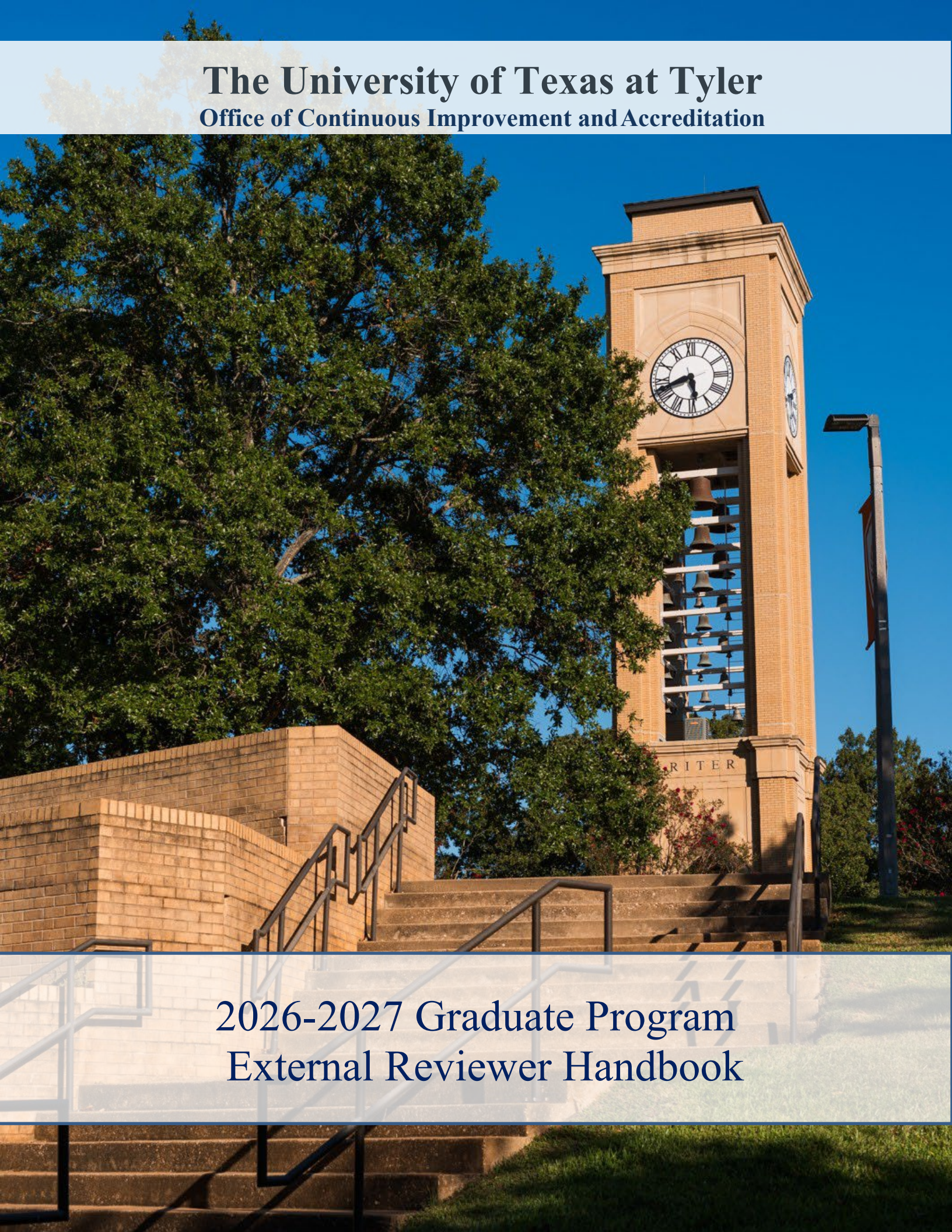


The background of the entire page is a photograph of a university campus. On the right side, there is a tall, light-colored brick clock tower with a large clock face and a bell tower section below it. To the left of the tower is a large, leafy green tree. In the foreground, there are concrete stairs with black metal railings leading up towards the tower. The sky is clear and blue.

