**Criteria and Standards of Graduate Academic Program Review**

Graduate Academic Program Review is conducted by the Graduate Council at GVSU. The findings and recommendations of the program review are forwarded to the Provost for consideration and action.

The following guiding principles establish the nature and boundaries of graduate academic program review:

1. A graduate academic program is a course of concentrated study that leads to a masters, specialist, or doctoral degree.
2. The assurance report of a graduate academic program under review is to be incisive, not voluminous, supplemented with compact appendices that are used to present statistical analyses and other information. The assurance report should go beyond the audit dimensions of compiling and presenting statistical data and should emphasize explanation and evaluation.
3. The assurance report must be set in the context of the university mission. The assurance report should be viewed as an opportunity for program self-reflection and to ask why the graduate program follows current guidelines, curriculum, and procedures and how these efforts could be improved or changed and meet the mission of the university. A final component of the assurance report is the opportunity to envision where the program wants to be in the next five to ten years and how the program will contribute to the GVSU Strategic Plan.

Two main elements structure graduate academic program review; 1) program quality elements and other quality indicators and 2) program viability elements. Program quality and viability elements are specified below in standards couched in the form of statements and questions that should be answered in the assurance report. Please note, **due to the wide diversity of graduate program offerings at GVSU every question may not apply to a specific program.**

The assurance report should be a narrative rather than a simple response to the specific questions. **Responses to questions should be based on information derived from the previous five (5) years.** In addition, the assurance report will be **no more than 20 pages**, not including appendices and data tables.

**Programs are strongly encouraged to have participation from all faculty and staff involved in the delivery of the graduate program.**

**Graduate Program Review Assurance Document Template**

1. **Program Quality Elements and Indicators**: GVSU desires that graduate programs provide the best quality education experience to our graduate students. It is incumbent on each graduate program to provide quality indicators and information that demonstrates the program is of high quality. The criterion of program quality should be addressed in the following areas:
   1. Program Mission
   2. Program History
   3. Curriculum Quality Elements
   4. Faculty Quality Elements
   5. Student Quality Elements
   6. Program Quality Elements
   7. Analysis of Peers and Competitors
2. Program Mission:
3. What is the program mission?
4. How is the program mission consistent with the university mission?
5. Program History:
   1. Provide a brief overview of why the program was initiated.
   2. Include any information regarding program changes (e.g., admissions requirements, degree requirements) that have occurred since the initiation of the program or since the last internal or external review.
6. Curriculum Quality Elements:
   1. Provide a summary of the program curriculum.
   2. Describe how the curriculum elements support the program mission.
   3. Assess the rigor, breadth, and relevance of the degree requirements and curriculum. The following questions might help with describing the above items (note that not all questions may apply to the program).
      1. How does the program curriculum compare to similar program curricula at other institutions and with disciplinary standards and trends?
      2. What changes have been made to the program curriculum in the past six years or since the last internal or external review and why?
      3. What has the program done to support high academic standards?
      4. What opportunities are available in the curriculum for students to engage in high-impact experiences (e.g. seminars, independent study, research, internships)?
      5. What teaching formats are used to deliver program content and what are typical class sizes?
      6. How many dual-listed classes are offered in the program? What role in the curriculum do these dual-listed classes play? What fraction of the students are registered for 5xx?
      7. Does the program articulate innovative and relevant skills appropriate for the discipline or profession? If so, how are these skills incorporated into the program?
      8. What opportunities are available for faculty/student and student/student interaction and dialogue beyond that which occurs in the classroom?
      9. What interdisciplinary opportunities are available to students in the program?
      10. Does the program curriculum respond to a social or community mandate? If yes, in what way(s)?
      11. Are there any impediments to offering a high quality curriculum? If yes, what are they?
7. Faculty Quality Elements:
8. Graduate program faculty:
9. Include a list of your faculty, their qualifications, and what courses they teach in a summary table format:
10. The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty members used to offer the graduate program (include both regular and part-time),
11. The number of tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty teaching in the graduate program,
12. The diversity of faculty teaching in the program,
13. The changes in number of full-time faculty and part-time faculty in the previous five years.
14. Effective teaching:
    1. What have the program faculty members done to support effective teaching? This may be measured or qualitatively assessed by such instruments as student course evaluations, peer reviews, course portfolios, and surveys of innovation and improvement.
    2. What has the graduate program done to support high quality teaching?
15. Faculty accomplishments:
    1. What are the accomplishments of the graduate program faculty in research, scholarship, and creative efforts (e.g., scholarly presentations, publications, grants, recognitions such as awards and prizes, exhibitions, showings, and performances)?
    2. What has the graduate program done to strengthen research, scholarship, and creative efforts of the faculty?
    3. What are the professional, institutional, and community service accomplishments of the program’s faculty? Programs should define what is considered community service.
    4. How actively engaged are faculty in the program (e.g., number of faculty that engage with graduate students, and attend graduate student functions)?

