

## **GRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW SELF-STUDY GUIDELINES**

The Graduate School

North Carolina State University

Revised April 4, 2018

**Instructions:** These guidelines are to be used by faculty to write the self-study report in preparation for an external review of their department or program. The completed self-study should be submitted to the Graduate School at least two weeks before the review team's site visit. Program data called for in the guidelines may be found in MyPACK Portal (Student Information System > Reporting Tools > Graduate School SAS Reports). Please introduce any additional information that you feel would be helpful in this review.

The main goal of the external review is to improve graduate programs. Departmental and program leaders contribute to achieving this goal through the process of engaging program faculty, other faculty inside and outside the University, and deans of the colleges and Graduate School in thoughtful and creative study and evaluation of the program's academic performance in relation to NC State's mission and to the program's mission and vision.

The review is intended to help faculty and administrators gain a clear understanding of the following:

1. The program's purposes within NC State, including the program's learning outcomes
2. The program's effectiveness in achieving these purposes and outcomes
3. The program's overall quality
4. The faculty's vision for the program, i.e., future aims for the program and what is necessary to achieve those aims

## I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 *Exact Title of Program:* Give title exactly as it appears in the Graduate Catalog.
- 1.2 *Department or Interdisciplinary Group Authorized to Offer Degree Program(s)*
- 1.3 *Exact Title(s) of Degrees Granted:* e.g., Master of Science, Doctor of Education, etc.
- 1.4 *College*
- 1.5 *Brief History and Mission:* Provide a brief history of the development of the graduate program(s). Briefly describe the mission of the program.
- 1.6 *Degree Program Objectives and Outcomes:* For each degree program, list the objectives and outcomes from the current program assessment plan in the Academic Program Assessment application ([go.ncsu.edu/apa](http://go.ncsu.edu/apa)).
- 1.7 *Responsiveness to Local and National Needs:* Describe the nature of your discipline and the types of educational experiences provided by the graduate degree program(s) in your unit. In what way is/are your program(s) responsive to the needs of North Carolina, the region and the nation?
- 1.8 *Program Quality:* Give your assessment of the quality of your program(s) as compared to similar graduate programs in the Southeast and the rest of the nation, and explain the basis of your assessment. Where does the department or program rank nationally? What do you consider the best objective measure for national comparisons in your field?
- 1.9 *Administration:* Briefly describe the program's administrative structure. List the major departmental committees that relate to graduate education and their structure and function. Describe any important formal and informal relationships the department has at the graduate level with other departments, institutes, centers, etc. at NC State and beyond.

## II. FACULTY

- 2.1 *Faculty List and Curricula Vitarum:* As attachments to the self-study narrative, provide an alphabetical list of faculty members, including for each the rank and the number of master's and doctoral advisory committees that each member has chaired during the past five years (Appendix A; data available through a SIS query: SIS\_GRADUATE\_FAC\_CMTEE\_ROLES). Also in the appendix, include for each faculty member a current BRIEF (i.e., TWO-PAGE) curriculum vitae.
- 2.2 *Visiting, Part-Time and Other Faculty:* Describe the extent to which visiting and part-time faculty participate in the graduate program. A list of graduate

courses taught by non-graduate faculty for the last five years should be included. Also, if faculty members from other university units serve important roles in the program, please specify.

- 2.3 *Advising*: Describe how and when faculty advisors are assigned to graduate students in your graduate programs, as well as any guidance that new faculty are given in directing graduate student research.
- 2.4 *Faculty Quality*: Describe the ways in which the department evaluates the quality of its graduate faculty (e.g., teaching evaluations, peer review, publications, research grants, graduate students advised and their time to degree) and how it uses the results of these evaluations.
- 2.5 *Faculty Distribution*: Is the department staffed adequately to meet the needs of various fields of specialization in your discipline? If not, please explain how the department could achieve an appropriate distribution of faculty across specializations offered, given no growth in resources.

### III. STUDENTS

- 3.1 *Enrollment*: Assess the strength of student demand for your programs. Referring to data shown in the 10-Year Profile Report (MyPACK Portal > Student Information System > Reporting Tools > Graduate School SAS Reports), comment on graduate enrollment trends. What are the implications of these trends for future departmental planning?
- 3.2 *Quality of Incoming Students*: Comment on how you evaluate and assess the quality of your graduate students. Referring to data provided in the 10-Year Profile Report (MyPACK Portal > Student Information System > Reporting Tools > Graduate School SAS Reports), comment on incoming student quality and trends over the past 10 years. What specific measures does the department use to evaluate the quality of entering students? (For example, what use is made of the GPA or of standardized test scores such as the GRE?) Is the quality of the enrolling students as good as you would like it to be? What does the annual graduate applications/offer ratio indicate about the quality of entering students and your faculty's standards of student quality?
- 3.3 *Quality of Current/Ongoing Students*: Are your current students performing as well as you would like them to? If not, what are the contributing factors? (Briefly refer to the findings of your outcomes assessment, which you describe in more detail in Section 5.)
- 3.4 *Degrees Granted*: Using data from the 10-Year Profile Report (MyPACK Portal > Student Information System > Reporting Tools > Graduate School SAS Reports), comment on the trends in the number of degrees awarded annually and the average length of time required to complete each degree program. What

has been the trend in attrition over the past ten years? If attrition has been increasing, what measures, if any, have been taken to address that increase?