The University of Texas at Tyler

Office of Continuous Improvement and Accreditation

2026-2027 Graduate Program External Reviewer Handbook

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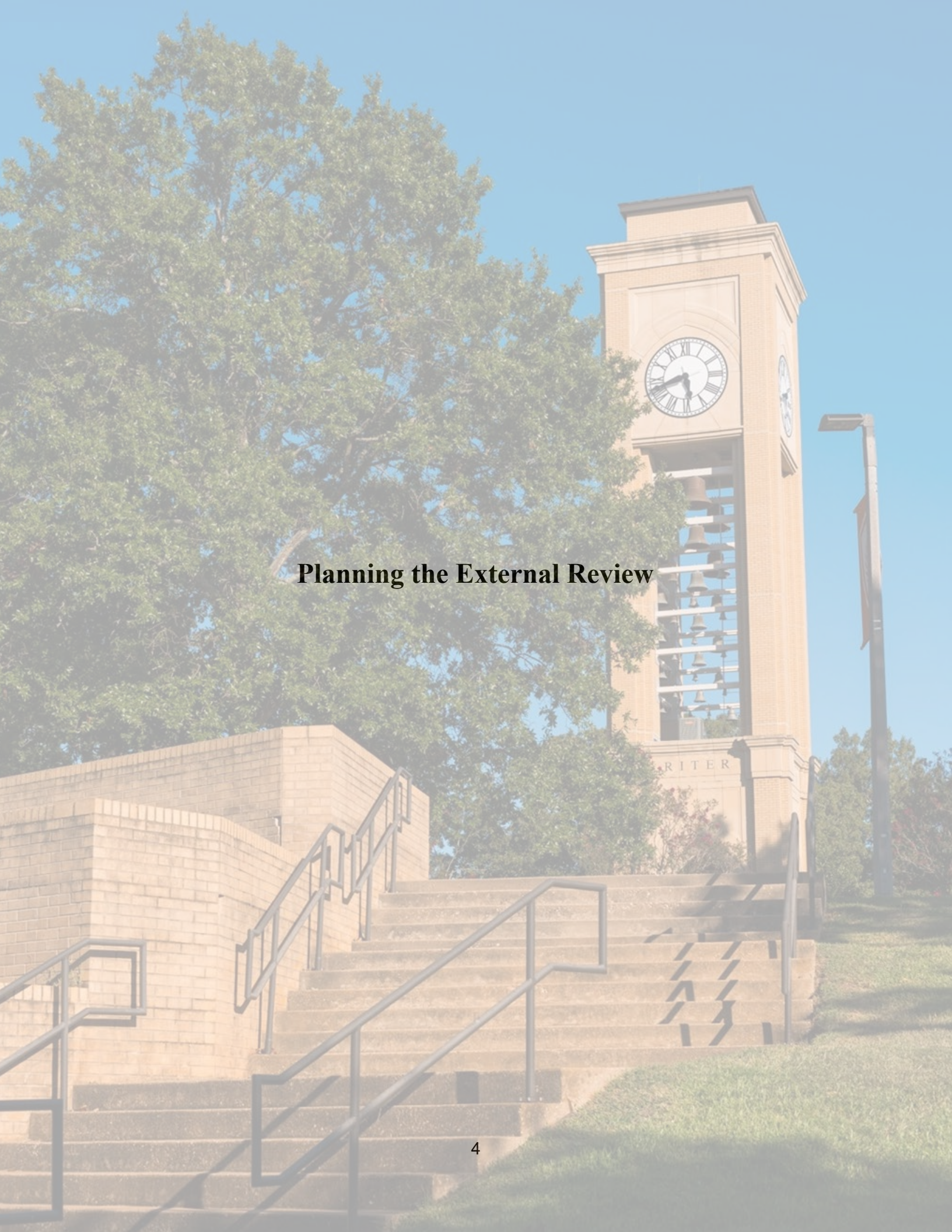
Introduction

An external review of UT Tyler graduate programs is an essential function of the institution's quality review process and provides perspectives not available on campus. The results of the external program reviews are included with other assessment and evaluation information in determining the quality of instruction, curricular relevance, program efficiency, and program impact. Additionally, the self-assessment and systematic program review information contribute to planning for continuous improvement of student learning and program quality. Both qualitative and quantitative criteria are included in the review, and the various criteria may be weighted differently for each program. Flexibility in the application of the review criteria is appropriate to accommodate the specialized missions of the individual programs.

Guiding Principles

- UT Tyler is committed to self-assessment and to external reviews as an integral part of strategic planning, institutional effectiveness, and ensuring continuous quality enhancement toward fulfillment of the UT Tyler mission.
- All graduate programs fulfill their respective mission and purpose in support of the UT Tyler mission, vision, values, and strategic plan.
- The external review is an appropriate assessment effort in the systematic evaluation of program performance and accountability.
- Faculty participation in the review process emphasizes self-assessment and demonstrates a concern about quality, integrity, an ability to be self-critical, and a willingness to act upon identified concerns.
- University stakeholders who may be referenced or affected by recommendations are included in the review process.
- Self-regulation protects institutional autonomy and promotes innovation and accountability.
- The external review process should consider the [fundamental principles](#) of “generally recognized practice” in graduate program education using well recognized and credible profession-wide standards specific to the discipline for quality assurance.
- Master's and Doctoral degree programs in the same discipline are reviewed simultaneously. Baccalaureate programs in the same discipline may be reviewed with the graduate program(s).

Graduate programs are reviewed on a decennial schedule determined with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and in compliance with the Texas State Code. The 5-phase process includes: 1) The Program Coordinator leads completion a comprehensive self-study using predetermined reporting criteria; 2) The External Reviewers review the Self Study; 3) The External Reviewers visit the campus or meeting with faculty, students, academic support teams, and administrators in a virtual desk audit; 4) External Reviewers complete a single External Review Report based on the Self-Study and campus site visit or virtual desk audit interviews; and 5) The Program Coordinator completes the Institutional Response Form based on External Review Report in consultation with senior leadership. The Office of Continuous Improvement and Accreditation (OCIA) submits the Self-Study, External Review Report, and the Institutional Response Form to THECB by August 31 of the review year.



Planning the External Review

A. External Reviewer Selection

Summer Preceding Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *The Graduate Program Coordinator (Coordinator) leads the external review process including the external reviewer nomination process, the Self-Study Report, organizing the on-site itinerary/virtual desk audit, and the Institutional Response Form.*
2. *The Coordinator leads program faculty discussions on prospective reviewers. Reviewers must be members of a nationally recognized peer program outside the state of Texas and must hold appropriate rank or stature in the discipline. Nominees must affirm that they have no conflict of interest related to THECB, UT System, UT Tyler, or the program. (See [Appendix A](#): UT Tyler Ethical Obligations of UT Tyler External Reviewers.)*
3. *The Dean sends the nominee list, CVs, and signed Ethical Obligations Forms to the Provost, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, and the Associate Provost of Curriculum and Experiential Learning. The Graduate Dean and the Associate Provosts make recommendations to the Provost who determines the finalists.*
4. *The Coordinator confirms site visit dates, service fees, and applicable travel arrangements for campus visits.*
5. *The Coordinator schedules a virtual External Review Orientation with reviewers and the Associate Provost for Continuous Improvement and Accreditation.*

Internal Contractual Process

1. *The Dean's Office completes the UT Tyler Contract Process following confirmation of the external reviewers and contacts the Provost's Office to identify the funding source.*

Fee for Service and Payment of Expenses

External reviewers receive a \$1,000 service fee, plus reimbursement for approved travel and accommodation expenses up to \$1,500. Exceptions to the service fee or reimbursement limit may be requested in advance and require case-by-case pre-approval from the Provost.

