

GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWER'S NARRATIVE REPORT: GRADUATE PROGRAMS

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

ARE ADMISSIONS STANDARDS APPROPRIATE TO THE DEGREE LEVEL, STATED CLEARLY, AND CONSISTENTLY APPLIED?

IS INFORMATION REGARDING ADMISSIONS AND RETENTION STANDARDS CLEARLY OUTLINE IN THE INSTITUTION'S CATALOG AND AVAILABLE TO ALL APPLICANTS AND ENROLLED STUDENTS?

WHAT EFFORTS ARE MADE TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN STUDENTS?

- Are enrollment levels sufficient to ensure the critical mass of students necessary for appropriate peer groups?
- Are enrolled students properly oriented to the department and institution? Does student support, such as personalized instruction, advisement, and guidance continue after orientation? Are the department's efforts in curricular and career advising adequate to meet student needs? What changes/ improvements are needed to improve the department's effectiveness in advising? Is student progress periodically monitored?
- Are retention standards clearly stated and consistently applied? How could the department improve recruitment and retention?
- Are there appropriate time limits for degree completion? Are the time limits appropriate for the degree level to ensure that students' knowledge is up-to-date when the degree is awarded?

ARE THERE APPROPRIATE CURRICULAR OFFERINGS TO ENHANCE STUDENT EXPERIENCES?

- Are any short courses accepted towards the degree program? Is prudence exercised in the number and type of acceptable short courses?
- Are distant education programs available? Are programs offered entirely through distance education technologies evaluated regularly to ensure outcomes at least equivalent to on-campus programs?

ARE THERE APPROPRIATE EXTRACURRICULAR OFFERINGS TO ENHANCE STUDENT EXPERIENCES?

- Does the program provide students with enrichment opportunities, such as lecture series, student organizations, etc.? Are such opportunities adequate to promote a scholarly environment?
- Does the program provide adequate opportunities for student professional development? To what extent does the program encourage membership in professional organizations, support participation in conferences and workshops, and/or promote opportunities for student publication?
- Does the program provide adequate opportunities for student internships, practica, and/or field experiences?

GRADUATE FACULTY QUALITY

ARE FACULTY COMPETENCIES/QUALIFICATIONS THOSE NEEDED BY THE PROGRAM AND BY UTC?

- Do faculty hold terminal degrees in the appropriate discipline?
- Do faculty specialties correspond to program needs and to the concentrations in which they teach?
- If faculty need additional/ different competencies/qualifications, how might these needs be addressed?

ARE FACULTY EFFECTIVELY SERVING GRADUATE STUDENTS AS MENTORS?

- Do faculty members have sufficient practical, professional, and/or academic experience to serve as mentors?
- Are faculty members actively involved in scholarly activity? To what extent does such scholarly activity facilitate mentoring of students?

DO THE FACULTY HAVE REGULAR OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUCH AS TRAVEL AND PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, WORKSHOPS, AND OTHER LEARNING EXPERIENCES?

ARE FACULTY TEACHING LOADS SUFFICIENTLY REASONABLE AND EQUITABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THE HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED NATURE OF A GRADUATE PROGRAM, ESPECIALLY THE DIRECTION OF THESES OR DISSERTATIONS?

TEACHING / LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

IS THE CURRENT CURRICULUM ADEQUATE TO ENABLE STUDENTS TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS AND ATTAIN THE OUTCOMES NEEDED FOR GRADUATES OF THIS PROGRAM?

- Is the curriculum content what it needs to be? Is the core curriculum appropriate to the discipline? Is there a provision for planned disciplinary specialization beyond the core including courses characterized by advanced disciplinary content and academic rigor? At the master's level, is degree credit from dual-listed courses limited to 1/3 of the total hours required?
- Are there appropriate opportunities to learn the tools, techniques, or methodologies that are needed to understand the discipline and actually practice the education acquired?
- Are courses offered frequently enough to ensure the timely completion of the degree?
- Do students have adequate opportunities to participate in extra-disciplinary courses or experiences without increasing the total number of hours required towards the degree?
- Will the curriculum need to be updated in the near future? If so, please explain and advise.
- Should the school consider the development of any new or alternative offerings?

ARE ADEQUATE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS?

- Is there adequate materials and secretarial support to encourage research and publication?
- Is there adequate library support?
- Is there adequate and accessible computer support?
- Are there adequate laboratory facilities?
- Is there adequate office space?

CONSIDERING CURRENT BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, WHAT ARE THE MOST PRESSING RESOURCE NEEDS OF THE PROGRAM? COULD THESE NEEDS BE MET IN WAYS WITHOUT REQUIRING ADDITIONAL BUDGETARY RESOURCES, SUCH AS SAVINGS FROM CURRENT PROGRAM OPERATIONS?

- How should needs of the program be prioritized? Could savings be realized from current program operations in order to fund any new budgetary needs?

PROGRAM EVALUATION

WHAT ARE THE COMPETENCIES / EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES THAT ARE EXPECTED OF STUDENTS WHO SATISFACTORILY COMPLETE THE PROGRAM?

- Has the department defined the skills/student outcomes desired for its students? Does the curriculum ensure the development of appropriate skills in written and oral communications? critical thinking? computer and technology-related skills? Does the school have adequate information to know when skills have been adequately developed/outcomes have been accomplished? If not, define what kind of data/analyses are needed?
- Does the program require an oral or written comprehensive exam or a culminating experience? To what extent does the comprehensive exam or culminating experience demonstrate breadth of knowledge across the discipline, depth of knowledge in specific areas, and the ability to integrate and apply knowledge independently?
- How do program mechanisms ensure that students demonstrate mastery of research in the discipline (e.g., through theses, research papers, case studies, etc.)?

ARE COMPLETION RATES AT AN ACCEPTABLE LEVEL?

- What are the current trends in the number of degrees awarded and completion rates?
- How does the department evaluate completion rates? What evidence is available towards acceptable completion rates? If unacceptable, what are possible contributing factors? How is this information used towards program revision?

DOES THE PROGRAM SYSTEMATICALLY TRACK ITS GRADUATES?

- What mechanisms or procedures are in place for the collection of information on graduates? Is follow-up data collection regular and systematic?
- What mechanisms or procedures exist for placing graduates in positions related to the discipline? Is placement regular and systematic? How are placement activities evaluated?

WHAT MECHANISMS OR PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE FOR CURRICULUM EVALUATION? HOW OFTEN IS THE CURRICULUM EVALUATED AND HOW ARE PROPOSED CHANGES IMPLEMENTED?

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

OVERALL, WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF THE PROGRAM?

- What are the major strengths of the program?
- What are the major weaknesses of the program?

WHAT GOALS WOULD YOU SUGGEST THE PROGRAM SET FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS? (please list in order of priority – the most important goal listed first)

HOW CAN THE PROGRAM WORK TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

- Considering current budget constraints, what are the most realistic strategies the program can use to achieve the highest priority goals?
- What goals would require additional resources? What level of resources would these goals require? How might the program secure these resources?