

### Executive Summary

The Graduate School conducts internal and external evaluative reviews<sup>1</sup> for all graduate programs across the University of Miami. The purpose of these reviews is to regularly (currently every 7 years with intermediate reports after 3 years) assess the effectiveness of the program while identifying niche areas of excellence to foster, discussing areas for improvement, sharing core areas that may be appropriate for interdisciplinary partnerships, and formally reporting to leadership those areas requiring further investment. Every 7 years, graduate programs should complete a self-study in the fall semester of the academic year, and the Graduate School will conduct the prescribed procedure for an external program review.

### Procedures for Review of Existing Graduate Programs

1. Graduate Program reviews will routinely take place approximately every seven years by initiation of the Graduate School.
2. Programs that will be reviewed are contacted by the Graduate School in the summer before the academic year that the review will occur.
3. Prior to, or at the start of, the academic year, the Associate Dean of the School/College, the Department Chair, and the Graduate Program Director meet with the Dean of the Graduate School to determine the content of the self-study report. The timetable is discussed.
4. A rank-ordered list of 6 to 8 potential Internal Reviewers, comprised of UM Graduate Faculty members from outside the program being reviewed, will be submitted by the Graduate Program designee to the Graduate School by September 1. The Dean of the Graduate School may or may not adhere to the rank order.
5. A rank-ordered list of 6 to 8 potential External Reviewers with expertise in the program will be submitted by the Graduate Program designee to the Graduate School by September 1, along with an explanation of any relationships they may have to the faculty of the program. The Dean of the Graduate School may or may not adhere to the rank order.
6. The Dean of the Graduate School will identify three Internal Reviewers and three External Reviewers from the lists provided and notify them of their responsibilities and the site visit<sup>2</sup> dates.
7. The scheduling of the site visit dates will be done by the Graduate School in consultation with the Program Faculty and their Dean, dependent on the availability of the Provost and the Dean of the Graduate School.
8. The Graduate School will arrange requisite appointments with the Dean of the Graduate School and Provost for the upcoming site visit. Meanwhile the program will use the sample schedule to set up the other site visit details.
9. The program will prepare a self-study report (20-30 pages of text, not including appendices) and submit it via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

1 If a program offers both doctoral and master's degrees (e.g., biology, chemistry, mathematics), both degrees will be reviewed simultaneously during the same review period.

2 Site visits will occur virtually, unless there are specific circumstances that warrant an in-person site visit (e.g. facilities that needs to be toured in person).

10. The Graduate School provides the self-study report to the Internal Reviewers. They are given 2-3 weeks to make comments on the self-study report. The Internal Reviewers collectively submit via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School a single 1-2 page memo that includes comments and recommendations on the report and indicates where information is missing, if applicable.
11. The Graduate School shares the Internal Reviewers' comments with the Graduate Program.
12. The Graduate Program incorporates the feedback and suggestions of the Internal Reviewers into the final version of the self-study report to be submitted via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School at least 30 days prior to the site visit.
13. The Graduate School submits the final self-study report to the External Reviewers at least 30 days prior to the site visit.
14. One week before the site visit, the Graduate Program designee provides the final detailed site visit schedule to the Graduate School and the External Reviewers.
15. The site visit occurs.
16. The External Reviewers submit their 10-15 page external report via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School within 30 days of their site visit.
17. The external report is shared with the Graduate Program. The Graduate Program prepares a written response to the external report, called the "plan of action", that is submitted via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School by September 1<sup>st</sup>.
18. The external report and plan of action are shared with the Internal Reviewers for their feedback. They collectively prepare a 1-2 page written memo of response to the external report and the plan of action and submit it via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School by October 1<sup>st</sup>.
19. The 1) External Reviewers' report, the 2) Graduate Program's plan of action in response to the external report, and the 3) Internal Reviewer's memo of response are presented at a Graduate Council meeting in October, November, or January by the Graduate Program representative and at least one Internal Reviewer. If the Graduate Council accepts the reports, the program review will be considered accepted.
20. A meeting is scheduled with the Provost, Dean of the Graduate School, Dean and Associate Dean of the School/College that houses the Graduate Program that was reviewed, Department Chair, and Graduate Program Director.
21. The Dean of the Graduate School, Dean and Associate Dean of the School/College that houses the Graduate Program that was reviewed, Department Chair, and Graduate Program Director meet with the Provost to discuss the program review.
22. With the approval of the Provost, the documents are then forwarded to the Office of Assessment and Accreditation. The Graduate School sends a memo to Faculty Senate and the Graduate Program indicating the program review was approved. The Faculty Senate does not require the full document.

**GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE SELF-STUDY REPORT**

An assessment of your program and existing degree(s) and identification of areas that might need future change will help your program to successfully implement its Strategic Plan. Please provide the Graduate School with the following information:

**1. Format**

Include the name of the program and existing degree(s) being reviewed on the cover page, along with the date, and names, titles, and contact information for each individual who writes the report.

**2. Degrees**

- a. Discuss the program and provide exact name(s) of degree(s) offered by your program.
  - a. Discuss the purpose and goals of the program and each degree.
- b. Assess job market demand for students possessing degrees offered by your program.
- c. Can courses offered by your programs be taken for credit by students in other programs/ departments and applied toward earning degrees outside your program?

**3. Current/Projected Strategic Plan (Describe a high-level strategic overview of the program, approximately 2 pages)**

- a. Describe your program in a strategic sense. Who are you? What is your growing capacity to educate and train? How is your infrastructure growing to meet those needs? What are your interdisciplinary connections and growth opportunities? How are you perceived externally?
- b. How do you demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- c. Areas of strength: What is your niche? What are the areas that your program can be in the top quartile? How is your strength evaluated?
- d. Areas for strategic development: Does the sustainability of your students, faculty, university, or trends demand that you do something differently? What are your areas of growth?
- e. Describe the direction the program will take in the next five years.
- f. Articulate resource allocation, reallocation and needs.

**4. Resources**

- a. Assess the adequacy of all library resources and services.
- b. List and evaluate all existing equipment and facilities in your program.
- c. List equipment currently needed by your program and provide estimates on how much new equipment will cost.
- d. Project what you anticipate your program's equipment needs will be in the next 5 years and provide estimates on cost.
- e. Evaluate the adequacy of existing classroom and laboratory space.
- f. Project what you anticipate your program's space needs will be for the next 5 years.

**5. Curriculum**

- a. List all courses taught in the last five years and by whom.
- b. List anticipated additions, deletions, or other changes in your course offerings for the next 5 years.

- c. Describe any current, anticipated, or agreed upon cooperative or interdisciplinary work with other programs of the University or with any outside agency related to your program.
- d. List and describe tracks for various degrees offered by your program.
- e. Describe the kinds of teaching, e.g., clinical, classroom, independent research, seminars, etc., used by your faculty and what proportion of each is used.
- f. Quantify the distribution of graduate students to advisors.
- g. Is the program accredited by an appropriate agency? If not, explain why.
- h. Provide statistics on the format and passing rates of qualifying exams required by your program.
- i. Describe any colloquia series, special seminars, or conferences your program has held.

#### 6. Faculty

- a. Provide a complete CV for each member of your program and for each member of an outside program who participates in your program's offerings.
- b. Estimate your program's need for additional faculty in the next 5 years.
- c. Describe any interaction your program has with other graduate programs, e.g., extra-program thesis and dissertation committees.
- d. Share faculty-articulated needs that could enhance the program.
- e. Describe the criteria for membership in Graduate Faculty.

#### 7. Students (This section is relevant for programs that directly control their admission and enrollment. For programs with central admissions, the pertinent central unit should provide an overarching description that describes these concerns.)

- a. Describe general requirements for admission to your program and completion of your degrees.
- b. Are there subgroups of individuals underrepresented in your field? What efforts have you taken and what activities have you implemented to increase the number of underrepresented minorities in your program? Provide numbers of underrepresented minorities in your program.
- c. Describe teaching or research positions currently held by graduates of your program.
- d. Describe how TAs, RAs, etc., in your program are trained.
- e. How do you assess the quality of the applicants to your program?
- f. How do you assess the program's retention rate and time to graduation?
- g. How do you assess your placement of graduates and career outcomes?

#### 8. Administration

- a. Describe the academic direction of current programs and how they are administered day-to-day.
- b. Describe the academic policy-making mechanisms in place to oversee your program and degree offerings. Are faculty included in these mechanisms? If so, what is the criteria for their participation?

#### 9. Overall Quality Assessment

- a. Do you think your program currently offers degrees and an environment that facilitates and enhances student learning? State the method used to gather the information.
- b. Describe any recommendations that would enhance the instructional environment for faculty, staff, and students in the program.