B. Self-Study Completion

Fall Semester of Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *The Coordinator meets with the OCIA Associate Provost and College/School Assessment Professional to review the external review process, campus resources, and deliverables. ([Appendix B](#): Texas Administrative Code and [Appendix C](#): Self-Study Guidelines)*
2. *The Coordinator schedules a meeting with the external reviewers to introduce UT Tyler participants and to review the UT Tyler graduate program external review process, deliverables, and timelines.*

3. *The Coordinator finalizes External Reviewers travel arrangements (in-person site visits only).*
4. *The Coordinator prepares a draft site visit/virtual desk audit schedule and confirms with external reviewers. (Sample Itineraries in [Appendix E](#))*

C. Site Visit and Reports

Spring Semester of Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *The Coordinator sends the Self-Study to the External Reviewers **4-6 weeks** prior to the campus site visit or virtual desk audit.*
2. *The Coordinator and Assessment Professional finalize site visit/desk audit schedule, confirm with External Reviewers, and schedule on campus participant calendars.*
3. *The Coordinator and Assessment Professional schedule external review preparation meetings with program faculty and student participants.*
4. *The Coordinator schedules local transportation, meal arrangements, and provides a small welcome basket with UT Tyler swag in the hotel rooms for campus site visitors.*
5. *External Reviewers complete a single External Review Report and send the Graduate Program Coordinator **4-6 weeks** after the site visit/virtual desk audit. ([External Review Report Template in Appendix F](#)).*
6. *The Dean's Office completes fee-for-service and travel reimbursement process for each reviewer.*

D. Institutional Response Form

Summer of Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *The Coordinator and Assessment Professional finalize the draft IRF with the Associate Provost CIA to review and prepare for the senior leadership meeting.*
2. *The Coordinator finalizes the IRF based on leadership meeting discussions. The Associate Provost CIA submits all three reports to THECB.*
3. *The Coordinator and Assessment Professional include GPR documents and evaluation results in the annual program assessment plan. Institutional responses to External Reviewer recommendations serving as action plans and closing the loop statements are provided in the subsequent assessment cycle.*

The background of the page is a photograph of a large, multi-story clock tower made of light-colored stone or brick. The tower has a large clock face on its upper section and a bell tower section below it. In the foreground, there are wide concrete stairs with metal railings leading up towards the tower. To the left of the stairs is a low stone wall. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with some green trees visible in the background.

Appendix A: Ethical Obligations Form

The University of Texas at Tyler

ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

UT Tyler graduate program reviews are based on a peer review process that requires program reviewers to make decisions about the program quality, effectiveness, and relevance. In order to maintain the credibility of those decisions, external evaluators are responsible for conducting reviews that uphold the highest level of integrity in all aspects. Integrity of the process mandates at least the following ethical obligations and understandings. External reviewers must affirm that they have no conflict of interest related to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, to The University of Texas at Tyler, or to the program under review. (TAC Rule 2.181)

Eligibility of External Evaluators and Obligations of UT Tyler Faculty and Administrators

The process for the external review of a UT Tyler program based on the professional judgment of external reviewers demands informed review, thoughtful analysis, and reasoned decision making. External evaluators must have subject-matter expertise and must currently serve as a faculty member in a program nationally recognized for excellence in the discipline.

UT Tyler program faculty and administrators have an obligation to select external reviewers with the highest caliber of integrity. It is paramount that evaluators are qualified in their external reviewer role to provide actionable advice based on their review of the self-study information and further verified through interviews with faculty, students, administrators, and staff.

Confidentiality

Without a commitment to confidentiality by all external reviewers and in all aspects of the review process, external evaluators cannot freely execute their responsibility to conduct themselves with professional integrity in accreditation activities and decisions.

External program reviewers must maintain complete confidentiality in all activities and decisions. Confidentiality applies to all documents, correspondence, and discussions relative to all phases of the external program review. External reviewers may not disclose any information about the program, including discussions with program and institutional representatives before, during, or following the review process. Written documents include but are not limited to the program self-study, program or institutional resource material and support evidence, and the external review report.

External program reviewers may not use generative AI to create all or part of the external review report. No UT Tyler documents, including the program self-study report or institutional resource material, may be uploaded to a generative AI platform. Generative AI may not be used to analyze any UT Tyler data provided as part of the external review.

Conflict of Interest

External reviewers should not accept appointments to serve when a conflict of interest or the *appearance* of conflict of interest exists. External reviewers affirm electronically that they have no conflict of interest with UT Tyler or the program under review as part of the process of accepting a formal invitation to serve.

UT Tyler relies on the personal and professional integrity of individual external reviewers, expects them to be sensitive to potential conflicts of interest in the review process, and assumes reviewers will act

accordingly. If it is discovered that a conflict of interest situation may have affected the external program review, the Provost and Graduate School Dean may initiate further program evaluation to determine the validity of the original findings of the external reviewer.

