



MARQUETTE
UNIVERSITY

Be The Difference.

Guidelines For University Program Review

William Wiener, Ph.D.

Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Dean

Council of Graduate Schools

Quotes from the Council of Graduate Schools*

- The purpose of all program reviews is the improvement of graduate programs.
- A comprehensive review [grad & Undergrad] can produce significant savings in time and money, ...by not subjecting departments to multiple separate examinations.
 - Matters like faculty teaching loads, program and departmental budgets, facilities, and the quality of the teaching assistant experience cannot be properly assessed without information on both the undergraduate and graduate programs.
- There is much to be saved in time and effort by coordinating a graduate program review with other internal or external reviews [accreditation].

*Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs: A Policy Statement by CGS



Be The Difference.

Quotes from the Council of Graduate Schools

- A professional program that meets national accreditation standards does not necessarily meet the institution's criteria for excellence nor conform to its mission.
- Institutions need to review professional programs in the same fashion as they review other graduate programs and not cede that responsibility to an outside agency or organization.
- Although graduate program reviews should be separate processes from accreditation reviews, much is to be gained by conducting them in tandem, sequentially, or at least within the same academic year.



Be The Difference.

Quotes from the Council of Graduate Schools

- It is recommended that every graduate program be reviewed every five to seven years.
- Data on academic programs should be developed and maintained centrally wherever possible but should be reviewed and evaluated by program faculty.
- Most important, program review results in action.
 - This plan is linked to the institution's budget and planning process in order to ensure that recommended changes are actually made.
- One year after the action plan or memorandum of understanding is signed, or at some other agreed-upon date, the parties responsible for each action item should be asked to report on what has been accomplished.

Purpose of Program Review

- Continuous program improvement
- Formative evaluation rather than summative
- Data driven and outcome based
- Evaluative and not simply descriptive
- Meeting need for accountability
 - Disciplinary accrediting bodies
 - Review focuses on achievement of standards and not necessarily program improvement
 - Regional accrediting bodies
 - ...Requires institution to engage in ongoing, integrated and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of programs and services...

Regional Accrediting Bodies

- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- Western Association of Colleges and Schools
- Northwestern Association of Colleges and Schools
- North Central Association Higher Learning Commission
- New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- Middle States Commission on Higher Education



Key Concepts of Academic Reviews at MU

Be The Difference.

- The Graduate Dean coordinates each program review
- All reviews must involve the college or school administration
- All programs in an academic unit should be reviewed simultaneously
- Program reviews should occur every five to seven years
- Departments must complete a self study guide
- Program reviews should be independent of other reviews
- Programs that have outside accreditation may have program reviews prior to accreditation visits and cycles may be adjusted accordingly
- An approved action plan must be a required outcome of the review
- Annual progress toward action plan must be reported

Financial Aspects

- Responsibility for payment must be established
- Costs include the following:
 - Development of self study guide
 - Honoraria for reviewers
 - Travel
 - Accommodations
 - Meals

Process Steps

Be The Difference.

- 1. Graduate School establishes schedule**
- 2. Grad School solicits reviewer names from Department**
- 3. Self study written by department**
- 4. Two day review by external reviewers**
- 5. Reviewers submit a written report**
- 6. Written Departmental response follows reviewers report**
- 7. Vice Provosts and Provost meet to discuss Dept. response**
- 8. Vice Provosts, Provost, Graduate Dean Academic Dean, and Department chair meet to discuss Dept. response**
- 9. Department and Academic Dean draft an action plan**
- 10. Vice Provosts, Provost, Graduate Dean, and Academic Dean meet to discuss proposed action plan**
- 11. Written response provided to action plan**
- 12. Report is given to Academic Senate**
- 13. Yearly report on progress given to the Provost and Graduate Dean**



Be The Difference.

Self Study

- Four Areas in Self Study
 - Program Profile
 - Faculty and Support Profile
 - Student Learning Outcomes
 - Program Evaluative Data

Data Elements

- Accurate data is essential for inclusion in self study
 - A standard reporting template should be developed to include information from Institutional Research (**IR**), Academic Unit (**AU**), Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (**ORSP**), and Library (**LIB**)
 - Information should be provided to academic unit each year for their reflection in self study guide



Self Study: Program Profile

Be The Difference.

- Typically Required
 - **Fit with Mission and Strategic Goals of University (AU)**
 - **Purpose of Program (AU)**
 - **Contribution to Core Curriculum (AU)**
 - **Students within Program (IR and AU)**
 - **Demand for graduates (AU)**
 - **Application rates (IR)**
 - **Selectivity rates (IR)**
 - **Yield rates (IR)**
 - **Applicant admission scores (IR)**
 - **Grade Credentials of Applying, Admitted, and Enrolled Students (IR)**
 - **Attrition rates (IR)**
 - **Completion rates (IR and AU)**
 - **Prerequisite physical space and facilities (AU)**
 - **Curriculum structure and changes (AU)**

Program Profile



MARQUETTE
UNIVERSITY

Be The Difference.

