

DUKE UNIVERSITY

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS AND PROGRAMS

I. Purpose of the External Reviews

The purpose of external reviews is systematically and periodically to evaluate the research and teaching--undergraduate, graduate, and professional--of all academic programs within the University, and to recommend to the University administration strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of these programs.

II. Authority to Conduct Reviews

Reviews are implemented through the office of the Vice-Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, under authority delegated by the Provost. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School normally serves as the Coordinator of all reviews: inviting the external team, scheduling the events of the site visit, and overseeing the preparation of all necessary documents.

III. Periodicity of External Reviews

Reviews are conducted on a regular cycle of approximately seven years, although decisions about when to schedule particular reviews are made by the Provost, the Dean of the relevant school, and the Vice Provost/Dean of the Graduate School. Faculty members from the Provost's Academic Programs Committee and the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty and other School councils, where appropriate, may also suggest a given program should be reviewed. The Basic Sciences Faculty Steering Committee will represent the faculty council of School of Medicine.

IV. Procedures for External Reviews

1. **Charge:** The charge to the External Team is developed by the Vice-Provost/Dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with the Provost and the Dean of the school in which the program to be reviewed is situated. Members of the Academic Programs Committee and the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty and other school councils, where appropriate, will also be consulted concerning the charge. Normally, the charge will seek to address all aspects of a given program, as well as its interrelations with other units of the institution and its general position among competitive research institutions.
2. **External Review Team:** In forming the External Review Team, the Associate Dean of the Graduate School will solicit nominations from the department or program to be reviewed, develop a separate list of prospective reviewers, frequently soliciting advice from members of the school's councils, and present a potential team to the Vice Provost/Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the relevant school. These individuals will select the final team. The Chancellor for Health Affairs may, if he wishes, also be consulted on external teams for reviews of Basic Medical Science departments.

Review Teams generally consist of 3-5 external reviewers, with one designated the Chair of the review team. In consultation with the Review Coordinator, the Chair will assume responsibility for the final version of the Team's written report. The Team as a whole, however, will be provided with time during its site visit jointly to compose an outline or first draft of that report. The Chair will also speak for the Review Team during the site visit.

3. **External Review Team Visit Procedures:** Approximately two weeks prior to the site visit, the External Team will be sent electronically a set of program materials furnished jointly by the department under review and the Graduate School. These materials will include: the formal charge; a detailed site visit schedule; a cover letter from the department chair or program director; and a “self-study” document (see below) which includes the program's most recent five-year plan, descriptive and statistical information on the department's academic programs, faculty vitae and other materials.

Typically, the External Team will arrive in time for dinner the evening preceding the first day of the site visit. At that meeting, the Provost, the Vice Provost/Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School, together with the Dean(s) of the relevant school(s) (and the Chancellor for Health Affairs for Basic Science departments) will discuss with the Team the plan for the visit, the critical questions to be answered, and the plan for the written report. There will be time for each visitor to pose particular questions to the central administration; and the administrators, in turn, should provide whatever historical or institutional background the Team may need to conduct a thorough investigation of the program in question.

Over the next two days, the Team will meet with faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and administrators of the department, as well as faculty representatives from the Academic Programs Committee, the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty and, when appropriate, other School councils.

Prior to the Exit Interview with the senior administrators indicated above, the Team will be given ample time to draft the initial version of its report. The major findings and recommendations of that report will then be delivered orally to the administration at the Exit Interview. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School will take full notes of this meeting, which will remain confidential to the administration.

4. **External Team Written Report:** The final written report should be submitted electronically to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School within approximately one month of the site visit. The report should be public in nature, so that it may be circulated to the full department. *If the Team wishes to provide a more private document to the administration, that should be appended as a codicil to the public report.*
5. **Departmental/Program Response to the External Team Written Report:** Review reports are circulated to all faculty members in the program or department, and the department is

asked to provide the Associate Dean with a formal written response to the report, addressing each point raised in the team's report. This response must be written in consultation with the voting faculty of the department or program under review, as documented by indicating the process by which the faculty members were involved.

6. **Institutional Response to the External Review:** The external team's report, along with the departmental response, will then be forwarded to the **Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty**, the **Academic Programs Committee**, and, when appropriate, other School councils. These committees will prepare written resolutions on the review detailing their recommendations for subsequent departmental or institutional action. The recommendations will be forwarded to the Provost and the relevant Deans and will be considered in the preparation of a draft **Memorandum of Understanding**. Using this draft as a starting point, the Provost and the relevant Deans (including, where appropriate, the Chancellor of Health Affairs) will formulate a final **Memorandum of Understanding** to be shared with the head or chair of the unit under review and outlining institutional intentions for the immediate future of this unit together with expectations that the administration has from the department/program.

Academic Programs Committee:

(<http://www.provost.duke.edu/committees/index.html>)

Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty:

(<http://gradschool.duke.edu/academics/ecgf/index.php>)

7. **Historical Archives:** The Graduate School will maintain complete files on all external reviews, including self-study documents, the external report and the department/program's response, the recommendations of the various faculty committees, and the final Memorandum of Understanding.