As examples, an evaluator would have a conflict of interest:

- is employed at a Texas higher education institution;
- has been an employee of THECB, UT Tyler or any UT System higher education institution;
- has served as a consultant or previous external reviewer at UT Tyler;
- if a UT Tyler faculty member or administrator served as a consultant or external reviewer at your university
- has been a candidate for employment at UT Tyler within the last ten years;
- is a graduate of UT Tyler;
- has a close professional, personal or familial relationship with persons at UT Tyler;
- has a strong bias regarding UT Tyler;
- has any other relationship that could serve as an impediment to rendering an impartial, objective professional judgment regarding the program evaluation.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge that I have read the *UT Tyler Ethical Obligations of External Reviewers* policy, and my signature below affirms that I am eligible to serve as an external reviewer for the *[PROGRAM NAME]*, without conflict of interest as defined in the policy.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

I acknowledge that *[External Reviewer Name]* meets required eligibility qualifications and no conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest exists.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR: _____ DATE: _____

DEPARTMENT CHAIR: _____ DATE: _____

DEAN: _____ DATE: _____

Appendix B: Texas Administrative Code 2.181

TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

TITLE 19. EDUCATION

PART 1. TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

CHAPTER 2. ACADEMIC AND WORKFORCE EDUCATION

SUBCHAPTER I. REVIEW OF EXISTING DEGREE PROGRAMS

§2.181. Academic Programs at Public Universities and Public Health-Related Institutions.

- (a) Each public institution of higher education, in accordance with the requirements of the institution's approved accreditor, shall have a process to review the quality and effectiveness of existing degree programs and for continuous improvement.
- (b) Board staff shall develop a process for conducting a periodic audit of the quality, productivity, and effectiveness of each existing master's, doctoral, and professional degree program at a public institution of higher education.
- (c) Board staff will meet the requirements of program review established by Texas Education Code, §61.0512(e), by reviewing program data reported in the Accountability System for each undergraduate degree offered by a public institution of higher education in Texas.
- (d) Each public university and public health-related institution shall review each of its master's, doctoral and professional degree programs at least once every ten (10) years.
 - (1) On a schedule to be determined by the Commissioner, each institution shall submit a schedule of review for each graduate program to the Assistant Commissioner with oversight of academic program approval.
 - (2) Each institution shall begin each review of a graduate degree program with a rigorous self-study.
 - (3) As part of the required review process, an institution shall use at least two external reviewers with subject-matter expertise who are employed by institutions of higher education outside of Texas. Each institution shall provide its external reviewers with the materials and products of the self-study and must participate in a site review.
 - (4) Each external reviewer shall be part of a program that is nationally recognized for excellence in the discipline.
 - (5) Each external reviewer shall affirm that they have no conflict of interest related to the Board, the institution, or program under review.
 - (6) Each institution may review a closely-related program, defined as sharing the same four-digit Classification of Instructional Programs code, in a consolidated manner at the discretion of the institution.
 - (7) Each institution shall review a master's and doctoral program in the same discipline simultaneously, using the same self-study materials and reviewers. Each institution may also, at their discretion, review a baccalaureate program in the same discipline as master's and doctoral programs simultaneously.
 - (8) Each Institution shall submit a report on the outcomes of each review, including the evaluation of

the external reviewers and actions the institution has taken or will take to improve the program, and shall deliver these reports to Board staff no later than 180 days after the reviewers have submitted their findings to the institution.

- (9) Each institution may submit a review of a master's, doctoral, or professional program performed for reasons of programmatic licensure or accreditation in satisfaction of the review and reporting requirements in this subsection.
- (e) Board staff shall review all reports submitted for a master's, doctoral, or professional degree program and shall conduct analysis as necessary to ensure high quality. The Commissioner may require an institution to take additional actions to improve its program as a result of Board review.

The background of the page is a photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there are wide, light-colored stone steps with dark metal handrails, leading up a grassy hill. To the left of the steps is a low, light-colored stone wall. In the background, a tall, light-colored brick clock tower stands prominently. The tower has a large clock face on its front and a bell tower section with several bells visible. The word "CRITER" is partially visible on the base of the tower. Large, leafy green trees are situated behind the tower, and a clear blue sky is above. A tall, thin light pole is visible to the right of the tower.

Appendix C: Self-Study Guidelines

The Self-Study Report must include the following sections and is limited to a maximum of 25 pages, excluding appendices.

Introduction and Overview

1) University Overview

Provide a brief overview of the UT Tyler history with notable milestones, Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Plan priority goals, and governance structure.

Evidence in this category includes:

- **University Description provided by the Office of Continuous Improvement and Accreditation**
- [University Strategic Plan](#)
- [University Organizational Chart](#)

2) College/School/Department/Program Overview

Provide a brief historical overview of college/school and department.

Describe the history program and identify program changes. Include curriculum information on certificates, tracks, concentrations, options, or other components included in the program.

Identify primary feeder programs and current recruitment and admissions strategies.

List the program's delivery modes and all locations where the program, or any portion of it, is offered. This includes dual degrees, international partnerships, and other off-site or alternative delivery arrangements.

Evidence in this category includes:

- **Academic Affairs and College/School Organizational Charts**
- **Current Program Catalog Admission Requirements**
- **Current Program Catalog Graduation Requirements**

A. Program Description and Strategic Plan

1) Mission, Vision, and Goals

State the mission of the college/school and, if applicable, the department, as well as the mission of the graduate program itself. Explain how the program's mission and purpose contribute to the UT Tyler mission achievement and student success.

Describe the aspirational vision of the program including strategic priorities, planned objectives to attain the goals, success thresholds, and the anticipated timeline with milestones.

Evidence in this category includes:

- **UT Tyler Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Plan**
- **Program Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan**

2) Program Curriculum

A. Curriculum Development, Integrity, Quality, and Rigor

Describe the alignment of the curriculum with institutional goals and with professional discipline workforce trends and practices.

