

PhD Program Reviews – External Review Team Guidelines

TULANE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS DOCUMENT: Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

COORDINATING DEPARTMENTS: n/a

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APPROVED BY: Graduate Council

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW THIS GUIDANCE: Faculty and Staff in Doctoral Programs; School Administrators

WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR THIS GUIDANCE: <http://tulane.edu/ogps/policies.cfm>

A review of each PhD program will be conducted by the Graduate Council on a periodic basis according to the Schedule for PhD Program Review. The review will consist of a Self-Study Document and an on-campus review by an External Review Team. The following guidelines for the External Review Team have been approved by the Graduate Council and are intended to assist the evaluators in their reviews and preparation of their report. The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies reserves the right to provide additional guidance to evaluators on the relevance of an item, to clarify the intent of a requirement, and where necessary, to request additional information from programs that is consistent with that intent.

The External Review

A team of 5-8 external reviewers will be brought to campus in the spring term to perform an on-campus review.

Charge

The charge to the External Review Team will be to evaluate the doctoral programs under consideration against the following criteria:

- Quality of the program as measured by program metrics, ability of the program to meet stated program outcomes, and sustainability of the graduate education model, including funding.
- Quality of the program faculty as measured by faculty productivity measures.
- Quality of the program students as measured by application, admission, and enrollment metrics.
- Quality of the program graduates as measured by placement metrics and ability to bring visibility to the program.
- Innovativeness and/or relevance of the program relative to other similar doctoral programs.

Team Composition

An External Review Team will be assembled by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in consultation with program chairs. The team will consist of nationally-recognized experts in the field of graduate education. Every attempt will be made to have an expert in each of the disciplines being reviewed; however, some experts may be brought in with clear expertise in multiple disciplines. At least one member of the committee will have a broader view of graduate education, such as a sitting dean of a graduate school, who will serve as chair. The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will be responsible for the coordination of all External Review Team visit activities.

Activities

Each member of the External Review Team will be assigned primary responsibility to review at least one PhD program. At a minimum, they will meet with the Department or Program Chair, the current Director of Graduate Studies, program staff, and a representative group of graduate students. The External Review Team leader will meet individually with the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research, and the Deans of the schools involved in the programs under review. The External Review Team may request meetings with other groups and individuals as it sees fit.

Outcomes

The External Review Team will submit its findings in a written report to the Graduate Council by approximately April 1 of the spring term. The written report will consist of the following sections:

- A letter of transmittal from the External Review Team Chair.
- A one page Executive Summary.
- A separate section on each program including the following:
 - Program Summary
 - Program Strengths
 - Program Weaknesses
 - Program Recommendations

Final Report

The Graduate Council will review the programs' Self-Study Documents and the External Review Team's Report at its April meeting. It may forward these documents to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost with or without comment or recommendations. Upon completion of the Graduate Council's review, programs will be given an opportunity to review the recommendations and correct factual errors, if necessary. School Deans will also have an opportunity to provide their perspectives to the Provost on the reviews and Graduate Council recommendations.