10. Provide any other information that you think is pertinent. (Graduate Programs may decide to include their Program Assessment Reports (PARs) in the Appendix of their self-study)

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**GRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW  
ROLES OF INTERNAL REVIEWERS**

1. To review the self-study report.
2. Within two to three weeks of receiving the self-study report, the Internal Reviewers collectively submit via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School a 1-2 page memo that includes comments and recommendations on the report and indicates where information is missing, if applicable. On the cover page, include the date, the name of the program(s) being reviewed, and the names, titles, and contact information for each Internal Reviewer. Your feedback will be provided to the program before the final self-study report is sent to the External Reviewers.
3. To attend the debriefing meeting with the External Reviewers and the Dean of the Graduate School on the final day of the site visit to seek their impressions of the program, hear their recommendations for improving the program, and ask questions of them.
4. By October 1<sup>st</sup>, based upon your interaction with the External Reviewers during the site visit and your reading of the self-study report, external report, and program's plan of action, you will collectively write and submit via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School a 1-2 page memo of response to the plan of action. On the cover page, include the date, the name of the program(s) being reviewed, and the names, titles, and contact information for each Internal Reviewer.
5. At least one Internal Reviewer will attend a Graduate Council meeting in October, November of January of the academic year following the site visit, along with the program representative, to present the program review. The Dean of the Graduate School will serve as a facilitator of this discussion. The Graduate Council is involved with the strategic planning for graduate education. They will ask questions of clarification of you and then a determination is made in Executive Session whether the program review is ready to be forwarded to the Provost. These program reviews are essential to strategic planning, faculty governance, as well as supporting the accreditation process.

**GRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW  
ROLES OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS**

1. To review the self-study report in advance of the site visit.
2. To participate in the site visit on the scheduled dates.
3. To collectively write and submit a 10-15 page external report to be submitted via email to the Executive Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School within 30 days of the site visit. You may decide to appoint a chair of committee, although this is not required. On the cover page, include the date, the name of the program(s) being reviewed, and the names, titles, and contact information for each External Reviewer.
4. To provide the Graduate School the required documentation for travel reimbursements and honorarium payments.

## A Sampling from Memos Submitted by Internal Reviewers in Response to the Self-Study Report

**Date:****Program(s) Reviewed:****Names, Titles, and Contact Information for Internal Reviewers:**

*The Internal Committee can comment on each section of the self-study document such as those shown below:*

**General comments**

This is a clearly and carefully prepared report. It provides a great deal of detail, at some points perhaps too much (e.g., Table in p. 8 providing components and cost of Audio Visual equipment). It is well-organized and precise.

**Program rationale**

Why is important to have a GRADUATE program in \_\_\_\_\_?

What are the advantages for the institution (strategic guidelines: revenue-generating, faculty research-assisting, or reputation-enhancing?) What are the advantages of offering a PhD program?

What are the advantages for South Florida, for the country to have this program at UM?

Are we satisfied with the program we have? Do we want to improve it? At this point it may be helpful to declare 3 peer institutions we feel we compare to, and 3 aspirational comparison schools, if we want to upgrade the program. These comparisons can and should be used throughout the report to compare values (e.g., number of students, number of faculty, funding levels, publications/student, average GREs, attrition rates, etc), whenever possible.

**Information**

Some of the following information is missing or difficult to grasp. The information could be added in additional tables, perhaps in Appendix form:

Clarify attrition rates (if possible, indicate causes).

What is the number of students not passing Qualifying examinations? %?

The following information needs to be included:

- GRE Statistics
- Student Fellowships: any aside UM fellowships?
- Transfer students

**Strategic plan**

The goal is to more than double the graduate enrollment. While the case is made that the job market is strong, the arguments for expansion could be a bit stronger. In other words, if I were going to double \_\_\_\_\_ graduates, why would UM's program be the one to provide these new graduates? This may be a good time to bring back the comparison schools mentioned in the introduction, and address the questions of where we are, where we would like to be, and above all, why. \_\_\_\_\_

*Or the Internal Committee memo could just be bullets:*

- Page 33, Section 5a: More information needs to be provided about how a research assistantship differs from a fellowship (i.e., salary, hours).
- Page 36, Section 5d: How can this section report on teaching assistants when on page 34 it was stated that there are none?
- Page 48, Section 6a: Exactly what secretarial support is needed and used by the Ph.D. program? Exactly how much student travel has been funded by the program during the past five years?