Summarize recent curricular changes based on reviews of current career competencies to meet trending workforce need.

Demonstrate how the program meets expectations for post-baccalaureate rigor:

- *Provide evidence that the curriculum builds upon undergraduate foundations with progressively advanced academic content and evidence of a logical progression of higher-order thinking.*
- *Summarize students engagement with the literature central to the discipline and participate in research and/or appropriate professional practice.*
- *Summarize curricular requirements such as capstone projects, theses, clinical/practice experiences, or applied research that illustrate graduate-level expectations.*

Explain how consistency and quality are maintained across modalities.

Compare peer program curricula with the UT Tyler program.

Evidence in this category includes:

- **Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**
- **Catalog Course Descriptions**
- **Program Curriculum Recommended Semester Sequence**
- **3-5 year Course Rotations**
- **Comparison Table with state, national, and aspirational peers (Total SCH, Term Length, Modality (-ies), Thesis Track, Program Time to Degree, certificate or specialization tracks, and UT Tyler curricular distinctions)**

B. Program Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Summarize the UT Tyler assessment policies and practices and explain how the program assessment is integrated into the institutional process.

Describe the faculty roles and responsibility in program assessment and planning.

Provide examples of formative and summative using direct and indirect assessment of original student work with evidence of a logical progression in higher-order thinking.

Describe recent examples of using assessment information leading to data-informed continuous improvements.

If the program has multiple delivery modalities, explain how consistency and quality of assessment and evaluation are maintained across these modalities.

Evidence in this category includes:

- **The three most recent annual assessment reports**
- **Completed UT Tyler Graduate Program Assessment Review Rubrics for three most recent years**
- **Current Curriculum Map (including Certificates if appropriate)**

B. Faculty Productivity

Summarize academic credentials of the graduate program coordinator.

Describe the profile of faculty in the program: academic qualifications, scholarly output, grant activity, awards, achievements, and service.

Summarize faculty workload implementation plans.

Provide summative course evaluations for all full-time and part-time faculty

Evidence in this category includes:

- a. **Current Faculty Roster (Rank, FT/PT, Endowed Chairs, etc.)**
- b. **Faculty-Student Ratio (Office of Information Analysis)**
- c. **Faculty Qualifications for Teaching Assignments (OCIA)**
- d. **Publications, Scholarship, Creative Endeavors, External Grants (Fac 180)**
- e. **Awards and Achievements (Fac 180)**
- f. **Community and Public Service (Fac 180)**
- g. **Completed Professional Development (3 Most Recent Years in Fac 180)**
- h. **Faculty Workload Implementation Plan (WIP)**
- i. **Example Completed Faculty Annual Appraisal based on assigned WIP (Redacted)**
- j. **Summative Course Evaluations (3 Most Recent Years - UT Tyler website)**

C. Students and Graduates

Summarize a description of the program student demographics. Include narrative description of recent trends observed for prospective successful and unsuccessful program applicants, admitted students, and degree completers.

1) Student Information (3 Most Recent Years - OIA)

Evidence in this category includes:

If applicable, disaggregate by instruction mode, enrollment status (PT/FT), track/concentration

- a. **Student Demographics**
- b. **Applied, Admitted, and Enrolled (3 Most Recent Years)**
- c. **Retention Rates**
- d. **Time to Degree**
- e. **Graduation Rates (Two and Three-Year Graduation Rates)**
- f. **Degrees Conferred Annually**

2) Student Achievement

- *Summarize curricular and co-curricular preparation for student academic success as evidenced by program output data.*

Evidence in this category includes:

- Publications/Awards**
- Licensure Pass Rates**
- Graduate Placement**
- Alumni Data (Career Success Office First Destination Survey, SeekUT, UT Tyler Graduation Exit Survey, Steppingblocks, etc.)**

3) Academic and Student Support Services

- *Provide a summary narrative on the institutional academic and student support services available at the university, academic unit, and department levels **relevant to the program and student populations served**. Include the most recent academic year services for academic advising, tutoring, writing support, research, library access, technology assistance, mental health resources, debt guidance, career coaching, graduate student organization, and post-completion transition services.*
- *Describe program-specific academic and student support services and/or programs.*

D. Facilities and Resources

Provide a summary narrative of facilities, equipment, support staff, and funding. Comment on space utilization, administrative support, and access to developmental or external resources.

Evidence in this category includes:

Facilities and Equipment

- Finances and Resources**
- Development/Advancement Resources**
- Program Administration (Academic unit organizational chart)**
- Staff Resources**

E. Program Distance Education Compliance (Hybrid, Online, Off-Campus)

The program is in compliance with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) "Principles of Good Practice," SACSCOC Distance Education Standards and Policies and with UT Tyler Distance Education Policies. Where applicable, briefly describe how program faculty ensure ongoing compliance for each of the following criteria. (Initials affirm compliance.)

1. Quality and Rigor

- All distance learning courses meet the same standards as an equivalent face-to-face traditional program/course.
- Online and hybrid courses have the same program/course student learning outcomes, course descriptions, and expectations.
- The course/program provides regular and substantive interaction between faculty and students, among students, and students and content.
- The faculty assumes primary responsibility for and exercises oversight of distance education, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction.

2. Faculty Credentialing

- Prior to teaching an online or hybrid course, all faculty complete the required “Online Instructor Certification” training offered by the Office of Digital Learning (unless faculty have completed nationally recognized online certification) to design online/ hybrid courses and implement best practices of online teaching.
- Faculty recertify the “Online Instructor Certification” training every three years and include current information in FAC180.

