

University of Saskatchewan

College of Graduate Studies and Research

Ph.D. Committee
Graduate Program Review Sub-Committee

Graduate Program Review External Reviewer Guide

1998

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Graduate Program Review External Reviewer Guide

In order to assess the Graduate Program under review, we are using the eight criteria listed below. In the sections that follow, these criteria are described and suitable measures are listed to evaluate the quality of the Graduate Program.

Objectives

- To provide an external assessment of the Graduate Program.
- To comment on the application of the criteria, measures *and* ranking scheme and to advise on what is appropriate.
- To review and report on the Graduate Program with reference to the quality of the education provided.
- To provide an assessment of the health and vitality of the Graduate Program and its quality relative to other national and, where appropriate, international programs.
- To make recommendations on the Graduate Program.

Criteria

The following criteria should be addressed in the evaluation of the quality of the Graduate Program. The indicated measures should be used in the evaluation of the quality of the Graduate Program with respect to the criteria provided. These measures and criteria are considered to be appropriate in the evaluation of the quality of the Graduate Program, but the list is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive.

A. Graduate Program Mission/Objectives

Is the Graduate Program appropriate in the context of educational demands and expectations?

Measures:

- Comment on the adequacy and appropriateness of the Graduate Program mission.

B. Curriculum

Does the Graduate Program provide sufficient intellectual challenge to justify the award of the graduate degree offered?

Measures:

- Breadth and depth of course offerings.
- Quality of teaching.
- Evaluation of teaching.
- Academic standards.
- Effectiveness of the Graduate Program.

Questions:

- Does the Department's graduate curriculum meet its program objectives?
- What do you conclude from the student evaluations and comments on the Department's curriculum?
- What comments do you have on the curricula in general?
- Does the stated Department curriculum match the delivered curriculum? If not, should it?
- How does this graduate curriculum compare to that of similar departments in Canada?
- Does the Department cover the breadth of areas to which a student should be exposed?
- Are the entrance requirements appropriate?
- Are sufficient opportunities provided for students to do interdisciplinary work?

- Has the Department changed appropriately in order to reflect changes in the discipline?
- How do this Department's curriculum initiatives compare to those of similar departments across Canada?
- Does the Department's curriculum provide sufficient flexibility, given the nature of the discipline, for students to pursue interests outside their area of specialization?
- Does the Department meet or exceed any appropriate accreditation and/or national standards?

C. Faculty

Do the faculty, as a group, provide intellectual leadership, atmosphere and challenge?

Measures:

- Scholarly activity.
- Competence of the faculty in the conduct of research.
- Advancement and dissemination of research.
- Funding level.
- Supervision of graduate students.
- Reputation.
- Strengths and weaknesses.
- Future development and plans.

Questions:

- Does the Department have sufficient contact, through its faculty members' research activities, collaborations and visiting scholars, with the latest developments in the discipline?
- Does the research completed in the Graduate Program meet the mission and objectives of the Graduate Program?
- Is the selection of classes offered and the method and timing of offering appropriate for the program and comparable to other programs?
- Do the faculty have the appropriate academic and/or professional qualifications to support and develop the program?
- Are faculty adequately involved in scholarly activities?
- Are faculty adequately involved with academic, professional and scientific organizations?
- To what extent have faculty been recognized for their scholarly and/or professional work?
- In what way has the scholarly work of faculty made a significant contribution to the discipline?
- Are the teaching skills of faculty current and adequate?
- To what extent have faculty been successful in obtaining external research support?
- What is the quantity and quality of the research done in the Department?
- How does the research completed in the Department meet the mission and objectives of the program?
- Are the faculty competent in the conduct of research *and* the advancement and dissemination of knowledge?
- Are the qualifications of the faculty teaching the courses appropriate? Does their research/scholarship get transferred to the learning environment?
- Who are the adjuncts and associates, and what are their affiliations?
- Do the adjuncts and associates add to the Department's graduate program?

D. Learning Environment

Does the Graduate Program provide a learning environment that is supportive and hospitable for all students?

Measures:

- Critical mass of graduate students.
- Canadian and International graduate students.
- Race.
- Gender.
- Age.
- Other.

Questions:

- Has the Department adequately addressed the issue of education equity in its curriculum?
- Is the make-up of supervisory/advisory committees appropriate?
- Does the program allow the students to participate in and evaluate the learning environment?
- Are the Department's student counseling procedures with regard to course selection appropriate?
- Is the academic unit delivering the program supportive of the students?
- Are the qualifying examination and comprehensive examination procedures appropriate?
- Is the nature of the qualifying examination appropriate?
- Is the program set-up process for new students appropriate?
- Are faculty and students aware of equity issues?
- Do supervisors and graduate students interact well?
- Are supervisory meetings sufficiently frequent?
- Is the composition of the Advisory Committee appropriate?
- Is the Advisory Committee schedule adequate?
- Is each student's Committee fulfilling its advisory role?
- How often does the program ask for exceptions to the rules of the Graduate College?

E. Infrastructure

Do the facilities and physical spaces provide the essential resources to support the faculty/graduate students adequately in their research/work?

Measures:

- Shared or common resources.
- Library.
- Laboratories.
- Computers.
- Office Space.
- Special facilities.
- External resources.
- Adequacy of the level of graduate student support.
- Graduate student scholarships.

Questions:

- Are adequate numbers of appropriately trained staff available?
- Are the necessary facilities and equipment provided?
- Are the computing and other information technology resources adequate?
- Are appropriate library resources available?

- Is there adequate funding for graduate students?
- Are appropriate management procedures in place?
- Is there adequate monitoring of the academic standards required for continuation and graduation?
- Do students progress normally through the Graduate Program?
- What are the estimated enrollments?
- What changes have occurred/been made in the recent past?
- Have past recommendations been incorporated?

F. Outcome

Do graduate students achieve a level of preparation appropriate to the objectives and requirements of the Graduate Program?

Measures:

- Competitiveness of the Graduate Program with other comparable programs.

Questions:

- Would graduates from this Master's program be acceptable for admittance to Ph.D. programs at other Universities in Canada?
- Is the graduate student research of high quality?
- Are entering students of high quality?

G. Demand

Do graduate students entering the Graduate Program have the capacity and preparation necessary to meet the challenges of the Graduate Program effectively?

Measures:

- Student demand.
- Critical mass of graduate students.

Questions:

- What feedback do the graduate students give with respect to this area?

H. Resource Usage

Does the Graduate Program use resources efficiently?

Measures:

- Faculty/graduate student ratio.
- Administrative personnel.

Questions:

- How does the Department compare to other departments both at the University of Saskatchewan and at other comparable universities?

I. Uniqueness

Is the Graduate Program unique in content and/or approach, nationally, regionally or provincially? [Note that this criterion is not applicable to all programs.]

Measures:

- Other comparable programs.

Questions:

- Are there ways in which this program is unique compared to others in the discipline with which you are familiar?

J. Relevance

Does the Graduate Program build on or contribute to areas of interest to the community and industry?

Measures:

- Community involvement.
- Industrial association.
- Contracts.
- Consulting.

Questions:

- Are there ties to the community and/or industry in the Department?

[Note: Each program under review should be assigned an outcome category A, B, C or D. For a complete description of these outcome categories, see the *Systematic Program Review Policy and Procedures*, Section XIII, pp. 7-9]