- 3.5 *Need/Placement:* Comment on the strength of employer demand for your students. Describe past, present and future need for graduates from the program in the Triangle area, state, Southeast, and nation. Cite any pertinent studies. Present data on the placement of graduate students who have earned their degrees in your unit in the past five years (Appendix B). Report any information you have on the level of employer satisfaction with your graduates. Describe the level and kinds of assistance you offer in the placement of your graduates.
- 3.6 *Funding:* Describe the stipend support packages available for your graduate students and the approximate annual number of each type that they receive. Include TA and RA appointments, fellowships, traineeships, etc. Include the number of semesters the average master's and doctoral student spends on a TA and/or RA. How are TA/RA positions publicized, and how are students selected for those appointments?

#### IV. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION

- 4.1 *Master's Degree:* Describe the master's degree curriculum, indicating the total number of required credits and the credit distribution among various departments. If more than one concentration is available, then list the concentrations and their curricula separately (use Appendix C for this purpose). If there is substantial dependence on some other department or program, describe and comment on the relationship between it and your own program.
- 4.2 *Doctoral Degree:* Describe the doctoral degree curriculum, noting the credit and general distribution of requirements as in 4.1. When concentrations are offered, describe their curricula separately (use Appendix C). Indicate whether the master's degree is required or usually completed before proceeding to the doctoral program and note the most common minor fields of study. Describe the preliminary examination requirements. Indicate any associated professional certification. Include any additional information concerning curricular emphasis that would aid in characterizing this program as practice- or research-oriented.
- 4.3 *Instructional Relationship to Other Programs:* Describe how graduate instruction and research in this program supports or is otherwise related to other programs (undergraduate, graduate, professional) within your department and/or in other departments or schools at NCSU. Cite other programs whose students frequently take minors or other program options with you. List courses in your program that are also required or are prerequisites within other graduate degree programs.

- 4.4 *Curricular Changes:* Describe any significant changes in curriculum and instruction in the program since the last self-study. Explain the reason for the changes, such as different needs of students, shifts of emphasis in the discipline, changes in faculty, perceived weaknesses in the program, problems with facilities, etc.
- 4.5 *Professional Development Opportunities:* Indicate the degree of participation by graduate students in your program in formal or informal teaching activities within your department and/or in other programs on campus. Describe any preparatory training and/or ongoing mentoring TAs receive. Describe any formalized research training doctoral students in your department receive. How are these training experiences supported, and how are students selected for them?

## V. ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES

The material in this portion of the self-study should reflect on the program outcomes: planning, information gathering, self-review, and use of results for improving the quality of the program.

- 5.1 *Summary of Past Assessment Reports:* Referring to the degree program's online assessment plan and reports in Academic Program Assessment system ([go.ncsu.edu/apa](http://go.ncsu.edu/apa)), summarize the program's assessment reports for the last five years. Focus primarily on what was learned from the assessment data and what changes were made to enhance the program based on what was learned.
- 5.2 *Current Assessment Report:* Copy your most recent assessment report in this document ([go.ncsu.edu/apa](http://go.ncsu.edu/apa)).

## VI. CURRENT RESEARCH:

- 6.1 *Current Research:* Provide a brief description of significant ongoing research in your department or program. Indicate the major strengths or emphases of this research. Describe any unique programs that have national prominence. Describe three to five major research accomplishments over the past five years by faculty and/or graduate students in your academic unit and any new research emphases planned for the near future (through new faculty hires, redirection of current faculty's research, etc.)
- 6.2 *National Comparison:* Briefly describe how the research effort in your department compares to research in your discipline nationally in terms of focus areas and breadth of coverage.
- 6.3 *Interdisciplinary Projects:* What opportunities are there for carrying out interdisciplinary research projects with other units on campus and with other universities, state or federal agencies, and industry? Are you presently able to

accommodate the needs for interdisciplinary research, and how successful are your efforts? Do you have any plans for increasing such efforts in the future?