2. Faculty Responsibility

- Faculty members who teach distance education courses are expected to implement best practices of teaching distance education courses and self-assess their distance education courses using UT Tyler’s Best Practices Checklist rubric.
- Faculty collaborate with instructional designers in the Office of Digital Learning to design online/ hybrid courses and implement best practices of online teaching.
- The U.S Department of Education requires that all distance education courses for which students may use Title IV funds (federal financial aid) “ensure that there is regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors.” Faculty members are expected to provide regular and substantive interaction with students enrolled in distance education courses. This interaction is instructor-driven, frequent, and consistent throughout the semester. Faculty members use a variety of methods and resources appropriate to the course and discipline to facilitate contact with students.
- Among the strategies, interactions typically include:
 - Providing direct instruction
 - Providing feedback for students
 - Making weekly announcements
 - Leading and facilitating discussion boards,
 - Posting instructional materials
 - Moderating group work
 - Facilitating student-to-student communication
 - Providing real-time audio or video conferencing
 - Holding office hours
 - Sending emails
 - Holding review and tutoring sessions
 - Meeting face-to-face

- Distance education courses are considered equivalent to campus courses in terms of workload expectations and contact hours. Therefore, the frequency of the instructor-led contact and interactions will be at least the same as would be established in a regular, campus-based course.

3. Technology & Accessibility

- All courses are delivered via the UT Tyler Canvas Learning Management System and faculty maintain grades in Canvas to ensure student privacy. If external tools are used, the faculty member must ensure that FERPA requirements are met.
- Faculty work with The Office of Digital Learning and Disability Services office to ensure all courses are accessible in compliance with Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide equal access to course materials for all students.

4. Student Support Services

- All associated course expenses are communicated to students prior to enrolling.
- Students are provided with an orientation that specifically prepares them for distance learning at UT Tyler that includes information on academic support services, policies, procedures, etc.
- Students enrolled in online/hybrid courses have access to all support services offered by UT Tyler.

Program Coordinator Initials

Department Chair Initials

Dean Initials

F. Executive Summary

Provide summary overview of the program strengths and areas of concern to consider for continuous improvement planning in the next 1-3 years.

The background of the page is a photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there are wide, light-colored stone steps leading up a grassy hill. To the left of the steps is a low, light-colored stone wall. In the background, a tall, light-colored brick clock tower stands prominently. The tower has a large clock face on its front and a series of bells hanging in an open section below it. The word "WRITER" is visible on the base of the tower. Large, leafy green trees are behind the tower, and a clear blue sky is above. A tall, thin light pole is visible to the right of the tower.

Appendix D: Graduate Program External Review Report Template

The University of Texas at Tyler
Graduate Program External Review Report
☐ **Master's** ☐ **Doctoral**

Institution: The University of Texas at Tyler

Department/School:

Academic Program:

Program Review. The University of Texas at Tyler hosted an external review team composed of the following scholars: [List First and Last Name, University/College Affiliation] and [List First and Last Name, University/College Affiliation].

The external review team [visited the campus on] [Dates] OR [conducted a desk review] [Dates] and produced an External Review with comments reflecting their overall impression of the graduate program. We thank the external review team for their time and valued comments regarding our program.

EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT GUIDELINES

The following areas are evaluated: **Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan; Program Curriculum, Faculty Productivity; Students and Graduates; Facilities/Resources; and Overall Ranking.**

External Reviewers are requested to complete a single external review report based on interview discussions with university participants, personal observations, and documented evidence provided by UT Tyler.

External Reviewers assign a rating of *Excellent, Very Good, Appropriate, or Needs Improvement* for each criterion of the section. A rationale statement is required for ratings of *Excellent, Needs Improvement, or Not Applicable*. The rationale statements must include specific examples attained during the external review process.

External Reviewer are requested to provide an executive summary that highlights strengths of the program and areas of concern.

1. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan

- a. Vision, Mission and Goals
 - b. Strategic Plan
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent*	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement*	NA*
Vision, Mission, and Goals					
Strategic Plan					

***External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:**

External Review Team Recommendations:

2. Program Curriculum

- a. Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes (To Include Career Competencies with Industry Standards and Professional Workforce Needs)
 - b. Curriculum development, coordination, and delivery
 - c. Student learning outcomes assessment with evidence of logical progression of higher-order thinking)
 - d. Program curriculum compared to peer programs
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent*	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement*	NA*
Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and Purposes					
Curriculum development, coordination, and delivery					
Student learning outcomes assessment					
Program Curriculum compared to peer programs					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

3. Faculty Productivity

- a. Qualifications
 - b. Publications
 - c. External Grants
 - d. Teaching Load
 - e. Faculty/Student Ratio
 - f. Achievements
 - g. Profile
 - h. Community/Public Service
 - i. Teaching Evaluations
 - j. Development
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement	NA
Qualifications					
Publications					
External Grants					
Teaching Load					
Faculty/Student Ratio					
Achievements					
Profile					
Community/Public Service					
Teaching Evaluations					
Development					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

4. Students and Graduates

- a. Demographics
 - b. Time to Degree
 - c. Publications/Awards
 - d. Retention Rates
 - e. Graduation Rates
 - f. Enrollment (# of Students, SCHs)
 - g. Licensure Rates
 - h. Graduation Placement
 - i. Degrees Conferred Annually
 - j. Admissions
 - k. Student Support Services (To Include Debt Guidance)
 - l. Alumni Relations (To Include Post-Completion Transitions)
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement	NA
Demographics					
Time to Degree					
Publications/Awards					
Retention Rates					
Graduation Rates					
Enrollment					
Graduate Placement					
Degrees Conferred Annually					
Admissions					
Student Support Services					
Tracking Program Graduates					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

5. Facilities/Resources

- a. Facilities and Equipment
 - b. Finances and Resources
 - c. Program Administration
 - d. Staff Resources
 - e. Developmental Resources
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement	NA
Facilities and Equipment					
Finances and Resources					
Program Administration					
Staff Resources					
Developmental Resources					

***External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:**

External Review Team Recommendations:

6. Executive Summary

Program Strengths:

Program Areas of Concern:

The background image shows a tall, light-colored stone clock tower with a large clock face and a bell carillon. In the foreground, there are wide stone steps with metal railings leading up towards the tower. A large, leafy green tree is on the left side of the frame. The sky is clear and blue. The text 'Appendix E: Institutional Response Form' is centered over the image.

