Graduate Academic Program Review Policy and Procedures

GC notifies programs & advises to prepare self-study.

PROC conducts confidential surveys/questionnaires

Data provided to Graduate Group Chair

Program submits self-study & list of potential External Reviewers

PROC and GC select Review Team

PROC prepares site visit schedule

Site Visit Occurs

External Members Report is submitted to PROC

PROC send interim report to Program Chair to review for factual errors. Revisions sent to PROC within 2 weeks

PROC review and send final report (Review Team Report, program revisions, and PROC member additions) to GC for review.

GC reviews for endorsement. If GC endorses the final report is transmitted to the Program Chair, Graduate Group Assessment Coordinator, Graduate Dean, Lead Dean, Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, VCR and Provost/EVC. Graduate Program is directed to provide a response report.

GC receives response report and action plan from Graduate Program.

GC and PROC follow-up meeting occurs with relevant parties

GC Chair and PROC write final action plan report.

PROC recommends program review closure to GC.

GC votes and send recommendation to relevant parties.

Contents

GRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I. Overview

As a public trust, the University of California, Merced, strives to assure its many constituents that it fulfills its obligations to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge for the public good. Academic Program Review is one way the university demonstrates its commitment to accountability and continual improvement. Academic Program Review is predicated on the idea of expert evaluation. Academic programs, combining cutting edge research with teaching, are far too complicated to be evaluated by simple measures; each program must be evaluated by peers whose knowledge of the fields of inquiry and education enable them to identify programmatic strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

Program review simultaneously serves both external and internal needs. Externally, Program Reviews are an essential requirement of Accreditation in that they show reflection on annual program learning outcomes and on student success data, while providing an institutional mechanism for responding to shortcomings. In particular, program review must ensure that budgetary planning takes student learning and student success into account. Internally, Program review enables us to consider annual assessment as a piece of the larger whole, connecting student learning to research and public service as appropriate. Perhaps more importantly, while WASC, under the direction of the U.S. Department of Education, holds us to modest standards, expecting us to cite program reviews when providing evidence that our students can demonstrate a number of "core competencies" upon graduation, we seek to foster excellence, creativity, and innovation, to create programs that attract students who seek distinctive, cutting edge, and prestigious approaches to learning and research. Thus, we see Program Review as an opportunity to reflect not just on what we are doing, but also on how we want our programs to grow.

Program Review is therefore both formative, in that it shapes the actions of a program in its ongoing development, and summative, in that it identifies particular issues and problems that may need to be addressed and identifies actions required to address such issues and problems. Given that Academic Program Review should spur creativity while also responding to external review requirements, and given our wide variety of programs and programmatic structures, Reviews must be carefully tailored to specific circumstances. Thus, Program review requires three distinct phases:

1. **Preparation**: Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC) consults with program faculty, graduate council, and administrators to determine the scope of review, articulating a plan for the self-study that considers the program's circumstance[1]. The program under review then develops a self-study responding to this plan. Upon receipt and review of the self-study, the PROC drafts a charge to the external review team in consultation with Graduate Council and the lead dean. The charge will include the basic questions listed below and any further questions deemed useful for the review by the

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[1] E.g. standalone graduate program, graduate program with undergraduate program, graduate program with programmatic accreditation, etc.

      PROC, Senate and administration. PROC conducts confidential surveys of faculty and students as needed.

2. **Site Visit**: A review team, composed of external members, and accompanied by a campus liaison, visits the campus to meet with constituents identified by PROC and listed in the charge.

3. **Follow-up**: The Program Chair and relevant Dean respond to the self-study and present the response to the PROC.   The Program Review is closed only when the PROC reports to the Graduate Council (GC) that the response of the program to the Review Team report adequately addresses the recommendations and the follow-up meeting has taken place with both committees. This normally takes place by the end of the second year of the Review. The combination of these activities allows for an evidence-based assessment of programs which engages faculty and administration, and that can be used as the basis for ongoing academic planning and for resource allocation.

Reviews of graduate programs are conducted under the authority of the [Standing Orders of the University of California](), the [University of California Academic Senate](), and the [Merced Divisional Bylaws](). Under Merced Divisional Bylaw II.4.C., GC has the authority to establish and review graduate programs. Thus, GC, with the aid of extramural review teams, and supported by the UCM Office of the Academic Senate, is responsible for Graduate Program Review. GC also retains the final authority to alter the type, format, requirements, review cycle, and length of program review.

The details of Program Review are coordinated by the Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC), a joint senate-administration committee supported by the Office of Institutional Assessment under the Provost's Office.

The Graduate Council will establish the sequence of program reviews, a sequence that is revisited annually. The current sequence is posted on the Program Review section of the Senate website. The sequence can be altered by action of the GC. In the first year, the program prepares a self-study and has a site visit by a program review team. In the second year, the administration and program respond to the findings of the review.

Usually programs will be reviewed every seven years, though circumstances in the interim (such as radical change in a program requiring GC approval) may justify acceleration or delay of reviews. A program may formally request to delay their review by up to one year, if circumstances warrant. The request must be signed by the program chair and lead Dean, explaining the need to delay, and sent to GC for approval.

For new programs, the first review occurs when the program proposal is submitted to GC for approval; that review follows the format prescribed for applications by CCGA, not the format outlined in this document. Otherwise, programs will be reviewed seven years after CCGA approval. However, programs may choose to be reviewed earlier in order to synchronize undergraduate and graduate program reviews to be on the same schedules. Within seven years of first admitting graduate students, any graduate emphasis area under the Interim-Individualized Graduate Program (IIGP) that has not submitted a proposal to CCGA for approval as a standalone graduate program is subject to Program Review.

