University Long Range Plan;
 - a. Ways in which these goals have changed during the past several years, and their responsiveness to changes in the University's goals and mission;
 - b. Ways in which the programs have succeeded in achieving these goals;
 - c. Ways in which the programs have fallen short of these goals;
2. Responsiveness to changing directions of the discipline;
3. Responsiveness to changes in available resources or workload; and
4. Responsiveness to changing needs of society.

B. Faculty

1. Number of faculty tenured, in the tenure stream, and outside the tenure stream, including part-time and adjunct faculty;
2. Number of faculty with graduate faculty status; number of faculty with doctorates;
3. Specific qualifications of faculty for the program (curricula vitae, limited to five pages, of all faculty of the program must be included as an appendix to the self-study);
4. Research productivity of the faculty; publications and other evidence of creativity;

5. Quality of teaching of the faculty;
6. National and international impact of faculty on their discipline and profession;
7. External recognition of faculty, including exhibits, awards, prizes, commissions, fellowships, etc.;
8. Progress toward meeting affirmative action goals;
9. Salary and fringe benefits to attract and retain faculty;
10. Faculty turnover rates and reasons;
11. Faculty teaching loads;
12. Faculty advising loads;
13. Faculty mentoring and support for faculty development;
14. Faculty involvement in governance and program development;
15. Opportunities for intellectual interactions among faculty; and
16. Description of faculty morale.

C. Students (Some items may be more relevant to graduate students than to undergraduates.)

1. Demographic and academic characteristics of student population;
2. Policy on admission of students and resources and strategies used for recruitment;
3. Progress toward meeting affirmative action goals;
4. Financial assistance available to graduate students;
5. Student participation in program development and evaluation;
6. Attrition rate, amount of time to complete degree, graduation rate;
7. Success in placement of graduates, including postdoctoral students, during past five years, career achievements of graduates; and
8. Description of the morale of students.

D. Physical Facilities and Other Resources

1. Laboratories;
2. Classrooms and other instructional rooms, including distance education facilities;
3. Offices and meeting rooms;
4. Library and information retrieval resources;
5. Computer facilities and support;
6. Equipment for research and instruction; and
7. Other teaching, training or research facilities.

E. Program Budget

1. Summaries of financial support from externally funded grants, endowments, University funds; and
2. Adequacy of support.

F. Curricula and Teaching Effectiveness

1. Curriculum objectives and student programs of study;
2. Methods of evaluating student performance;
3. Numbers, types and sizes of classes taught by tenure stream, tenured, and other faculty, and by TA/TFs;
4. Assessment of teaching by students and peers (methods and results);
5. Quality of undergraduate and graduate student research experiences;
6. Quality of internships and practice;
7. Quality of senior theses, masters theses and doctoral dissertations; and
8. Opportunities for professional development for graduate and undergraduate students.

G. Interrelatedness (if any) of Programs with Other Programs, Departments, Centers and Schools within the University and at Other Leading Institutions

1. Curricula;

2. Research;
3. Dual-degree or joint-degree programs and/or dual majors; and
4. Joint appointments

H. Comparison to Similar Programs within the Institution and at Other Leading Universities (where feasible)

1. Identification of peer programs;
2. Ratings by accrediting agencies, professional organization or others;
3. Annual program support (all sources);
4. Faculty size and number of students;
5. Success at recruitment of good graduate students;
6. Success at placement of graduates and productivity and recognition of these graduates;
7. National and international reputation in profession or discipline; and
8. Other indicators.

I. Strategies for Strengthening Program, Given Present Resources

Self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the program; and

2. Description of ways to strengthen the program.

III. PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING EVALUATIONS OF UNITS

A. The dean determines the schedule for the evaluation of programs in consultation with departmental chairs and program directors and requests funding from the Provost. If the schedule is approved, the Office of the Provost will provide travel expenses and an honorarium for the members of the external review team as well as self-study reproducing expenses.

B. The dean sends a letter to the chairs of the departments¹, stating that the academic programs offered by the departments are to be reviewed. The letter includes: (a) the procedures for evaluations; (b) a proposed timetable for conducting the review (timetables should be established with the concurrence of the heads of units); and (c) a request for a self-study following the "Recommended Guidelines for Program Self-Studies. " If the department offers several academic programs (e.g. an undergraduate major and a graduate degree program), it may be preferable to separate some of the sections into parts to describe each program separately.