Appendix E: Institutional Response Form

The University of Texas at Tyler
Graduate Program External Review
Institutional Response Form
☐ **Master's** ☐ **Doctoral**

Institution: The University of Texas at Tyler

Department/School:

Academic Program:

Program Review. The University of Texas at Tyler hosted an external review team composed of the following scholars: [List First and Last Name, University/College Affiliation] and [List First and Last Name, University/College Affiliation].

The external review team visited the campus on [Dates] OR conducted a desk review [Dates] and produced an External Review with comments reflecting their overall impression of the graduate program. We thank the external review team for their time and valued comments regarding our program.

The Self-Study and External Review Report were reviewed by senior leadership who contributed to the UT Tyler Institutional Response. Senior administrators included the President; Provost and Chief Academic Officer; Chief Business Officer; Vice President, Operations – Academic Affairs; Vice President, Operations, Health Affairs; Chief Strategy Officer; VP Marketing; and VP, Information Technology, Chief Information Officer.

EXTERNAL REVIEW REPORT GUIDELINES

External Reviewers were requested to complete a single external review report based on interview discussions with university participants, personal observations, and documented evidence provided by UT Tyler. The following areas were evaluated: **Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan; Program Curriculum, Faculty Productivity; Students and Graduates; Facilities/Resources; and Overall Ranking.**

External Reviewers assigned a rating of *Excellent, Very Good, Appropriate, or Needs Improvement* for each criterion of the section. A rationale statement was required for ratings of *Excellent, Needs Improvement, or Not Applicable* and include specific examples attained during the external review process.

1. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan

- a. Vision, Mission and Goals
- b. Strategic Plan

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent*	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement*	NA*
Vision, Mission, and Goals					
Strategic Plan					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

Section 1. UT Tyler Response:

- Action Plan:
- Timeline:
- Person(s) Responsible:

2. Program Curriculum

- a. Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes (To Include Career Competencies with Industry Standards and Professional Workforce Needs)
 - b. Curriculum development, coordination, and delivery
 - c. Student learning outcomes assessment with evidence of logical progression of higher-order thinking)
 - d. Program curriculum compared to peer programs
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent*	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement*	NA *
Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and Purposes					
Curriculum development, coordination, and delivery					
Student learning outcomes assessment					
Program Curriculum compared to peer programs					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

Section 2. UT Tyler Response:

- **Action Plan:**
- **Timeline:**
- **Person(s) Responsible:**

3. Faculty Productivity

- a. Qualifications
 - b. Publications
 - c. External Grants
 - d. Teaching Load
 - e. Faculty/Student Ratio
 - f. Achievements
 - g. Profile
 - h. Community/Public Service
 - i. Teaching Evaluations
 - j. Development
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement	NA
Qualifications					
Publications					
External Grants					
Teaching Load					
Faculty/Student Ratio					
Achievements					
Profile					
Community/Public Service					
Teaching Evaluations					
Development					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

Section 3. UT Tyler Response:

- **Action Plan:**
- **Timeline:**
- **Person(s) Responsible:**

4. Students and Graduates

- a. Demographics
 - b. Time to Degree
 - c. Publications/Awards
 - d. Retention Rates
 - e. Graduation Rates
 - f. Enrollment (# of Students, SCHs)
 - g. Licensure Rates
 - h. Graduation Placement
 - i. Degrees Conferred Annually
 - j. Admissions
 - k. Student Support Services (To Include Debt Guidance)
 - l. Alumni Relations (To Include Post-Completion Transitions)
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement	NA
Demographics					
Time to Degree					
Publications/Awards					
Retention Rates					
Graduation Rates					
Enrollment					
Graduate Placement					
Degrees Conferred Annually					
Admissions					
Student Support Services					
Tracking Program Graduates					

*External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:

External Review Team Recommendations:

Section 4. UT Tyler Response:

- **Action Plan:**
- **Timeline:**
- **Person(s) Responsible:**

5. Facilities/Resources

- a. Facilities and Equipment
 - b. Finances and Resources
 - c. Program Administration
 - d. Staff Resources
 - e. Developmental Resources
-

External Review Team Rating:

	Excellent	Very Good	Appropriate	Needs Improvement	NA
Facilities and Equipment					
Finances and Resources					
Program Administration					
Staff Resources					
Developmental Resources					

***External Review Team Evidence-Based Rationale for Rating:**

External Review Team Recommendations:

Section 5. UT Tyler Response:

- **Action Plan:**
- **Timeline:**
- **Person(s) Responsible:**

6. Executive Summary

Program Strengths:

Program Areas of Concern:

The background of the page is a photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there are wide, light-colored stone steps with dark metal railings. To the left of the steps is a low stone wall. In the background, a tall, light-colored stone clock tower stands prominently. The tower has a large clock face on its front and a series of bells hanging in an open section below it. The word "CRITER" is visible on the base of the tower. Large green trees are behind the tower, and a clear blue sky is above. A tall, thin light pole is to the right of the tower.