For IIGP emphasis areas offering multiple tracks[2], each track will be scheduled for a separate abbreviated review during the same time as its IIGP emphasis area. GC will determine the format for the abbreviated review and what information will be required from each track. GC will contact each lead faculty member from each track regarding their abbreviated review. In general, tracks will be expected to provide a brief written report containing evidence and analysis of the critical features of the track, a plan for the future direction of the track, and establish a procedure and timeline for the track to lead to a stand-alone graduate program, if that is what is planned. No questionnaire will be conducted for the abbreviated reviews. The PROC will review the written report and may interview the lead faculty member. The abbreviated review of the tracks will be discussed concurrently when the "parent" IIGP emphasis area undergoes review.

A. Guidelines

It is the GC's responsibility to evaluate the academic components of graduate programs and to identify those that define the distinctive character of UC Merced as a research university. In collaboration with the Administration, those that define the academic character of UC Merced should be supported and managed in such a manner as to optimize graduate education and research across the campus.

Criteria to be considered in identifying and prioritizing graduate programs that contribute to the quality of the campus include:
- the quality of curriculum, faculty and students;
- the record of achievement of the program;
- the place of the program in the field as a whole;
- the anticipated future of the program and the discipline;
- the contribution and centrality of the program to the missions and goals of the campus and the state;
- the contribution of the program to other fields of study at UC Merced at the graduate and upper division undergraduate levels;
- the FTE, financial and facilities resources required for developing or maintaining the strength of the program.

As scholarship is dynamic, it is expected that the faculty will propose new graduate programs. The criteria for evaluating newly proposed programs differ from those used in evaluating existing programs, in that a new program would not have a record of accomplishment.

B. Standards and Measures

Academic Quality – The paramount criterion on which all academic programs are to be judged must be quality, which is the excellence of achievements. This includes quality of the faculty, entering students, graduates, and the overall quality of the academic experience, including learning and research as perceived by those associated with the program and by external evaluators. The quality of graduate programs must be judged in a manner that is independent of the final degree objectives of the students. In assessing the quality of graduate programs, the following will apply:

[2] In this document the term tracks refers to graduate program emphasis that serve as an umbrella (incubator) for the development of graduate programs in related fields.

1. *Programs* – Quality in a graduate program refers to the degree to which a program has:
   - a clear statement of its mission and goals;
   - a curriculum that is appropriate to the mission and reflects current thinking in the discipline or field;
   - consistently good teaching in courses;
   - good faculty mentoring of graduate students;
   - members contributing to the establishment and attainment of program goals;
   - appropriate, assessable and aligned statements of student learning goals and outcomes at the course and program levels;
   - engaged annually in assessment processes and used appropriate feedback and student learning results to inform programmatic practices.
2. *Faculty* – Quality with regards to faculty refers to the degree to which students are:
   - actively engaged in significant research or other relevant creative endeavors;
   - making a contribution to their discipline or field in the form of;
   - good teachers;
   - good mentors for graduate students;
   - contributing to improving the program.
3. *Students* – Quality with regard to students refers to the degree to which students:
   - are highly qualified for admission into a program;
   - produce excellent research or creative works in projects, theses or dissertations, and, if relevant, publications;
   - successfully compete for placements after graduation (employment, admission to further graduate education, post-doctoral appointments);
   - successfully compete for campus, UC, national, and international scholarships, fellowships, and research funding;
   - are retained and able to complete their degree in accordance with expected timelines;
   - demonstrate achievements of learning outcomes at expected levels.
4. *The place of programs in the field as a whole* – Assessing the place of a program in the field as a whole refers to internal and external recognition of:
   - outstanding faculty achievement in research;
   - effective teaching programs;
   - successful students;
   - public service relevant to disciplinary potential.
5. *The future of the program and discipline* – Assessing the future of the program and the discipline refers to an assessment of the degree to which a program:
   - reflects academic vitality and is engaged with distinctive or emerging intellectual directions;
   - recognizes and adopts new trends in graduate education;
   - provides an education that will allow graduates to pursue current and future employment opportunities.
6. *The record of achievement of programs* – The record of achievement of existing programs refers to the degree to which a program is successful in:
   - recruiting highly qualified students to the graduate program;

- honoring the University's goals of diversity in its student cohorts[3];
- retaining and supporting its graduate students;
- providing the facilities necessary for student research;
- facilitating/ensuring students' completion of their degrees in a timely fashion;
- placing its students in appropriate positions after graduation;
- effectively using assessment processes to improve programmatic practices related to student attainment of education and outcomes.

C. Priorities

These guidelines will be used by the GC, PROC and review teams in reviewing existing programs and by the GC in establishing new programs. The GC will use these measures in recommendations of establishment, continuation, or disestablishment of individual programs. The degree to which programs demonstrate success in meeting these guidelines will be used to recommend resource allocations (e.g., faculty FTE, block grant funds, and graduate student admission quotas) and to determine the viability of programs within the broad context of graduate education on the campus.

D. Practicalities

UC Merced is a new and developing campus with multiple graduate programs in various stages of development. As such, it is expected that some review activities and/or criteria will be impossible to complete or unavoidably poorly developed when undergoing graduate program review. In such cases, the limitations on the assessment possible should be stated succinctly. For example, some statistical measures may simply have sample sizes that are too small to be interpreted confidently.

The burden of program review may be large for small graduate programs, in which case existing methods of assessment should be used and independent metrics should be co-opted in the circumstances in which this makes sense.

E. Program Review Schedule

Program Review is a two-year process. In the first year, PROC in consultation with GC, the lead dean and relevant Senate committees defines the scope of the review for the self-study. The program then prepares a self-study. Following receipt and review of the self-study, the PROC in consultations with GC, the lead dean, and relevant Senate committees draft and approve the charge. In the second year, the review team visits. Then the administration and program respond to the findings of the review.

Program Review Schedule[4]

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[3] University of California Diversity Statement adopted by the Assembly of the Academic Senate May 10, 2006; endorsed by the President of the University of California June 20, 2006.