C. When the self-study is completed, the department chair is responsible for ensuring that all faculty have an opportunity to review the document. Department-wide faculty sessions should be held to discuss the report and to propose avenues for strengthening the academic programs. The department chair then forwards the self-study to the dean of the school who may ask that additional information be included. The dean forwards the complete self-study to the Provost for his information.

D. At least one month before the submission of the self-study, the department shall submit to the dean the names of approximately ten nominees to be considered as members of an external review committee, together with brief descriptions of their qualifications. When selecting nominees for external review committees, priority should be given to distinguished individuals who are affiliated with leading universities; hold a minimum academic rank of associate professor; and, have a minimum of five years of professional experience in the same or closely related field as that of the programs for which they are nominated to serve as external experts. Persons nominated should not be graduates of the program, former faculty members in the department, or have any other close connection with the department. In keeping with the University's Affirmative Action Program, particular attention should be accorded to identifying women and racial minorities for inclusion on the rosters of nominees submitted.

E. The dean appoints the external review committee and may select one member to chair the group and then submits to them the department's self-study, the school's current planning document and any other relevant document. The chair of the external review committee is responsible for coordinating the submission of the written report of the group; however, all committee members are expected to participate in the preparation of the report. The report shall describe the strengths and weaknesses of the program, offer recommendations and include a brief executive summary of its major findings and recommendations. It is normally submitted within

¹ The unit to be evaluated is referred to throughout this document as "department" and the head of the unit as "chair," although in the case of an interdisciplinary program, the unit is not a department, and in the case of a small school or a regional campus, the unit may be the entire school or campus.

one month of the visit. (Guidelines for the campus itinerary of the external review committee appear in Appendix B.)

F. In those cases where the evaluation of the unit occurs shortly after the evaluation of any of the departmental programs by an external accrediting group, the external review committee will receive copies of the accreditation report.

The written report of the external review committee is submitted to the dean for submission to the faculty of the department for comment.

The report with the department's response is submitted to the school's Planning and Budgeting Committee and/or other appropriate committees, to the Provost and to the Senior Vice Chancellor for the Health Sciences when a school in the Health Sciences is being reviewed. As appropriate, the Provost will submit the report and departmental response to evaluation subcommittees of the University Council on Graduate Study and the Provost's Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Programs for their information and advice.

The Provost requests the department and the dean, in consultation with the school's Planning and Budgeting Committee or other appropriate committees, to prepare an action plan based on the evaluation recommendations. Progress toward realization of this plan is reviewed annually by the school and by the Provost. If the department under review is in the Health Sciences, the action plan is also submitted to the Senior Vice Chancellor for the Health Sciences.

APPENDIX A

External Review Committee Checklist

PROGRAM UNDER REVIEW	COMMENTS
A. <u>Goals and Objectives</u>	
1. Goals of the various academic programs including affirmative action goals, and how these are related to the School and the University Long Range Plan;	
1a. Ways in which these goals have changed during the past several years, and their responsiveness to changes in the University's goals and mission;	
1b. Ways in which the programs have succeeded in achieving these goals;	
1c. Ways in which the programs have fallen short of these goals;	
2. Responsiveness to changing directions of the discipline;	
3. Responsiveness to changes in available resources or workload; and	
4. Responsiveness to changing needs of society.	
B. <u>Faculty</u>	
1. Number of faculty tenured, in the tenure stream, and outside the tenure stream, including part-time and adjunct faculty;	
2. Number of faculty with graduate faculty status; number of faculty with doctorates;	
3. Specific qualifications of faculty for the program (curricula vitae, limited to five pages, of all faculty of the program must be included as an appendix to the self-study);	
4. Research productivity of the faculty; publications and other evidence of creativity;	
5. Quality of teaching of the faculty;	
6. National and international impact of faculty on their discipline and profession;	