- Typically Required
 - Teaching course loads (IR)
 - Bachelor degree productivity (IR and AU)
 - Master's degree productivity (IR and AU)
 - Doctoral degree productivity (IR and AU)
 - Class Size (IR)
 - Funded activities and sponsored research (ORSP)
 - Publishing recognition activities (AU)
 - Success of graduates (AU)
 - Instruction productivity (IR)
 - Equipment and Needs (AU)
 - Library (LIB)
 - External Success Measures (AU)
 - Excellence Awards (AU)
 - Number of Assistantships (AU)



Be The Difference.

Program Profile

- Optional
 - Changes in credit hours (AU)
 - Program costs (AU)
 - NRC or other ratings (AU)
 - Humanities and creative recognition activities (AU)

Self Study: Faculty and Support Profile

- Number of regular faculty (IR)
- Number of participating faculty-non tenure track (AU)
- Statistics on Gender, Ethnicity, and Racial Composition (IR)
- Number of New Faculty (AU)
- Theses and Dissertation Chairing Load per Faculty (AU)
- Faculty to Graduate Ratio (IR)
- Number of Support Staff (AU)
- Number of Post Docs and other Research Personnel (AU)



Be The Difference.

Self Study: Student Learning Outcomes

- Historical data
 - Summary of past reports
 - Most recent assessment report
- Current Assessment Plan
 - Outcomes
 - Assessment measures utilized
 - Target populations or samples
 - Frequency of administration
 - Responsible persons
- Evidence of Impact
- Anticipated future changes to assessment



Be The Difference.

Self Study: Evaluation of the Program

- Previous Reports
 - Progress made since last review
 - Based on action plans
- Current Strengths and Weaknesses
- Free Commentary
 - Future directions
 - Additional information



Be The Difference.

Reviewers' Formal Report

- **Section I -- Program**
 - Educational goals in relation to mission and strategic plan
 - Achievement of stated goals
 - Goals in relation to national and international trends
 - Program's role in advancing state of the discipline
- **Section II -- Curriculum**
 - Curricula's reflection of current national needs and standards
 - Depth and breadth of student learning
 - Communication of organizing principles
 - Academic integrity of curriculum
 - Relevance of instructional strategies\
 - Policies in relation to admission/retention and assessment/evaluation
 - Currency of curriculum



Be The Difference.

Reviewers' Formal Report

- **Section III – Students**
 - Understanding of program
 - Numbers and utilization of assistantships
 - Recruitment practices
 - Status of orientation, guidance and academic/career advisement
 - Integration into department
- **Section IV – Faculty**
 - Numbers and areas of expertise
 - Expectations for teaching, research, and service
 - Expectations for scholarly activity
 - Publication records
 - Extramural support
 - Engagement in professional development



Formal Report

Be The Difference.

- **Section V – Support Facilities**
 - Sufficiency of resources for library, computing, media, etc.
 - Physical facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, office space
 - Support personnel
 - Equipment and instruments
- **Section VI –General Assessment and Recommendations**
 - Strengths of program
 - Weaknesses and Recommendations
 - Student learning outcomes
 - Progress in addressing past program review recommendations
 - Progress toward meeting goals of college strategic plan
- **Free Commentary – other observations**



Be The Difference.

Departmental Response to Reviewers' Report

- Response from faculty
 - Identify any inaccuracies
 - Describe any misperceptions
 - Indicate where and why a recommended action is unnecessary
 - Prioritize recommendations



Be The Difference.

Development of an Action Plan

- Meeting of Vice Provosts, Graduate Dean, Academic Dean, Chairperson, and Provost
 - Discussion of reviewers report and departmental response
 - Discussion of items for action plan
- Academic Dean and Unit write an action plan
- Provost, Academic Dean, and Vice Provosts meet to discuss action plan and agree upon next steps



Be The Difference.

Report to Academic Senate

- Summary of program review and action plan
 - Strengths and weaknesses
 - Steps in action plan



Be The Difference.

Continued Reporting

- Yearly submission of progress report in addressing requirements of action plan
 - Sent to Provost as part of annual report

Concluding Remarks

- Interdisciplinary programs create their own challenges, require evaluations across academic units, and require additional reviewers
- Any program review process must be pilot tested prior to implementation across the campus
- Flexibility is needed to accommodate the differing needs of academic units

Questions and Answers