[4] Minor variations in the timetable are the purview of the Periodic Review Oversight Committee

Year One	• January/start of spring semester (Jan X) – Programs under review receive formal notification.
	• By March 1:
	   o With consultation, PROC determined with the scope of the review, notifying the program of the format for the self-study.
	   o Administrative support team meets with program in February to review purpose, process, timeline, responsibilities, support available, etc.
	• April 1 – Program with dean input submits list of possible reviewers due to PROC.
	• May 1 – By this date, PROC reviews; list of reviewers is set.
	   o Start recruiting team for a spring visit following year.
	   o Data package provided to program.
	• September 1 – self-study submitted to PROC; distributed to relevant Senate Committees, Dean, with basic charge and request for additional input into charge.
	• Confidential survey of students and faculty conducted in fall, as needed.
	• By December 1 – charge is finalized, and sent to External Review Team with self-study.

Year Two	• Site visit takes place before spring break. • By June 1 – final external review team report submitted to PROC, following factual error check. • By Sept 1 – PROC forwards External Team Report (ERT) to program and EVC, and Dean. Dean is asked to coordinate response, including program/administrative response to ERT recommendations, development of implementation plan, resource commitments, etc. This should involve EVC. • November 1 – Response and implementation plan due to PROC, which sends to relevant Senate Committees for evaluation, input, and conclusion if review should be closed. • By start of spring semester – PROC has approved implementation plan for integration into budget. Review is closed.

II. Periodic Review Oversight Committee

The Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC) is a joint senate-administration committee supported by the Office of Institutional Assessment under the Provost's Office, and it conducts the Graduate Program Review.

The PROC:
- Makes recommendations to GC about the schedule of Program Reviews
- Collaborates, as necessary, with UGC to coordinate Program Review when there is a simultaneous review of undergraduate and graduate programs
- Invites reviewers to serve on Program Review teams
- Designs and conducts confidential surveys of students and faculty for each program under review with the approval of GC. The Office of Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) will provide assistance with the implementation of the surveys.
- Summarizes the results of student and faculty surveys and identifies which summarized results may not be shared beyond the Review Team
- For emphasis areas, receives and reviews the track reports
- Receives the final review team report and submits it, along with any corrections of fact, to GC
- Reviews the response of the Program Review Report made by the Program and Graduate Dean
- Recommends to GC that the Program Review be closed
- Reviews the implementation of the response plan by programs and administration
- Provides GC with an analysis of the aggregate results and actions of the Program Reviews completed in a given year. Any patterns will be highlighted for future investigation
- Every year, the PROC reviews the last three years of Program Review results; a report on patterns and recurring issues will be shared with GC; results for particular schools, if relevant, will be shared with the School Curriculum Committee.
- Consults with appropriate members of the Senate and Administration as necessary.

In addition, a senate member of the Periodic Review Oversight Committee serves as the Senate Liaison for Program Review teams.

III. Program Self-Study

To correspond with the Undergraduate Program Review Policy, the Graduate Program self-study similarly consists of two parts: an Executive Summary and Data Appendices. The Executive Summary must be less than 20 pages, single-spaced; summarize the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges faced in the program; and provide an overview and interpretation of the material covered in the Data Appendices.

A. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should be able to stand alone as a relatively brief, concise document of the larger self-review. The composition of the Executive Summary is the responsibility of the faculty, and not that of the staff. It is a rare, valuable opportunity for the faculty to have a conversation about the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of the graduate education they are

delivering. The Executive Summary should be based on the data in the self-review, and thus should be prepared only after the self-review data has been compiled. Past experience has demonstrated that the best result is obtained if the chair prepares the Executive Summary based on collaboration among the faculty.

Great care should be taken in preparing the Executive Summary as:
- the review team will use it as the foundation for its interviews with faculty, students, and administrators and the foundation for their assessment and recommendations;
- it will become part of the official record that will be included in the Self-review Data section of subsequent reviews.

Graduate programs at UC Merced vary considerably; the features of the program that might not be clear to colleagues outside of the program should be explained. For example, explain the role of the master's degree in a doctoral program or the relationship between the graduate program and divisions within a home school.

The study should address the following questions:
I. Introduction: Program Mission, History, Context
II. How does the program envision its work?
III. How will the program accomplish its missions?
IV. Who are the primary individuals/teams taking responsibility?
V. How is progress being monitored and how is relevant feedback being incorporated?
VI. Future directions/planning

Most of these are self-explanatory and should be generated internally by the program/unit. Data to support questions III and IV can be provided with the assistance of the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Division, who will work with the program and GC on their preparation.

The program self-study, other than the Table of Contents, may be organized in a way that makes sense to the program. The questions below should serve as prompts, and should be answered as appropriate.

1. Table of Contents/ Contact Information

I. Introduction
   This serves to orient the reader to both the Program itself and the self-study, and can provide an overview of report, Program mission, Program history, and internal and external contexts that shape the program. Major changes in the program since the last review or initial program approval should also be highlighted.

II. How does your program envision its work?
   This includes program philosophy, program goals, and program learning outcomes (PLOs). What do you want your students to learn, and how do you measure their learning outcomes? How do these relate to School and University missions and goals, including institutional planning documents as relevant? How does your program relate – in mission and goals – to other similar programs? What kinds of careers will the program's PhD and

Masters students be pursuing after they graduate?

III. How will the program accomplish its missions?
This includes curriculum, graduate student support (tuition, NRT, stipends, conference travel, summer support, etc.), advising, student publications, recruitment and retention. How do these compare with comparable graduate programs at peer institutions? Are there disciplinary guidelines or best practices that have shaped the curriculum and career preparation?

IV. Who are the primary individuals/teams taking responsibility?
Provide an overview of the graduate program's faculty, their qualifications, and contributions to the field and program. This includes their roles in planning and assessment and their record of graduate student placement after graduation.

V. How is progress being monitored and how is relevant feedback being incorporated?
This section should reflect on the results of annual assessments, the development and effectiveness of the Assessment Plan, and the ways the annual and cyclical assessments have been used to improve student learning, teaching and research training, the learning environment student support, the students' teaching skills, and curriculum. It may also reflect on the adequacy of institutional support in improving both student learning and assessment itself. It should also draw on relevant student data that are provided in the appendices, including time to degree and disaggregated data on career placement of students after graduation. These data should be used to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program.