7.	External recognition of faculty, including exhibits, awards, prizes, commissions, fellowships, etc.;	
8.	Progress toward meeting affirmative action goals;	
9.	Salary and fringe benefits to attract and retain faculty;	
10.	Faculty turnover rates and reasons;	
11.	Faculty teaching loads;	
12.	Faculty advising loads;	
13.	Faculty mentoring and support for faculty development;	
14.	Faculty involvement in governance and program development;	
15.	Opportunities for intellectual interactions among faculty; and	
16.	Description of faculty morale.	
C.	<u>Students (Some items may be more relevant to graduate students than to undergraduates.)</u>	
1.	Demographic and academic characteristics of student population;	
2.	Policy on admission of students and resources and strategies used for recruitment;	
3.	Progress toward meeting affirmative action goals;	
4.	Financial assistance available to graduates students;	
5.	Student participation in program development and evaluation;	
6.	Attrition rate, amount of time to complete degree, graduate rate;	
7.	Success in placement of graduates, including postdoctoral students, during past five years, career achievements of graduates; and	
8.	Description of the morale of students.	
D.	<u>Physical Facilities and Other Resources</u>	
1.	Laboratories;	
2.	Classrooms and other instructional rooms, including distance education facilities;	
3.	Offices and meeting rooms;	

4.	Library and information retrieval resources;	
5.	Computer facilities and support;	
6.	Equipment both for research & instruction; and	
7.	Other teaching, training or research facilities.	
E.	<u>Program Budget</u>	
1.	Summaries of financial support from externally funded grants, endowments, University funds; and	
2.	Adequacy of support.	
F.	<u>Curricula and Teaching Effectiveness</u>	
1.	Curricula objectives and student programs of study;	
2.	Methods of evaluating student performance;	
3.	Numbers, types and sizes of classes taught by tenure stream, tenured, and, other faculty and by TA/TFs;	
4.	Assessment of teaching by students and peers (methods and results);	
5.	Quality of undergraduate and graduate student research experiences;	
6.	Quality of internships and practice;	
7.	Quality of senior theses, masters theses and doctoral dissertations.	
8.	Opportunities for professional development for graduate and undergraduate students.	
G.	<u>Interrelatedness (if any) of Programs with Other Programs, Departments, Centers and Schools within the University and at Other Leading Institutions</u>	
1.	Curricula;	
2.	Research;	
3.	Dual-degree or joint-degree programs and/or dual majors; and	
4.	Joint appointments.	

H.	<u>Comparison to Similar Programs within the Institution and at Other Leading Universities (where feasible)</u>	
1.	Identification of peer programs;	
2.	Ratings by accrediting agencies, professional organization or others;	
3.	Annual program support (all sources);	
4.	Faculty size and number of students;	
5.	Success at recruitment of good graduate students;	
6.	Success at placement of graduates and productivity and recognition of these graduates;	
7.	National and international reputation in profession or discipline; and	
8.	Other indicators.	
I.	<u>Strategies for Strengthening Program, Given Present Resources</u>	
1.	Self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the program; and	
2.	Description of ways to strengthen the program.	

APPENDIX B

Campus Itinerary of External Review Committees

A staff person from the Office of the Dean, working with the chair of the department under review, is responsible for the scheduling of the on-campus activities of the external review committee and for sending the committee the self-study and other material well in advance of the visit. The campus visit normally lasts two days.

A. Mandatory Items

1. Private meeting with the Dean of the department under review, at the beginning of the visit (the committee is given its charge at this meeting.);
2. Private meeting with the chair of the department, close to the beginning of the visit;
3. Private meeting with the Provost and/or one or more Vice Provosts;
4. Meeting with faculty of the program, either singly or in groups, depending on the size of the department;
5. Closed meeting with graduate students of the department, and with undergraduate majors;
6. Debriefing meeting, at the end of the visit, with the Dean and appropriate Associate Deans, and the Vice Provost who is the contact for the school.
7. Free time to start writing the report and preparing for the debriefing with the Dean.

Optional Items

- Meeting with the school's planning and budgeting committee or the graduate or undergraduate policy committees;
- Visit to library, to laboratories, to computing facilities;
3. Meeting with faculty in related departments;
 4. Meeting with involved faculty and administrators from outside the department;
 5. Social reception for faculty and students at the end of the first day. The evening schedule is the responsibility of the Office of the Dean and normally is left free for the committee to discuss the evaluation among itself