**Appendix F: UT System Graduate Deans Statement of Principles
of Graduate Education**

University of Texas System Graduate Deans Statement of Principles of Graduate Education

March 8, 2022 (Revised November 13, 2023)

The State of Texas acknowledges the importance of higher education and financially supports the University of Texas System and the other Texas university systems that offer undergraduate and graduate degree programs. As articulated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), higher education in Texas is imperative, vital to upward social mobility of the state's citizens, and critical to the sustained health of the state's economy: [THECB Building a Talent Strong Texas Strategic Plan](#).

“Research shows that someone with a bachelor's degree can earn nearly double the lifetime wages of a high school graduate.” This earning potential increases further when one earns a master's degree and still further with a PhD. “And as wages go up, so does the state's revenue through tax increases. Higher education also helps the state meet its changing workforce needs and spurs new businesses. In other words, when Texas students win, the state wins.”

The priority toward students and their benefit to the state (the nation and the world) is also embraced by the UT System. Consensus is that advanced degree education provides the additional training and specialized expertise that allow students to substantively contribute to improving the human condition, the economy, and the greater community. Graduate programs at UT System institutions underpin the creation of new knowledge. Graduate programs are expected to prioritize the personal career success of program graduates, help ensure that students avoid amassing excessive financial debt while in school, and prepare students to contribute substantively to society. UT System Graduate Schools are expected to commit to the highest standards of quality and be recognized externally for rigor and excellence with programs that empower students to boldly change the world for the better. To ensure graduate students reach their full potential, our programs must recognize and support the diverse backgrounds, skillsets and needs of current and prospective students. Finally, our programs are expected to be good stewards of the state investment in the UT System, evidenced by reasonable average degree completion times (nominally two years for master's and five years for PhD programs) and high student retention. A degree candidate who does not finish represents a failure to serve that student and an intellectual and financial investment loss for the university and the state.

Consequently, UT System Graduate Schools and their degree programs are expected to incorporate proven practices—such as those reported by the [Council of Graduate Schools \(CGS\)](#) that help guarantee the aforementioned objectives are achieved. These practices are organized under the following seven themes.

1. **Outreach and recruitment.** Many undergraduates may not know the benefits of having a graduate degree or the opportunities available for financial and academic support. Therefore, programs have an obligation to reach out to prospective students, especially those from populations traditionally underrepresented in graduate education, and encourage the best and brightest minds to apply within the state, nationally and internationally. Departments and schools should provide online access to current information about each graduate program and engage in community outreach to attract prospective students, which may include in-person events, external networking, social media engagement, and targeted emails. Campuses should encourage their own undergraduate students to consider attending graduate school by providing research experiences and graduate education preparation activities. Programs should also provide prospective students salary and placement data for recent graduates of the program.
2. **Matriculation.** Programs should seek to enroll the most talented class of new graduate students through a *holistic admissions* process that recognizes the benefits of inclusion and the value of

educating students within a community of diverse scholars who embody the rich demography of the state, the nation, and the world. Programs should offer to all students competitive financial aid packages that are on par with national averages for each discipline. These competitive packages assist with recruiting talented students and removing financial barriers to attendance for low-income and underrepresented students. Programs should provide clearly written admission letters that enable students to easily compare their offer with offers received from elsewhere.

3. **Transparency.** Given that students entering graduate school arrive with different backgrounds and levels of exposure to advanced degree education, programs should clearly articulate degree requirements and expectations. To this end, programs should offer graduate student orientations for incoming students to assist new students in acclimating to campus. Additionally, programs should review existing policies to ensure equity and clarity and have graduate student handbooks accessible online and updated at least annually. Programs should provide ongoing holistic advising that begins as soon as students are accepted.
4. **Faculty commitment to success:** Faculty supporting Ph.D. programs should have active research agendas. Faculty supporting professional programs should be engaged in applied research that informs practice. Graduate students should be mentored by engaged faculty who meet with them regularly, advise them academically and prepare them to be successful in the workforce. Faculty members should provide timely feedback on assignments/exams/milestones and monitor student behavior and progress closely. They should be prepared to teach and work with students from diverse backgrounds and to intervene immediately if issues arise to help students succeed.
5. **Retention and completion.** Programs should take responsibility to ensure that all students are supported academically from start to finish. As part of this effort, programs should administer annual graduate student progress reviews, with the intent of providing students with clear direction about the steps needed to complete the program and the timeframe for doing so. Programs should also have an oversight process to intervene and assist in the event a student is not making satisfactory progress. To ensure they meet expectations, programs should routinely review average graduation rates and time-to-degree rates.
6. **Career success.** Programs should have a mentoring process and professional skills development program in place for all graduate students, which may include the use of an Individual Development Plan (IDP). Together, these initiatives should instill critical social skills, cultivate leadership and teamwork skills, and develop multicultural competencies that will allow students to excel in a diverse workforce. Programs have the responsibility to track student employment and follow national employment trends within their discipline to provide training and guidance for students in their potential careers.
7. **Promoting a Culture of Respect and Understanding.** Programs must promote diverse perspectives in research, teaching, learning and artistic scholarship because they are essential to high quality academic programs. Programs should develop and refine equitable and inclusive practices that welcome all scholars and learners, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, and/or veteran status. Programs should strive to remove artificial barriers to learning faced by students from historically underrepresented or underserved populations to ensure that historical injustice is not perpetuated. Faculty and administration should pay attention to the various needs of all students and provide them with affirming and inspiring educational experiences through teaching, training, and mentorship.