VI. Future Directions/Planning
Summarize main points of the current strategic plan, as well as any long-term thinking about the program. In this section, the program may wish to suggest possible changes in the Assessment Plan. Future planning should reflect on enrollment trends in the program, current student/faculty ratios, necessary institutional support of graduate students, and any other issues that impinge on sustainability. Note: if in the course of the self-study a program begins to think about changes to its curriculum, we recommend that these be outlined here, but not submitted to GC for review until after the site visit has been completed. This section may also include any issue the program wants to bring up that would be helpful to the review.

2. For programs being reviewed for the first time:

- Since the program was approved: Briefly address how the program has evolved since the program proposal was approved.
- Other key changes: Briefly describe these changes.
- Briefly outline any limitations on assessment due to the stage of development of the program.

B. Self-Study Data Appendices

1. Documents from the Previous Program Review

This section contains either the documents from the program's previous review or the program's approved proposal (for programs being reviewed for the first time). The PROC analyst will provide one copy of the documents. The program is responsible for making the appropriate copies for the self-review binders.

For programs previously reviewed:
- The PROC analyst will provide one copy of the documents from the last review that must be included "as is" in this section.

For programs that are being reviewed for the first time:
- Change the tab and section title to: "Approved Graduate Program Proposal."
- The PROC analyst will provide one copy of the approved program proposal and the approval letter from the Office of the President, which must be included "as is" in this section.

2. Program Administration

Administrative Profile
The Administrative Profile is an overview of the organizational structure of the program. Provide the following information:
- *Program name:* If the name of the program has changed since the program was approved, provide the history of the name.
- *Chairs:* List the current and past chairs and their term of service, since the program was approved. For departmentally based programs, list the department chair and graduate program chair.
- *Graduate advisor(s):* List all faculty members serving as a mentor or thesis advisor to graduate students for the current academic year, as appointed by Graduate Council.
- *Committees:* For the current academic year, list each committee and the members. This list should correspond with committees listed in the program's bylaws. Do not provide a description of the committee, that information is included in the program's bylaws.

Faculty Membership List
Provide a list of the faculty (according to the program's bylaws) who have held membership in the program for the last three years, their academic title, and school affiliation.
- *Name:* Provide first and last names of the faculty member
- *Academic Title:* Provide the current academic title for each member
- *School Affiliation*

Graduate Student Organization
Provide information on the program's graduate student organization; include how graduate students participate in policy matters pertaining to your program and the current status of any graduate student organization that strengthens the development of your program.
- If a student organization is currently active, the student officers may submit this statement.
- If the program does not currently have a graduate student organization, provide a

statement to that fact and explain why one has not been established.

Bylaws
Graduate programs may not operate under bylaws that have not been reviewed and approved by GC. All graduate programs must have approved bylaws that are in compliance with Graduate Council's Bylaws Guidelines. The PROC analyst will notify the chair if the bylaws need to be revised and submitted to GC for review. As part of the review process, programs are asked to review their bylaws for compliance with GC's Bylaws Guidelines. Programs should complete this process once the review has been initiated and submit all revisions to the GC no later than March 1st during the first year of review. Future revisions should be submitted no later than three months before the self-review is due.

3. Student Information

Current Graduate Students
Provide a roster of currently enrolled graduate students in the program (include those on PELP and filing fee status). The information should be presented in a table that contains the following: name of the student, year enrolled and degree status (e.g., MA, MS, PhD, Filing Fee, and PELP), graduate GPA, Graduate Advisor, undergraduate degree, undergraduate institution, and undergraduate GPA. Table 5.1 is an example.

Table 5.1 Current Student Data: 2008-2009

Name	Enrolled/ Status	Grad GPA	Graduate Advisor	UG Deg.	UG Institution	UG GPA
John Jones	2005 /PhD	3.8	A. Smith	B.A.	Worton	3.7
Emily Seed	2004/PhD, Filing Fee	3.9	P. Drown	B.S.	Peppermill	3.4
Juan Rush		3.5	R. Peters	B.A.	Swartmore	3.6

Aggregate Data
Most of the aggregate data is available from the Graduate Division Office annual reports, which can be provided to the Graduate Program upon request.

The following information is required:
1. Basic statistics (extract data for the last eight years, and present in one table).
2. Application, admission, and new enrollment headcount (select all years available)
3. Enrollment headcount by student type (select all years available)
4. Enrollment headcount by degree objective (select all years available)
5. Enrollment headcount by gender (select all years available)
6. Enrollment headcount by citizenship (select all years available)
7. Total enrollment headcount (select all years available)
8. Annual average enrollment (select all years available)
9. Number of graduates by degree conferred (select all years available)
10. Analysis of retention and completion rates.

The average GRE scores for the admitted and enrolled students are required for one representative year. Table 5.2 is an example of what is needed.

Table 5.2 Average GRE Scores of Admitted Students – Fall 2008

	GRE Analytical	GRE Quantitative	GRE Verbal
Domestic admitted	80%	92%	86%
Domestic enrolled	84%	96%	89%
International admitted	81%	91%	83%
International Enrolled	83%	88%	78%

Student Financial Support
For this section Graduate Division generates a report on support that the program's graduate students received. The report will be provided to the programs by the PROC analyst. The report should be inserted in the self-review document.

Professional Development Opportunities
Provide information and percentage of students participating in professional development programs to become competitive for jobs in industry and/or academia. Note: If students have not yet participated in professional development opportunities, then the chair should discuss with the program faculty the need for a set of practices, workshops, and meetings that will ensure students are prepared for all aspects of professional life, including the values and ethics of their fields.

Alumni
Provide a list of students who have graduated since the last review and include the following information:
- Student name;
- Year graduated; and
- Most recent placement information: Employer, job title, city/state/country.

