PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW OF
INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

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THE REVIEW PROCESS

The regular, periodic review of departments and programs is an important part of strategic planning and quality management at the University of Iowa. Therefore, insofar as possible, the review should reflect the program in terms of the Strategic Planning Steering Group “Criteria for Institutional Enhancements and Reductions” [October, 1992; available from the Graduate College]: Quality and Centrality as primary criteria; Student Demand, Potential for Excellence, External Impact, and Cost as secondary criteria.

The procedures for departmental and collegiate reviews have evolved over several years. These procedures served as a model for “Procedures for Review of Institutes, Center, and Non-departmental programs issued by the Provost’s Office in December 1993 (available from the Graduate College). The procedures for reviewing interdisciplinary graduate degree programs have been developed from both departmental and non-departmental procedures. The basic review procedure is summarized below, followed by more detailed guidelines for preparation of the self-study document.

Preparation of a self-study review by the program
Review of the program and reaction to the self-study by an internal committee
(appointed by the Dean) of peers from related cognate disciplines/programs
Review by an external committee of peers (for unique programs this may not be feasible)
Response by Program Administrators and/or Faculty to review documents
Discussion of review documents by the Graduate Council
Response to the Review by the Dean of the Graduate College
Presentation of the Review by the Graduate Dean to the Provost
One-year follow-up report by the Program to the Dean on implementation of Review recommendations and scheduling of additional reporting dates

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

The self-study report is limited to twenty pages of text (excluding the Executive Summary and Appendices), double-spaced using font size 10 or larger. Tables of ½ page or less should be included within the text; longer tables may be included as separate pages or included as appendices. If a long table is included as a separate page in the text, it will not count toward the 20-page limit and may be numbered as p3a, for example, for a table following page 3 of the text. The self-study should respond to all items listed below which are applicable to your program; for those not applicable, please include the section title with the indication “Not Applicable”, with any explanation needed for clarification.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One- page summary describing major points documented in the review which reflect the nature and quality of the program and its relationship to department and university strategic goals.

BACKGROUND

Describe the program. Note the program’s history and rationale. List the departments primarily involved in the program, the number of faculty currently appointed to the program, the number of current masters or doctoral students, the number of current postdoctoral associates, the total number of graduates to date.

CURRICULUM

Describe the program, including degree requirements, required course, elective courses, qualifying and/or comprehensive examination, and thesis or dissertation requirements. Describe instruction on ethics and the responsible conduct of research. Describe the research opportunities available for students. For postdoctoral associates, describe the interactions with graduate students, faculty and others in the program and the basic science departments.

STUDENTS

Recruitment: Describe strategies for recruiting students. Append any brochures, relevant excerpts from guides to graduate programs, etc. Describe special strategies for recruiting women and individuals from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups.

Applicants: In a table, for each of the past five years, list: The number of applicants, the number offered admission, the number of matriculants, and the number of graduates. For each group include the racial/ethnic and gender distributions, and the mean GRE and mean GPA. Other appropriate data reflecting quality of students who have applied to the program may also be included (such as: undergraduate institution, number with undergraduate research experience, those who may be co-authors on published or presented research, honors and awards received, etc.).

Current Degree Students: For each currently enrolled student, provide name, underrepresented ethnic/racial group, previous institution and degree, date of program matriculation, source of financial support for each semester/year in the program, honors and awards, and faculty advisor. Describe the process for laboratory rotations and/or familiarization with research opportunities and for selecting a research mentor.

Graduates: For each graduate of the past five years, provide name, previous institution and degree, date of program matriculation, date of degree, sources of financial support while in the program, honors and awards, thesis or dissertation, title of current position and institutional affiliation, and faculty advisor.
Postdoctoral Students: For each postdoctoral student specifically associates with the Program during the past five years, provide name, previous institution and degree, beginning and end dates of postdoctoral training period, sources of financial support, research interest/topic, current position and institutional affiliation, and faculty advisor.

FACULTY

Describe procedures for choosing program faculty: criteria, endorsement by the home department, review of service to the program, reappointment/discontinuance as members of the program faculty, etc.

For each participating faculty member, provide: name and primary department, number of past and current program masters or doctoral students and postdoctoral associates for whom the faculty member has served as advisor or as thesis/dissertation committee member (separately listed), program courses taught, and program administrative responsibilities.

ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

Tabulate budgets and expenditures from UI and other sources of financial support, including salaries, general expenses, student stipends, tuition scholarships.

For federal grants (including training grants), provide a summary of the purpose of the grant and describe the competition, review process, peer rating, constraints on funds, etc.

Describe office and laboratory facilities specifically allocated to the Program or providing substantial support to Program activities (for example, labs for teaching core course, etc.) Describe research equipment specifically for use of program participants and/or available from core facilities and participating departments for use by Program participants and activities.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Describe the administrative structure of the program and the distribution of responsibilities within it. Provide the names and departments of persons recently serving as Program Director and other program administrators, and staff. Describe the functions of the program executive committee and provide name and department of current committee members. Describe any other program committees and list current members and their departments.

Describe procedures for review of the Director and of the selection/reappointment of executive committee members.

DIRECTION OF PROGRAM

Indicate the date and list the major objectives of the program’s last strategic plan. Describe the progress made to date in achieving those objectives.
Prepare an updated strategic plan (to be included as an appendix). Summarize the new plan’s primary objectives.

EVALUATIONS

Describe internal procedures/mechanisms used to monitor progress of students and of the program, including enrollment of non-Program students in courses, SPOT or other instructional evaluation tools, etc.

Describe any external evaluations and/or accreditation of the program in the last five years (e.g., by NRC-NAS) and attach a copy of the evaluation as an appendix.

SELF-EVALUATION

Briefly summarize the major overall strengths of the program. Identify those areas which need improvement and recommend ways that might be pursued to effect improvement.

APPENDICES

--2-page CV for each participating faculty member, including dates of appointment, bon ors, and awards, recent and current grant support, relevant publications, and program activities/responsibilities (i.e., information as needed for NIH training grants, etc.)

--Program brochures and other recruiting material.

--List of representative recent publications of current students, graduates and postdoctoral students associated specifically with the Program.

--External descriptions and evaluations of Program, if available.

--Current strategic plan.

--Program operating rules and guidelines, formal administrative documents, etc.