

**Graduate Program Review - -
Principles and Procedures**

Texas Christian University

2001-2002

INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The program review provides an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction; student quality; education (learning) outcomes; faculty contributions in teaching, research/creative activities, and service; resource availability and needs; and special features or services provided by the unit. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the program review should allow the unit, in conjunction with the university, to plan to build on existing strengths, maximize opportunities for growth, and solve current problems.

The program review allows the unit to thoroughly and candidly evaluate:

- the mission and goals of the program and its relation to those of the university.
- the educational objectives, curriculum, and student learning outcomes of graduate programs.
- the quality and diversity of faculty and staff and their contributions to program mission and goals.
- resources (e.g., library, technology, physical facilities).
- the reputation of the program among peers in the discipline.
- readiness for accreditation, if appropriate.

The guiding principles for the program review includes:

- The program review as part of an overall assessment plan should provide a portrait of program strengths and weaknesses and should result in program improvement. To this end, the program review should move beyond a program description toward a systematic program evaluation.
- The process should be broadly participatory.
- The program review should provide a framework for excellence; an opportunity to explore, enhance, and integrate student learning and faculty teaching, service, and scholarly efforts into unit mission and goals.
- The process should facilitate short-term and long-term strategic planning in areas such as curricular development, resource allocation (e.g., financial, physical), faculty/staff hiring and workload, and research foci.
- The program review process allows the university to account for its use of resources and develop support among its various constituencies.

Program Review Procedures

Document Preparation

The report is an interpretive document that uses data to assess current program status and future directions. Data should be analyzed and discussed in relation to unit mission and goals. The department chair is responsible for the content, accuracy, and completeness of the work.

The Document

The following outline is suggested for the program review document. The narrative should be written easily within fifteen pages. (This does not include the department

chair's explanation of workload distribution and appendices.) Selected university data summaries are provided and other key university documents (e.g., mission statement, strategic plan) may be available from the TCU website. The document report should be organized around the following headings:

I. Brief History of the Academic Program

Provide a brief overview of the history of the program including such things as changes in administrative organization; dates new degree programs were established; significant additions to the faculty; and major changes in graduate program directions.

II. Description of the Academic Program

Please organize the report utilizing the headings below. The text within each heading can be modified to better meet the program needs/dimensions. If you prefer, you may submit a copy of your 2001-2002 program assessment plan in lieu of items 1. and 2.

1. Missions and Goals

- Describe the mission of your unit and its relation to the mission of the college and the university.
- Describe program goals and the role of faculty in setting these goals.
- Describe the process for assessing the extent to which goals are met.

2. Learning Objectives and Program Effectiveness

- Describe the critical elements of the program (e.g., degrees, major, tracks, concentrations, certificates, online/distance education/off-campus programs).
- State the learning outcomes for the program.
- Describe the direct measures used to assess student-learning outcomes (e.g., performance on standardized tests, capstone courses, portfolios).
- Describe other measures of program effectiveness (e.g., rankings, student satisfaction, employer feedback, institutional surveys).
- Discuss ways that the assessment data will be used to improve the program.

3. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Placement

- Describe student recruitment, retention, and support practices (e.g., recruitment initiatives, financial aid, course advising, mentoring, career advisement and placement efforts). Based on data, evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies noting areas for improvement.
- Present a table showing the academic credentials (undergraduate institution, grade point average, scores on standardized tests, etc.) of all students who have applied, been admitted, and enrolled in the program during the past five years.
- Based on data, discuss the diversity of your student population (e.g., ethnicity, nationality, and gender) noting areas for improvement).

- List the graduates of the program for the past five years and state their current positions.

4. Faculty and Teaching/Research Staff Quality

- Note outstanding achievements/contributions (e.g., evidence of leadership in national professional/research organizations in the discipline, awards for outstanding teaching, scholarship and creative activity, external funding either for individuals or collaborative efforts, evidence of success in recruiting faculty and staff from underrepresented groups).

Required faculty data include:

- A profile of program faculty (i.e., number, FTE, headcount) including number of tenure/tenure track faculty, instructors, research and teaching assistants/associates, adjunct faculty, and affiliated faculty. Describe number of faculty by rank, gender, and ethnicity. Provide an individual listing of current tenure/tenure track faculty including rank, credentials, and areas of specialization.
- Tenure/tenure track faculty must submit a one-page professional statement describing his/her research, teaching, and service roles in the graduate program. The previous five (5) year annual reports will be on file.

5. Community Engagement

- Evaluate the quality and impact of faculty professional involvement with the community relevant to the program.

6. Future Plans

- Based on the results of this program review, discuss the program's goals assuming existing resources?
- Should limited additional resources become available, specify three (3) top priorities for the next three-to-five years and discuss what would be accomplished with the resources.

III. Conclusion

Provide a summary statement, which may include any comments that you wish to make.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

The following additional suggestions are offered as guidelines for preparing an effective program review.

- **Clarity.** This document will be shared with a host of university officials. It should be thorough while succinct and readable.
- **Objectivity.** The document should be candid, introspective, and analytical. It must be credible to be useful.
- **Perspective.** The document should be forward looking; consistent with departmental, college, and university strategic plans. It should not be seen as an opportunity to leverage the university for resources, an unconstrained "wish list," or a self-congratulatory exercise.
- **Tone.** The document should be constructive and focused on challenges, aspirations, and goals. Documents that focus predominantly on problems ("ax grinding,") or reflect a defensive or condescending tone are discouraged.
- **Documentation and Accuracy.** Analysis and evaluation of program components should be data-based. Check the documentation for accuracy and consistency of data reported. Simplistic, selective, and out-of-context data summaries are useless or counterproductive. Data should be interpreted and evaluated, not just included in the document.