Benchmark Data
A benchmark data report should define student productivity. It can include, but is not limited to, the number of theses and dissertations for the last seven years; number of student publications and professional presentations; attrition rates; degree completion rates; and average time to degree.

4. Admitting and Mentoring Students

Mentoring Guidelines
In order to address the programmatic climate of the graduate program, information regarding the quality of student mentoring should be included.
1. Provide a copy of the mentoring guidelines[5] for the program. Note: If a program has no mentoring guidelines, then the chair should discuss with the program faculty the need for the development of such guidelines.
2. Provide an example of the announcement that annually notifies the faculty and students of the program mentoring guidelines and the location of the URL for those guidelines.

Degree Requirements

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[5] Programs should consult the Graduate Advisors Handbook.

Each graduate program must have a document approved by the GC that contains all of the degree requirements for the master's and/or doctoral degrees that it offers and must share this document with its students. Whether a master's degree leads to a doctoral program or not, a master's degree should have its own academic integrity. **A program may not impose requirements that have not been approved by GC.**

Provide a copy of your program's most recently approved degree requirements[6] and a copy of the approval letter from GC. If you do not have a copy of these documents, contact the PRC analyst for assistance. Note: The information is posted on the graduate program's website and it must include:

- the date the degree requirements were approved by Graduate Council;
- the exact wording of the document as approved by the Graduate Council.

In the event that it is determined during the self-review preparation that the program's degree requirements need revision, the following policies and procedure must be followed: While a program is in the "review phase"[7] degree requirements will not be reviewed by the GC until the PROC report and GC's transmittal letter have been forwarded to the program. Once the program review has been conducted and is in the "follow-up phase," degree requirement changes may be submitted for review and GC will consider them as a priority item. It is expected that the graduate program and the committee will work together to expedite the review, revision and approval process. Refer to GC's Procedures for Review of New Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Groups for information regarding format, submission of changes, etc.

Courses Taught
Provide a list of the program's core and elective courses, when they were taught and by whom for the past five years. This information should be organized by year.

Graduate Student Handbook
Each graduate program should have a "Graduate Student Handbook" with the information a graduate student needs to understand the graduate program's policies and procedures. This is a handbook separate from the degree requirements required in Section 5.4.2. The Graduate Student Handbook should include practical information students need to negotiate the campus – how to get a CatCard, the health center location, and so on – but the far more important information for new and continuing students includes the following (as examples):

- How to find a graduate advisor; how to change advisors;
- The curriculum, with required courses, electives, and the required (or recommended) sequence in which students take the courses;
- How to arrange for independent study units as part of the student's program
- How and when to put together a qualifying examination committee and a thesis or dissertation committee, and the rules about the composition of those committees;
- Opportunities for graduate student participation in the governance of the graduate program;
- A sample checklist so the student can keep track of his/her progress toward the degree.

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[6] This must be a verbatim version of the version approved by GC

[7] The "review phase" covers the period from the date the program's self-review is submitted to the PROC to when Graduate Council sends the PROC report back to the program.

Graduate programs should consult with current graduate students while creating or revising the program's Graduate Student Handbook so that the document answers the sorts of questions students have when they enter the program and at each stage in their continuing education.

If the Graduate Student Handbook is available on the graduate program's website, print out a copy and insert it in the self-review document. If a program is in the process of developing a handbook, provide a copy of the draft document and information on when the document will be finalized and provided to students.

Guidance Procedures
Provide the program's guidance procedures for new and continuing students. While some of this information might already be contained in the Graduate Student Handbook, for clarity the guidance procedures should be repeated here. This section should include:

- Established procedures for the selection of graduate advisors;
- Guidelines for how recommendations regarding the appointment of examination and dissertation/thesis committees are made; and
- Samples of checklists used to track students' progress to degree.

Teaching Assistant Training Procedures
If your program hires and trains its Teaching Assistants (TAs), please include:
1. Your procedure for hiring and training;
2. The university requires that schools hiring TAs provide the graduate student TA a clear, written statement about the duties of the TA for a course, including expectations about how the TA will spend an average of 20 hours per week (for a full-time appointment) performing those duties.
3. If your program does not assign TAs, provide a statement to that fact on a separate page in the self-review.

Note: If the information requested for the Admissions Policies, Guidance Procedures, and TA Training Procedures subsections is provided in the program's Graduate Student Handbook (or equivalent) that document may be inserted in the self-review. Include a cover page that lists all of the requested information and the page number in the handbook where it can be found.

GSR Compensation Plan
Include the program's latest approved GSR compensation plan. Programs should be aware that UCOP periodically adjusts GSR salary scales, which results in automatic salary increases for a given percent time appointment. Current salary scales are available at http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers. For all graduate programs, a copy of the original compensation plan and any updates to the plan should also be filed with the Graduate Division.

Recruitment Materials
Provide a copy of the program's current recruitment materials:
- Current recruitment materials, such as brochures and website print-outs; and
- Sample letters to applicants and admitted students and/or email messages used in place of a letter.

- Include copies of letters and materials used by the Graduate Division.

5. Faculty Information

Faculty Research Grants

For the last seven years, provide a listing of the grants held by faculty in the graduate program – **only** those grants that support graduate students in the program. That is, grants that do not support the graduate students in the program should not be included. If the grant also supports students in other programs, the information must be broken down only to account for the number of students in the graduate program under review.

Provide the following information:
1. source (e.g., NIH, not name of grant)
2. dates of the grant (life of the grant)
3. estimate the number of students in the graduate program under review supported by the grant by providing
   a) time period of that support; and
   b) total percentage appointed per semester.