**NOTE**: All information on graduate program faculty should be reported only on an aggregate basis for the faculty serving the program, not individual faculty. Include framing statements in text with supporting data in appendix.

1. Student Quality Elements:
2. Discuss the data showing the five-year trends in the number of students expressing interest in, applying, and entering the program.
3. Discuss the data showing trends in the quality of students expressing interest in and entering the program. Data that may be used include the institutional origins and academic credentials of applicants and admitted students, number of applicants, scores on graduate admission examinations, internal and external awards and scholarship, and diversity of incoming students.
4. What has the program done to strengthen the academic qualifications of its incoming graduate students?
5. What has been done by the program to increase the diversity of its incoming graduate students?
6. Discuss the accomplishments of students in the program, as evidenced by academic and research awards, scholarly, research and creative efforts, and graduation with honors.
7. Provide the five-year retention and graduation rates of program students and discuss factors affecting those rates. What constitutes on-time graduation in this program? What fraction of the students graduate on time? Discuss the primary factors that foster or limit a student’s ability to graduate on time. What strategies are being employed by the program to improve retention and graduation rates?
8. How successful have students been in earning admission and awards (e.g. fellowships, scholarships, assistantships) to advanced graduate programs and professional schools, taking professional licensing exams, and/or receiving professional certificates?
9. Discuss the career paths and achievements of program graduates using information such as first employment after graduation and subsequent advancements (possible sources - surveys of alumni/ae, social media and other sources).
10. To what extent have recent graduates found employment appropriate to their education and to their career expectations?
11. What percentage of students did not finish their degree? Discuss the primary barriers preventing students from finishing their degree.

**NOTE**: All information on student elements should be reported only on an aggregate basis for the students the program, not individual students. Include framing statements in text with supporting data in appendix.

1. Program Quality Elements:
   1. How does the program regularly review existing program processes for admissions and policies?
   2. What mechanisms are used to identify and implement improvements to existing program processes?
   3. What has the program done to strengthen the scholarly, research and creative efforts of its graduate students?
   4. What has the program done to strengthen community service accomplishments?
2. Analysis of Peers and Competitors:
3. Identify peer, aspirational, and competitor programs.
4. Compare your program to both peer and aspirational programs (how might this information be used to enhance your program?).
5. Which programs are considered direct competitors and what distinguishes your program from direct competitor programs?
   * + 1. **Program Viability Elements and Indicators**: Program viability and sustainability is an expressed goal for all programs at GVSU and is a key indicator of a program’s relevance. Therefore, it is incumbent on each graduate program to provide indicators and information that demonstrate the program is viable and sustainable. The criterion of program viability and sustainability should be addressed in the following areas:
6. Program Resources
7. Program Sustainability
8. Program Quality Relative to Sustainability
9. Program Resources:
   1. Has the program received the necessary support staff, graduate assistantships, special facilities (e.g. laboratories, data banks, computer centers, and classrooms), budgetary support, library resources, or other resources in general to offer a high quality program?
   2. How have additional resources been used to achieve the mission, goals, and outcomes of the program?
   3. What additional resources would be useful to promote program viability and quality?
10. Program Sustainability:
11. Provide enrollment data (number of students, student credit hours, and full-time equivalent students) for all program courses (including XXX-693, XXX-695, XXX-699) for the previous five years. What has been the student to faculty ratio in the program’s courses? Report the number of low enrolled courses.
12. How many students have graduated from the program in each of the last five years?
13. What is the policy of the graduate program on faculty workload generally and on faculty teaching load in particular? What reductions in faculty teaching load are provided for administrative and other non-instructional duties in the program?
14. Does having a graduate program help with recruiting faculty? If so, how?
15. Tabulate the revenues and expenditures for the graduate program over the past five years. Has the program been able to strengthen its revenue base from sources other than internal funding?
16. What is the optimal number of faculty, staff, and students to achieve a critical mass and offer a graduate program of distinction and excellence while effectively utilizing the institution’s human and financial resources?
17. What are projected enrollments over the next five years? Discuss how you arrived at this projection.
18. What are the external factors that may limit or support the program’s ability to be sustainable and achieve these projected enrollments?
19. What are the internal factors that may limit or support the program’s ability to be sustainable and achieve these projected enrollments?
20. How has the program used benchmarking to improve its ability to achieve its mission?
21. Program Quality Relative to Sustainability
    1. How do the quality elements (e.g., Curriculum Quality Elements, etc.) and other quality indicators (e.g., retention, time-to-graduation, success in employment or admission to advanced graduate programs, and other quality indicators) support the sustainability of the program?
    2. How does the interaction between quality indicators and sustainability support the mission of the program?