MATERIALS TO BE FURNISHED FOR PROGRAM REVIEWS

The following materials constitute the self-study for the external review. Preparation and timely delivery of the self-study is the responsibility of the department chair or program director, though he or she would be wise to recruit additional faculty as well as staff to assist in its preparation. The broader faculty of the department or program should be consulted in the process of preparing the self-study. The document is due as a PDF to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School no less than one month before the scheduled review date.

I. Departmental Materials

1. Chair's cover letter to review team
2. Department's most recent five-year plan
3. List of departmental faculty, by area of specialization
4. Research funding by area of specialization
5. Laboratory and computer facilities

6. Inventory of office, teaching, and laboratory space
7. Tabulation of faculty teaching loads
8. Description of collaborations across departmental lines
9. Current national standing of department
10. Present administrative structure of department
11. Statement on the intellectual life of department
12. Description of the department's vision and mission

II. Faculty Materials

1. Full vitae for each member of the faculty
2. Description of each member's current research interest
3. External research support over last 5 years
4. Number of dissertations supervised
5. Current teaching load/schedule

III. Graduate Materials

1. Number and quality of graduate students
2. Description of graduate program, including all courses and requirements
3. Application/Admission statistics
4. Pattern of graduate student financial support
5. Time-to-degree and attrition statistics
6. Teaching Assistant/Research Assistant patterns
7. Number of Masters and Ph.D.s awarded per year
8. Career and professional development opportunities offered to students
9. Professional activities of graduate students
10. Student placement over past 10 years
11. Assessment of student learning outcomes and program effectiveness

IV. Undergraduate Materials

Note: In spring 2010, Trinity College revised the guidelines for providing undergraduate program materials for external reviews, as outlined in the following section.

Guidelines for Self-Study of Department Undergraduate Program

Note: Departments are asked to provide information in the following seven broad categories. The questions below each category are meant to serve more as guidelines for responses, rather than a rigid list to be answered in sequence

A. General description of undergraduate program (intellectual foundations, program goals and student learning objectives)

1. What options do you offer undergraduates for having majors and/or minors in your department? If you have multiple majors, minors, concentrations, explain rationale, and any limits on courses counting for multiple majors/minors.
2. What are your educational goals and objectives for the major?

3. What are your educational goals for non-majors participating in your program?
4. In what ways does your program relate to Duke's strategic plan, and to the general educational mission of Trinity College?

B. Curriculum

1. How was the curriculum of the department developed? What are the principles underlying the undergraduate curriculum? How has the department kept informed about and responded to national curricular trends?
2. Has the curriculum changed substantially in recent years, or is the department considering any changes? How and why?
3. What is the progression and sequence of courses through the major and minor? What is the rationale for the numbering of courses? for course sequencing? for requirements and prerequisites? Is it clear that courses are planned and offered as components of a larger program of study? Are there serious gaps in your offerings? What resources would be needed to fill them?
4. Are courses offered on a regular and rotating basis? What is the relationship of regular courses to special topics courses offered in a single term? Do students generally have a good idea of what courses will be offered during their progression through the major? Do they have any difficulties fulfilling the major requirements?
5. In what ways does your curriculum contribute or relate to the general educational goals of the Duke undergraduate curriculum (including modes of inquiry, FOCUS, freshmen seminars, service learning, study abroad, undergraduate research, etc.)
6. What is the relationship of your curriculum to other departments and programs (including impact of changes on other majors, minors, certificate programs)? Do other departments offer "service courses" or prerequisites to your majors? If so, are they adequate for your majors? What agreements or procedures are in place to ensure continuity of course offerings when other departments are involved?
7. How do you articulate your program goals and curriculum to students (written materials/websites / advising, etc.)

C. Co-curricular connections

1. How are undergraduate majors and minors integrated into the intellectual life of the department?
2. Does the department support undergraduate clubs and/or co-curricular events?
3. To what extent do your majors/minors participate in research projects, DukeEngage, study abroad, etc.

D. Connection between undergraduate and graduate programs

1. How does the department foster vertical integration of undergraduate and graduate programs?
2. How and to what extent are graduate students involved in the teaching and/or mentoring of undergraduates (including common research projects or other learning experiences)?

E. Instructional Faculty / Teaching:

1. How is the teaching load in your program divided between regular rank junior and senior members of the faculty? What is the ratio of courses taught by regular rank and non-regular rank faculty (graduate students and non-ladder faculty)?

2. On what basis are graduate and non-regular rank faculty assigned to courses? How are they trained and supervised for teaching these courses?

3. Is your program limited by inadequate faculty resources? In what ways?

F. Enrollment trends, recruitment and retention of majors/minors

1. What do enrollment rates, attrition, and numbers of majors and minors indicate about the effectiveness of the department's programs?

2. How does the department attract students, majors, minors?

G. Assessment

1. To what extent and how frequently are courses and course sequences reviewed? How and on what basis are decisions made to add, drop, and modify courses?

2. How does the department evaluate program effectiveness/ student learning outcomes? What assessment instruments are used?

3. How does evaluation feed back into program?

H. Data to accompany self-study:

Number of enrollments, majors and minors over last 10 years

Number of students completing research project / study abroad, graduation with distinction

Quality statistics of majors

Post-degree positions of graduates

[Graduate School Academic Affairs, April 2014]