Abbreviated CVs

For each faculty member of the graduate program, provide an abbreviated CV (two pages at the most) that span the last seven years. Often this information is already available in grant proposals that a faculty member has submitted recently, such as to NIH or NSF. In such an instance, use this abbreviated CV. Otherwise, provide the following information:
- Name
- Highest degree, institution, year of degree;
- Area of expertise (two lines);
- Membership in the program's committees and other services to the program;
- Number of published, peer-reviewed papers. If the faculty member is in a book discipline (e.g., humanities), then briefly describe the book project. Faculty members in the performing or fine arts should indicate major performances or exhibitions;
- Five key papers that were published related to the program. Humanities and performing/fine arts faculty should indicate their work with most relevance to the graduate program;
- Professional awards and honors (three lines maximum); and
- Service to the profession (including consulting, where appropriate).

C. Submission Format

1. Number of Copies Needed

Six copies of the Self-review document are needed.

2. Presentation

The information must be presented precisely in the format described below.[8] The Executive Summary and the Data section must be presented in two separate binders. The presentation of the **Executive Summary** document shall be as follows:

- Cover page: Include **Executive Summary**, the name of the graduate program and the year in which the review was initiated.

The presentation of **Data Section** document shall be as follows:

- Cover page: Include the **Data Section**, name of the graduate program, and the year in which the review was initiated.
- Major headings: Each section and subsection must be present in following order and separated by tabs and a colored sheet of paper with the title of the section or subsection:
    1. Documents from the Previous Program Review[9]
    2. Program Administration
        a) Administrative Profile
        b) Faculty Membership List
        c) Graduate Student Organization
        d) Bylaws
    3. Student Information
        a) Current Graduate Students
        b) Academic Qualifications
        c) Student Financial Support
        d) Alumni
        e) Benchmark Data
    4. Admitting and Mentoring Students
        a) Mentoring Guidelines
        b) Degree Requirements
        c) Courses Taught
        d) Graduate Student Handbook
        e) Guidance Procedures
        f) TA Training Procedures
        g) Recruitment Materials
    5. Faculty Information
        a) Faculty Research Grants
        b) Abbreviated CVs
        c) Graduate Teaching Evaluations

IV. Review Team

The Review Team is accompanied by a PROC senate liaison; and two or three external faculty

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[8] If it is not in the required format, the PROC analyst will return the documents to the program for correction.

[9] If the program is being reviewed for the first time, the section title and tab should be **Approved Graduate Proposal**

from peer institutions. Where possible, in the case of interdisciplinary programs, reviewers representing the disparate disciplines of the group will be chosen. All external reviewers should not be connected to the programs graduates, former faculty, or research; and at least one of those external faculty should be from a UC campus. The review team is selected from a list generated with input from the program chair and faculty, relevant deans, PROC members, and GC members. The list submitted via email to the PROC Analyst should include the names, contact information, and vitae. Potential team members will be ranked by the PROC. They will be contacted by the PROC liaison in charge of the review; and when they have accepted, they will be sent an official appointment letter. The Senate Office coordinates the Review Team travel, travel expense reimbursements and honoraria payments.

The Periodic Review Oversight Committee, in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate Division, the lead Dean, and the GC formulates a "standard" set of questions that the Review Team may (not "must") use to guide its deliberations; most of the questions are used for all programs, but some are program-specific. These are based on the Review Team Guidelines (see below) but may be more specific. The program is provided with the questions that are sent to the Review Team.

About 30 days prior to the scheduled visit, the information from the program self-study and a package of additional information (contents of the package follow below) are sent by the PROC Analyst to each member of the Review Team. Members can request electronic or hard copies of the documents. An identical information package is provided electronically to the members of the Periodic Review Oversight Committee. The program, Lead Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost receive a copy of the package of the material except confidential responses to surveys, which are dealt with as described previously in this document. The following items are included in the packages sent to members of the Review Team along with the Program self-study and a cover letter signed by the PROC co-chairs:

1. Tentative schedule for visit
2. Results of confidential surveys of faculty and students. The results will be made available in summary form.
3. Current section of the UCM General Catalog
4. Additional materials that the process elicited (Abbreviated Program Review of Tracks)
4. Guidelines and Questions for reviewers

V. Review Team Guidelines

A. Review Questions

The review team may ask any questions they deem appropriate. The following questions are provided to the review team as a guide and to assist the program members in their preparation for the review. Of the suggested questions, certainly only those that are relevant to the program should be asked.

1. General

1. What are the program's educational goals and outcomes? What role is it expected to play on campus in terms of its educational offerings and research? How do the program's

goals and outcomes align with those of the University of California as a whole? Is the program meeting its educational goals and outcomes, as well as the expectations of others? How do you know?

2. Does the program fulfill its role in:
   (a) attracting students of promise?
   (b) recruiting and retaining faculty members of quality?
   (c) justifying the instructional resources it requires?
   (d) flexibility in accommodating changes in the campus mission?
3. How does the quality and productivity of the program compare with other programs in the same discipline?
4. Using relative standards of comparison from the most outstanding programs in the discipline (indicate comparison within the University of California, nationally and internationally), how does the program compare in:
   (a) breadth of faculty (collectively) and their professional reputations?
   (b) facilities, library holdings, and financial support for further development?
   (c) providing a learning environment conducive to excellence in research and scholarship?
   (d) the quality and number of students in view of the facilities for research, the size of the faculty, and career opportunities for graduates?
   (e) student demand (e.g., for graduate students, the ratio between applications and admission within the previous five years)?
   (f) placement of graduates in promising positions?
   (g) scholarly fieldwork and publications
   (h) retention, completion and time to degree metrics.
5. Are the national rankings of this program reflecting the state of the program?
6. What special characteristics does the program possess in relation to other analogous programs within the University? Does the program exploit opportunities for interaction with related programs on the campus or within the University? What is the impact on other campus programs and within the University?
7. Has the program changed or developed special emphases to incorporate new knowledge and skills to meet the changing needs of students and the University?
8. What are the plans for future growth and investments?
9. Is the program meeting the needs of the discipline, students, state and society?
10. What is needed to improve the program significantly?

