

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY STANISLAUS

**GUIDELINES FOR THE GRADUATE COUNCIL'S EVALUATION OF
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEWS FOR MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS**

This document was designed by the Graduate Council to guide its evaluation of the quality of master's degree programs at CSU Stanislaus as reflected in the Academic Program Review process. Salient issues important to graduate education provide a structure to ensure a comprehensive and consistent evaluation of program quality among graduate programs. The review is conducted in accordance with *Principles for Assessment of Student Learning* for the purpose of program improvement.

After having read the academic program review documents and after a brief presentation by the graduate director/coordinator, the Graduate Council discusses the academic program review. The Graduate Council's review concludes with a report that provides a summary of its evaluation of program quality; commendations; recommendations for program improvement beyond those identified by the program, if any; and an overall recommendation for either program continuance, continuance with specified conditions, or discontinuance. The chair of the Graduate Council forwards the report to the graduate director/coordinator, department chair, and college dean for response (if any) and then forwards its recommendation to the provost for consideration.

QUALITY OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW SELF STUDY

1. Quality – Overall, to what extent is the APR self study for the graduate program comprehensive? Analytical? Focused on improvement of student learning? Future-oriented?

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT FROM LAST ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

2. Program Improvement – Is there evidence of faculty making program changes to enhance the program's currency and quality from the last academic program review?
3. Implementation Plan – Have faculty accomplished each of the actions identified in the previous review and done so at a high level of achievement? If actions/goals were not reached, have the faculty described the constraints and articulated future plans for these or other goals?

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

4. Student Characteristics/Profile – To what extent has faculty reflected upon the appropriateness of its student characteristics and taken appropriate actions to ensure student success across each sub-population of students? Include numbers (headcount and FTES); diversity (gender; ethnicity; full-time/part-time, other); student/faculty ratio.
5. Enrollment Targets – Based on institutional research data, do faculty evidence success in meeting enrollment targets, offering a program at a sustainable level, and drawing conclusions for future enrollments?

6. Graduation – Are faculty successful in serving students as evidenced by retention and graduation rates and time-to-degree? Do faculty provide a thoughtful analysis of and recommendations for improving student success?

COMMITMENT TO STUDENT LEARNING

7. Program Goals – Do the program’s goals reflect high expectations for program quality commensurate with graduate education?
8. Student Learning Objectives – Do the student learning objectives reflect high expectations for student performance? Is there evidence that students are achieving these student learning outcomes at a high level of academic rigor (besides evidence derived from assessment methods, measures may also include student awards and honors, employment success, doctoral education)?
9. Curriculum Map – Does the curriculum map illustrate the alignment between student learning objectives, graduate learning goals, required courses, instructional emphasis, and primary assessment methods?
10. Graduate Student Learning Goals and Program Learning Objectives – Does the evidence demonstrate that students overall have achieved the program’s student learning objectives as linked to the six overall graduate learning goals?
11. Assessment Plan and Implementation – Is the assessment plan for assessing student learning effective and comprehensive, including direct and indirect methods for collecting and using data that are meaningful, measurable, and manageable?
12. Use of Assessment Results – Have faculty used results effectively from their assessment efforts to both affirm and improve program quality, instruction, student learning, and other program elements?

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

13. Delivery of Instructional Program – Is the instructional program scheduled effectively so that students may graduate within a planned timeframe (as appropriate, in Turlock, Stockton, off-campus, and via distance education)?
14. Library and Technology – What is the adequacy of the library and technological resources for instructional quality?
15. Student Advising – Is there evidence that faculty provide effective student advising and mentoring?
16. Graduate Culture – Have faculty successfully sustained a graduate-level culture and do they have specific plans to continue its enhancement? What is the extent and quality of students’ research, scholarship, and creative activity within the classroom, in collaboration with faculty, and in external public venues? Have faculty designed rigorous standards of written, research, and scholarly proficiency for the culminating experience? Does the evidence illustrate high levels of student performance on thesis, project, and/or comprehensive examinations?

17. Written Communication Skills – Does the evidence indicate that students have achieved writing commensurate with graduate academic rigor?
18. Teaching/Quality of Instruction – Does the evidence indicate that faculty encourage, use, evaluate, and reward effective teaching methods that promote student learning? Do these methods result in enhanced teaching proficiency?
19. Curricular Plans and Alignment – Are the curricular plans for future program development aligned with the college and university’s mission and strategic plan and contribute to the distinctiveness and strengths of the graduate program? Is the number of required units appropriate to achieve program goals?

FACULTY

20. Faculty Characteristics, Expertise, and Deployment – Are the numbers and qualifications of faculty adequate and appropriate for delivering the graduate program? What is the adequacy of the proportion of tenured/tenure track, full-time lecturers, and part-time faculty? Is there an adequacy of support for the program director/coordinator? Include numbers (faculty headcount/FTES) for graduate program; number of tenured, tenure track, lecturer, and part-time; demographic characteristics (gender; ethnicity, other).
21. Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity – Overall, to what extent do faculty evidence currency, continuing productivity, and quality of scholarly work commensurate with graduate education (as defined by program elaborations)? What is the extent of faculty collaborative research with students?
22. Faculty Development – How effective are faculty development opportunities for supporting faculty in the achievement of their professional goals: Orienting and mentoring new and non-tenured faculty to the culture of the graduate program? Ensuring faculty advancement through the ranks? Continuing improvement of teaching effectiveness and scholarship?

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

23. External Review/Accreditation (if applicable) – What do the findings of an external reviewers/accreditation team suggest for the quality of the current program? Are external reviewers’ recommendations for program improvement in the implementation plan, where appropriate?
24. Recommendations – Have the faculty identified important recommendations for improving program quality and for developing new programs? Do they show the use of evidence in reaching these conclusions/recommendations? Are there others that should be considered?
25. Implementation Plan – Have faculty described appropriate and achievable action steps in response to their key recommendations? Have the faculty included appropriate human, physical, and fiscal resources needed to implement its plan and possible methods for securing these resources?

IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS

26. What recommendations do program faculty have for improving the Academic Program Review process as related to graduate programs?

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