- 6.4 *External Research Support:* Evaluate the level of external funding for research in your department or program. Comment on any trends. Is the department/program competing effectively for external support?
- 6.5 *Research Development:* What does the department do to encourage and develop research collaborations with faculty performing similar research elsewhere in the university? Also, please describe deficiencies in facilities and resources that impede the department's attempts to reach its research objectives and any plans to address these deficiencies.
- 6.6 *Ethics Training:* Describe any education in research and professional ethics that the program provides for its graduate students. Such education could include courses, workshops, seminars offered by the program or by related programs or other appropriate experiences.

## **VII. SERVICE/OUTREACH/EXTENSION**

- 7.1 *Consulting:* To what extent are faculty involved in outside consulting work? Provide a quantitative and qualitative assessment of this type of work and explain in what ways it contributes to the department's graduate program and to the mission of NC State.
- 7.2 *Community Service/Extension/Engagement:* To what extent is the department's professional expertise made available to the community, state and nation through formal extension programs, lectures, exhibits, public symposia, or concerts or through faculty service on governmental boards, scientific/professional associations, etc.? Evaluate the quality of this service, and indicate how it contributes to the department's graduate instructional and research programs.
- 7.3 *Graduate Student Involvement in Community Service/Extension/Engagement:* To what extent are graduate students exposed to formal or informal outreach activities?

## **VIII. ACCREDITATION**

If accreditation has been attained, provide the name of the accrediting agency and indicate the date accreditation was granted and the frequency of accreditation review. If accreditation has been denied or has not yet been attained, describe the current status of the program in relation to gaining accreditation.

## **IX. SUMMARY COMMENTS AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

- 9.1 Summarize the major strengths and areas for improvement of the graduate program and the challenges and opportunities it faces in the foreseeable future.
- 9.2 Briefly describe the program's vision/strategic plan for the immediate future:  
Review the department's major goals for the graduate program over the next five years and describe your strategies for attaining funding for any goals that require financial resources.

**Appendix A. Graduate Faculty/Student Committees Chaired Over the Last 5 Years**

Note: Data for this appendix is available through a SIS query:  
SIS\_GRADUATE\_FAC\_CMTEE\_ROLES.

|      |      | Advisory Committees Chaired* – Last Five Years |           |             |           |
|------|------|--|-----------|-------------|-----------|
|      |      | Master’s                                       |           | Doctoral    |           |
| Name | Rank | # Completed                                    | # Current | # Completed | # Current |
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## Appendix B. Graduate Student Placement

Note: Contact the Graduate School for information about employment plans for graduates based on exit surveys.

| <b>Placement of Graduate Students<br/>Past Three Years</b>                                 |          |              |          |              |
|--|----------|--------------|----------|--------------|
| Show the first post-degree position placements of your graduates for the past three years. |          |              |          |              |
| Type of Position   | Master's |              | Doctoral |              |
|  | In-State | Out-of-State | In-State | Out-of-State |
| 1. Further graduate study  |          |              |          |              |
| 2. Post-doctoral scholar or research associate   |          |              |          |              |
| 3. College/university faculty or administration  |          |              |          |              |
| 4. Primary/secondary education   |          |              |          |              |
| 5. Business or industry  |          |              |          |              |
| 6. Government  |          |              |          |              |
| 7. Military  |          |              |          |              |
| 8. Non-profit organization   |          |              |          |              |
| 9. Self-employment   |          |              |          |              |
| 10. Not seeking employment at this time  |          |              |          |              |
| 11. Other  |          |              |          |              |

### Appendix C. Degree Program/Degree Concentrations Form

|   |  |                 |  |
|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Degree Program/Degree Concentration Form  |  |                 |  |
| <i>Please provide brief descriptions of each degree program or concentration.</i> |  |                 |  |
| Degree  |  | Curriculum Code |  |
| Descriptive Title   |  |                 |  |
| Percentage of students who elect this program                                     |  |                 |  |
| Percentage of graduate faculty in the department who teach in this program        |  |                 |  |
| Description of Program/Program Concentration                                      |  |                 |  |
|   |  |                 |  |
| Degree  |  | Curriculum Code |  |
| Descriptive Title   |  |                 |  |
| Percentage of students who elect this program                                     |  |                 |  |
| Percentage of graduate faculty in the department who teach in this program        |  |                 |  |
| Description of Program/Program Concentration                                      |  |                 |  |
|   |  |                 |  |
| Degree  |  | Curriculum Code |  |
| Descriptive Title   |  |                 |  |
| Percentage of students who elect this program                                     |  |                 |  |
| Percentage of graduate faculty in the department who teach in this program        |  |                 |  |
| Description of Program/Program Concentration                                      |  |                 |  |
|   |  |                 |  |