2. Faculty

1. What is the state of faculty morale?
2. Has the program motivated and enabled faculty members to use and develop new knowledge in the discipline?
3. Are there sufficient faculty FTE to support the program?
4. Is faculty participation adequate to support the objectives of the program?
5. Do the faculty receive appropriate credit for participation in graduate education?
6. Are there sufficient facilities in terms of infrastructure and laboratories?
7. How are faculty involved in annual assessment of student learning, including review of student work and assessment results, and the identification and implementation of programmatic changes based on assessment results?

3. Student Education
   1. What is the state of the student morale?
   2. With what other universities is the program competing in regards to graduate student recruitment?
   3. Has the program motivated students to participate fully in enquiry in the discipline?
   4. Are the students being mentored and advised in a manner that is appropriate for the discipline?
   5. Does the program ensure that consistent information is provided to students as well as advising on program requirements?
   6. What contributions do the program's students make to the decision-making, planning, and program organization?
   7. Are the students involved in research projects, teamwork, scholarly meetings, and national and/or international activities?
   8. Are students knowledgeable about the program's student learning expectations (outcomes), at both the course and program levels, and related assessments?
   9. Are the students demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes at expected levels? How do you know? If not, what plans exist to improve student achievement? How will the success of these plans be assessed?

4. Course Curriculum
   1. Is there a vision/cohesiveness to the course offerings in the program?
   2. Are the core course curriculum, the number or types of courses/regularity of offerings and the number of electives appropriate for the discipline?
   3. Is a multi-year assessment plan in place requiring annual assessment of student learning outcomes? Are annual assessments conducted, modifications implemented and complete reports filed as expected? Who receives these reports? Are they integrated into budgeting and planning processes? Are the reports reviewed by a knowledgeable person or committee that offers timely and constructive feedback that is used by the program as appropriate?
   4. In preparation for this review, have the faculty evaluated the multi-year assessment plan and the associated assessment results? How has this evaluation been used to revise the multi-year assessment plan?
   5. Does the curriculum prepare students for teaching responsibilities in ways that enable knowledgeable and productive support of student learning in relation to the educational goals and outcomes of the programs they support, and the campus as a whole?

5. Student Financial Support
   1. Does the program provide sufficient financial support for its students?
   2. Is the number of multiyear fellowships adequate?
   3. Is the nonresident tuition support adequate for the number of international students in the program?
   4. Are there a sufficient number of research assistantships in the program?
   5. What is the role of TA teaching in the program? What educational functions do teaching assistantships serve for the TAs? Is there a TA training program? Are there sufficient TA positions available? How are the TA assignments for the graduate students in the program made?

6. Are the students sufficiently informed of grant opportunities and facilities?

6. Resources and Infrastructure

1. Are sufficient resources being allocated by the University to the graduate program in order to allow it to meets it goals, such as financial resources, space, facilities and equipment?
2. Is the program as productive as possible given the resources available to it?
3. Is the number of faculty FTEs appropriate for the existing size of the program? How many FTEs will be needed to realize future objectives?
4. Is there sufficient administrative support?
5. What is the state of graduate staff morale?
6. Is there sufficient technical support?
7. Are adequate infrastructure and financial support in place for annual assessment of student learning?
8. Are the program's plans for improvement, based on annual assessment, supported by the institution?

We are aware that each program under review presents a special set of circumstances and that your review will need to take these distinctions into account. We intend these guidelines to be suggested topics that you may want to pursue rather than prescriptions of the process. As an External Reviewer, you should feel entirely free to pursue whatever avenues of investigation will yield constructive and relevant insights into the particular programs. We hope to obtain well thought-out and forthright judgments of where we stand in the academic picture, so that UCM may best capitalize on its strengths and take effective steps to correct weaknesses. The Academic Senate will give serious consideration to whatever directions you believe to be most worthwhile in achieving those ends. Any questions concerning the review should be directed to the PROC with a cc to the PROC Analyst.

B. Review Team Visit

The review team visit is scheduled by the PROC, with the assistance of the PROC Analyst. It generally begins with a dinner, followed by a day and a half of meetings on campus. The initial dinner should include the Review Team, PROC Co-Chairs, GC Chair, Vice-Provost for Graduate Education/Dean of the Graduate Division, Lead Dean, the VCR, Program Chair, and a representative of Student Affairs; other people may be included as appropriate. The PROC expects a minimum of 50-75% of the faculty and students to participate in the review meetings.

The first morning of the visit begins with a meeting with the PROC Co-Chairs and GC Chair, who will outline procedures and note any special issues for the review. Meetings will be scheduled with the Dean of the Graduate Division, Lead Dean for the program, the VCR, and the Provost/EVC. In addition, the Review Team meets with the Program Chair, and with the faculty as a whole. A separate meeting is also scheduled with any non-Senate faculty and lab staff who participate in the program. Finally, the team meets with students and with faculty from closely related programs. As appropriate, there may be a tour of the facilities.

The final activity of the review team is an exit interview. The team meets with the PROC Co-Chairs, the GC Chair, Graduate Dean, Lead Dean, VCR, and Provost/EVC as well as the

Program Chair/Coordinator to deliver an oral summary of their findings and recommendations.

C. Review Team Report

The review team is asked to provide an assessment of the quality of faculty, students, and the program; effectiveness of learning outcomes assessment; areas of strengths and weaknesses; advice on areas to remove or strengthen; adequacy of facilities; morale; and any other issues they wish to address. The review team is also asked to provide recommendations for faculty or programmatic development. While these findings are summarized in the exit interview, the review team is also asked to furnish a comprehensive written report of approximately 5-10 single-spaced pages **within four weeks** of their visit. The review team will submit their report to the PROC, GC Chair and PROC Analyst. Recommendations for change and future development should be prioritized by level of significance; the review team may, at its discretion, recommend a shorter time between reviews than is usually the case. When the review team report is received, the honoraria are sent to the reviewers.

