

GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF UNIVERSITY DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

I. DOCTORAL PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Web Page Statements on Doctoral Programs

1. In addition to the regular cycles of doctoral program review expected, each university shall promulgate via its web page a statement of goals and objectives for each program, which builds upon the quality standards outlined below and defines the unique qualities and strengths (the niche) of the program. These statements shall include at minimum the following, totaling no more than two pages for items (a) through (d):
 - a) A mission statement defining the unique aspects of the program including the special characteristics of the curriculum and the types of research conducted by program faculty and students.
 - b) Admission standards - the expected preparation and qualifications of students admitted to the program.
 - c) The manner in which the program addresses the needs of the state or region.
 - d) Placement objectives for graduates.
2. The web based report must be updated every two years covering items (a) through (d) and must also include:
 - a) The date of the last program review.
 - b) The date of the next scheduled program review.
 - c) The date these program goals and objectives were revised.

II. Institutional Doctoral Program Review Procedures

All universities must have internal doctoral program review procedures, which incorporate the quality standards in Section III. It is the expectation of both the OBR and RACGS that most doctoral programs will easily meet these standards and that the review process will be designed to identify and resolve any problems at the local level, and thus ensure a commitment to continuous quality improvement in doctoral education.

- A. Each doctoral program will be reviewed through the university's internal review procedures no less frequently than every eight years.
- B. An external reviewer(s) will be used during the review and will prepare an evaluative report to the university.
- C. In a summary report to the OBR, the chief academic officer, using evidence from the internal review and the report, will assess how well the doctoral program is meeting the goals and objectives that have been defined and will also determine the extent to which the criteria in the quality standards have been met. This report to the Regents is distinct from the evaluative report and recommendations for improvement submitted by the external reviewers to the university.

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- D. If the Regents' staff identify specific quality standards for which they believe the university has not demonstrated competence, RACGS may use a "focused review" that deals specifically with the quality standard(s) in question. This review process should take place within six months of receipt of the report.
- E. After no more than four years in which the university has had an opportunity to address the problems, the university will submit a report to the Regents, who will determine if the university has resolved the problems. If after discussions with the university the Regents still have questions and concerns, the Regents' staff will conduct a viability review according to additional guidelines developed by the Regents and RACGS. This review should be done in a timely manner (within six months of the receipt of the original university response).

III. QUALITY STANDARDS

A. Program Faculty

A level of faculty productivity and commitment shall be required commensurate with expectations of a doctoral program faculty as indicated by the following:

- 1. The number and qualifications of graduate faculty members are judged to be adequate for offering the doctorate in the specified areas, and faculty supervise an appropriate number of students.
- 2. The preparation and experience of the faculty are appropriate for offering the doctoral degree in an intellectually challenging academic environment as demonstrated by active scholarship and creative activity judged by accepted national standards for the discipline.
 - a) Faculty members have achieved professional recognition (nationally, internationally).
 - b) The faculty garners significant external funding, as defined by disciplinary norms, which enhance the graduate program.
 - c) Directors of dissertations and a majority of committee members generate new knowledge and scholarly and creative activity as determined by disciplinary norms.
 - d) In professional areas such as the PsyD, PharmD, AuD, DMA, etc., items (1) and (2) above would be related to other options, which measure professional activity and competence, as is customary for the discipline or area in question.

B. Program Graduates Since the Most Recent Review

There should be a level of student satisfaction, student accomplishment, and graduate accomplishment as evidenced by the following:

- 1. Students express satisfaction with advisement, teaching, and program support services.

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2. The structure and conduct of the program lead to an appropriate degree completion rate and time-to-degree.
3. The predominant employment of graduates within three to five years after graduation is in fields consistent with the mission of the program. Data should be provided to show the number of graduates in each of the following or comparable categories, and the total number of graduates:
 - a) postdoctoral fellowship/traineeship, or acquiring an additional degree, e.g., JD, MD;
 - b) tenure track faculty position in higher education, including community colleges;
 - c) non-tenure track faculty position in higher education, including community colleges;
 - d) administrative position in higher education;
 - e) non-university administrative position;
 - f) research position in college or university;
 - g) research position in public, non-profit or private sector;
 - h) leadership or teaching position in K-12 setting;
 - i) self-employed offering professional services;
 - j) unemployed;
 - k) other (please describe); and
 - l) unknown.
4. Graduates demonstrate preparation for career-long learning and success as indicated by periodic surveys of career changes, job satisfaction, relevance of doctoral training to various career opportunities. Consistent with the mission of the program, many or most of the students publish original scholarship or produce creative work within five (5) years after graduation.
5. Accomplishment and potential of program graduates to generate new knowledge or new initiatives in teaching, public service, and/or other practice.

C. Program Vitality

A vital doctoral program is dynamic and should possess the following indicators:

1. The environment of the doctoral program promotes a high level of intellectual interaction among students, graduate faculty, and the larger academic community;
2. The curriculum has been updated during the period under review with disciplinary developments;
3. Essential resources are provided (e.g., library materials, computer support, laboratory facilities and equipment, student financial support, etc.); and

4. Requirements for completion of the degree are deemed appropriate to the degree.

D. Program Demand

A doctoral program should be able to demonstrate that there is demand on the part of prospective students and that it is fulfilling a clear need through the following:

1. Student demand/enrollment during the period under review: application ratio, student GPA and GRE scores, or other indicators as appropriate; and
2. The extent to which the program meets community, region and state needs and occupational societal demands is clearly documented.

E. Program Interactions

Doctoral programs do not exist in isolation but rather in relation to and in comparison to similar programs in the discipline at other institutions and to cognate areas in the same institution. Information regarding appropriate interactions should include:

1. Centrality of the program to advanced study in the specific discipline(s) regionally or nationally;
2. The ability of the faculty and students to make a particular contribution in this field;
3. Interactions, including interdisciplinary, among graduate, undergraduate, and professional programs, as appropriate;
4. Interactions with and in collaboration with similar programs at other universities and organizations; and
5. Programmatic access to special leveraging assets such as unique on-campus or off-campus facilities, non-university experts or collaborative institutions in the discipline, industrial or other support, endowments, as well as special funding opportunities.

F. Program Access

There should be evidence that the program has established or seeks to establish an appropriate level of diversity among its faculty and its graduate student body, as evidenced by:

1. Trends and expectations in student demographics; and
2. Proven efforts to sustain and enhance diversity of faculty and students.

G. Assessment Mechanisms Used in Program Review

Since quality indicators are increasingly becoming an integral part of ongoing program review, an enhanced recognition of the uses of outcomes assessment

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in the review process provides a useful tool for program improvement, as demonstrated by:

1. A summary of the appropriate outcome measures used to assess program quality; and
2. Procedures must be in place to ensure the use of assessment data for continuous quality improvement of the program.

H. Program Revisions Resulting from Review Finding

The Program should document changes resulting from previous reviews.