### Sample Schedule For In-Person Site Visits

The actual site visit schedule can be modified to meet the needs of the program although any modified schedule must provide time for meetings with academic leadership (i.e., School/College Dean, Dean of the Graduate School, and Provost). The Dean of the School/College must meet with the External Reviewers at some point in the schedule. A tour of the facilities should be included in the visit. This schedule should be set up and all relevant parties notified as soon as the visitation dates with the External Reviewers are known.

The transportation, lodging, and honorarium for the External Reviewers are paid by the Graduate School. Meals with the program, refreshments for student meetings, etc. are covered by the program, as noted in the sample schedule.

Meetings in italics are scheduled by the Graduate School. All others are coordinated by the program.

#### Day 1 –

Arrive in Miami and check into hotel by 5pm; Dinner with External Reviewers and Dean of the School/College undergoing program review (expense paid by the program)

#### Day 2 –

- 8:30 am *Breakfast at hotel with Dean of the Graduate School (expense paid by the Graduate School)*
- 9:30 am Program Faculty pick up External Reviewers and bring them to campus from hotel
- 11:00 am Program Faculty meet with External Reviewers
- 12:30 pm Lunch with select Program Faculty not in previous meeting (expense paid by the program)
- 2:00 pm Program Faculty meet with External Reviewers
- 5:00 pm External Reviewers meet with graduate students in two sessions, first with early-stage graduate students and then later with advanced students (refreshments paid by program)
- 7:00 pm Dinner with External Reviewers and Graduate Program Director, Department Chair, Associate Dean, and/or Dean of School/College (expense paid by the program)

#### Day 3 –

- 8:30 am Breakfast - External Reviewers only (expense submitted to the Graduate School for reimbursement)
- 9:30 am Program Faculty pick up External Reviewers and bring them to campus (along with their luggage if they are leaving directly for the airport after the exit and debriefing meetings)
- 10:30 am Meetings as decided between External Reviewers and Program Faculty
- 12:30 pm Lunch with Graduate Program Director, Department Chair, and/or Associate Dean of School/College (expense paid by the program)
- 2:00 pm External Reviewers' exit meeting with Dean of School/College
- 3:00 pm *External Reviewers' exit meeting with Provost and Dean of the Graduate School*

- 4:00pm *Debriefing meeting with Dean of the Graduate School, External Reviewers, and Internal Reviewers*
- 6:00 pm External Reviewers' dinner on their own or return to airport (expense submitted to the Graduate School for reimbursement)

### Sample Schedule For Virtual Site Visits

The actual site visit schedule can be modified to meet the needs of the program although any modified schedule must provide time for meetings with academic leadership (i.e., School/College Dean, Dean of the Graduate School, and Provost). The Dean of the School/College must meet with the External Reviewers at some point in the schedule. Provide the time zone in the schedule along with information on how to access the site visit virtually (e.g., Zoom links for each meeting). This schedule should be set up and all relevant parties notified as soon as the visitation dates with the External Reviewers are known.

Meetings in italics are scheduled by the Graduate School. All others are coordinated by the program.

#### Day 1 –

- 10:00 am Welcome meeting with the Dean and Associate Dean of the School/College undergoing program review, Department Chair, Graduate Program Director and External Reviewers
- 11:00 am *Introduction meeting with Dean of the Graduate School and External Reviewers*
- 11:00 am Program Faculty meet with External Reviewers
- 12:30 pm Lunch break
- 1:30 pm Program Faculty meet with External Reviewers
- 4:00 pm External Reviewers meet with graduate students in two sessions, first with early-stage graduate students and then later with advanced students
- 6:00 pm External Reviewers' meeting only (optional)

#### Day 2 –

- 10:00 am Meetings as decided between External Reviewers and Program Faculty
- 12:30 pm Lunch break
- 1:30 pm Department Chair, Graduate Program Director, and/or Associate Dean of School/College meet(s) with External Reviewers
- 2:00 pm External Reviewers' exit meeting with Dean of School/College
- 3:00 pm *External Reviewers' exit meeting with Provost and Dean of the Graduate School*
- 4:00 pm *Debriefing meeting with Dean of the Graduate School, External Reviewers, and Internal Reviewers*
- 5:00 pm External Reviewers' meeting only (optional)