VI. Final Report and Recommendations

After the review team report is received, the PROC Analyst will send a copy to the Program Chair. At this stage, the Review Team report will be treated as an interim report that will only be available to those directly involved in the review so as to encourage candor and ensure that those directly affected by the review have the opportunity to respond freely. The Program Chair will have the opportunity to review the report for factual inaccuracies and misperceptions; any corrections should be submitted to the PROC within two weeks. If no response is received, the report will be considered to be factually correct. The PROC will forward the review team report, along with any corrections submitted by the program and additions made by PROC, to GC. The level of confidentiality and openness of the finished self-study, review team report, and final report is left to the discretion of GC. GC will receive the report for review and endorsement. If the findings and recommendations are not controversial, GC forwards the report to the Chair of the Program, Graduate Dean, Lead Dean, Graduate Program Assessment Coordinator, the Coordinator of Institutional Assessment, the VCR, the EVC, and any other relevant parties whose responsibility it is to improve the program

VII. Response Phase

The effectiveness of academic program review depends on the implementation of the recommendations, as the goal of program review is to improve graduate programs not to produce review reports. Thus, in the semester following receipt of the Review Team Report, the program faculty will discuss its recommendations with the responsible Dean and any other relevant parties. The program shall seek and collect input from all constituents (faculty, students, and administration) and prepare a detailed response.

The program response consists of:
- A narrative response addressing the recommendations
- Detailed action plan laying out specific goals before the next review and strategies to reach these goals
- A revised multi-year assessment plan
- Timeline for achieving these goals

- An outline of the resources needed

While the narrative response is the work of the program alone, the action plan may be developed collaboratively with (as appropriate) the responsible Dean, the VCR, faculty in adjacent programs, and representatives of the PROC or GC. The program response, including the action plan, are both approved by the Dean, and submitted to the PROC by the end of November. When the PROC determines that the response adequately addresses the concerns of the report, it proposes to GC that the review phase be closed. A review phase is not closed until the PROC and the GC agree that the response to the review is adequate. By December, if a review phase is not closed; the PROC and GC may implement curricular sanctions, and may recommend administrative sanctions to the Dean and Provost/EVC. Sanctions may include a moratorium on faculty appointments, a moratorium on graduate admissions, or other actions.

VIII. Implementation and Follow-Up

In the following months, the Review Team recommendations will be implemented as appropriate through revisions to the Program Strategic Plan, the Dean's budget requests to the Provost/EVC, and any revisions of policy/ies and program(s) that are submitted to GC.

Since most of improvements to graduate programs will take time, GC and PROC will schedule a follow-up meeting with the program and parties responsible for each action item as outlined in the action plan. The relevant parties will be asked to report on what has been accomplished by the end of May and determine if additional action should be taken. Based on the follow-up meeting, GC and PROC will produce a written closure report, which shall be included in the official record of the review. The final evaluation of the implementation will occur at the next scheduled program review.

IX. Closing the Review

When the program's response has been approved and the follow-up meeting closure report has been discussed by GC, the PROC will recommend to GC that the Program Review be closed. GC will vote and notify the relevant parties of its decision.

Distribution of Closed Review Materials
Copies of the unedited review team report, the program's response, and other pertinent documents shall be sent to the Chancellor, Provost/EVC, responsible Dean and the UCM Office of the Academic Senate. File copies of these documents, along with the original self-study and the results of the student and faculty surveys, will be stored in the Office of the Academic Senate. A brief summary of the programs reviewed and GC actions are included in the GC Annual Report to the Academic Senate, Merced Division.

CONFIDENTIALITY Graduate Program Reviews will be treated with confidentiality until they are closed. The self-study, the review team report, and the final implementation plan are open to examination after the Review is closed. The results of student and faculty surveys are available only in form consistent with the confidentiality guidelines described previously in this document.

Appendix A: Sample E- mail to Faculty

The sample email below has been developed to assist the program chair in obtaining information from the faculty:

Dear Colleagues: The [*insert name of graduate program*] is being reviewed this year by the Periodic Review Oversight Committee, a joint Senate-Administration Committee. We are required to submit a self-review for which we need the following information from you by [*insert deadline*]:

1. Current Faculty Research Grants (extramural support only that pertains to the graduate program):
   a) Source (e.g., NIH, not name of grant);
   b) Dates of the grant (life of the grant); and
   c) Estimate of the number of students in the program under review supported by the grant by providing:
      i) Time period of that support
      ii) Total percentage appointed per semester.
   If none of the funds are used to support students in the program, indicate "none."
2. Alumni: Attached is a list of your past students. Please update the following information for each student:
   a) Current job title and employer.
   b) City/State/Country.
3. Abbreviated CV: Provide an abbreviated CV (two pages at the most) that spans the last five years. Often this information is available in grants that a faculty member has submitted recently to NIH or NSF. In such an instance, use that abbreviated CV. Otherwise, provide the following information:
   - Name;
   - Highest degree, institution, year of degree;
   - Area of expertise (two lines);
   - Membership in the program's committees and other services to the program;
   - Number of published, peer-reviewed papers. If the faculty member is in a book discipline (e.g., humanities), then describe briefly the book-length project. Faculty members in the performing or fine arts should indicate their work with most relevance to the graduate program;
   - Professional awards and honors (three lines maximum); and
   - Service to the profession (including consulting, where appropriate).

Appendix B: Using external peer review as a component of program review

During the normal course of research and teaching, members of graduate programs including students and faculty regularly undertake activities that require external review or assessment in some manner. For example, review of manuscripts for publication in peer-review journals and grant review. These activities implicitly provide objective outside review of the work being conducted by graduate programs and therefore provide a useful resource for program assessment. Mechanisms for bringing these metrics to a central point for incorporation in review – for example, by gathering annual faculty biobibs, and requiring students maintain an online CV- is encouraged.

In addition to documenting the numbers of grants or publications gained and the "quality" of the journals, it should also be possible to gather examples of reviews that speak objectively to the quality of the work produced.

Furthermore, on occasion it may be possible to request simple metrics from agencies that provide grants, such as number of applicants, number of institutions represented, percentage funded, etc., that provide additional information about the quality of academic programs at UC Merced.