The University of Texas at Tyler
Office of Continuous Improvement and Accreditation

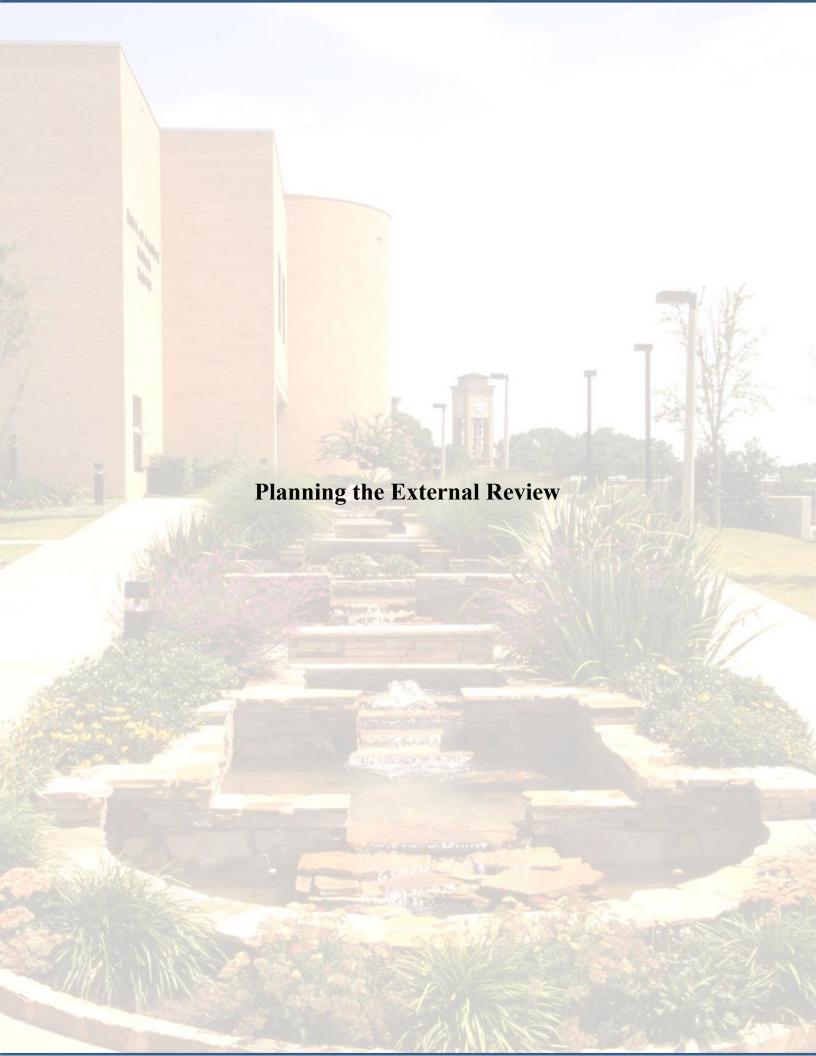# Graduate Program External Review Handbook
2025-2026

Contents

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 within the context of the UT Tyler mission.
- 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, an ability to be self-critical, and a willingness to act upon identified concerns.
- University stakeholders which 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) Completion of a comprehensive self-study using predetermined reporting criteria; 2) Review of the self-study and program website by the external reviewers prior to a campus site visit; 3) Campus site visit that includes meetings with faculty, students, and administrators along with campus tours to view program facilities and resources; 4) A single External Review Report completed by external reviewers based on the self-study and campus site visit; and 5) completion of Institutional Response Form. The external review may include commendations for program strengths and recommendations for continuous improvement planning. Programs that are offered online only may complete a virtual site visit. The self-study, External Review Report, and the Institutional Response Form are submitted to THECB by August 31 of the review year.

Planning the External Review

A. External Reviewer Selection
Summer Preceding Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *Graduate Program Coordinator (Coordinator) meets with the Office of Continuous Improvement and Accreditation (OCIA) and Academic Unit Assessment Professional to review handbook and processes.*

2. *OCIA facilitates a meeting with the Coordinator, Department Chair, and Dean to review the external review process.*

3. *The Coordinator contacts faculty-identified reviewers to confirm interest/availability, request CVs, and obtain signed Ethical Obligations Form. (See Appendix A: UT Tyler Ethical Obligations of UT Tyler External Reviewers.)*

4. *Coordinator/Department Chair discuss nominees with Dean, who may suggest additional individuals.*

5. *Dean sends the nominee list, CVs, and signed Ethical Obligations Forms to the Provost and Dean of Graduate School who determine the finalists. If the review includes both a master's and doctoral program, three reviewers may be selected with Provost approval.*

6. *Coordinator confirms site visit/virtual desk audit dates, service fees, and schedules an initial planning meeting with reviewers and OCIA. Dietary preferences for on-campus site visits and any special requests are confirmed with the external reviewers.*

Internal Contractual Process and Fee for Service

1. The Dean's Office completes the UT Tyler Contract Process with the assistance of Coordinator following confirmation of the external reviewers.

2. The Dean's Office contacts the Provost's Office to identify the funding source.

3. 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. *Coordinator meets with OCIA and Assessment Professional to review self-study requirements and identify campus resources. (Appendix B: Texas Administrative Code and Appendix C: Self-Study Guidelines)*

2. *Coordinator may survey faculty, students, and alumni to include in the self-study. (Optional –Example Surveys in Appendix D)*

3. *External Reviewers complete travel arrangements with Coordinator (in-person site visits only).*

4. *Coordinator completes self-study, incorporating feedback from the Academic Unit Assessment Professional, program faculty, Department Chair, and Dean. The completed self-study is reviewed by the Chief Risk Auditor, Provost, Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Research Officer & Dean of the Graduate School, and Associate Provost for Continuous Improvement and Accreditation. Additionally, Health Science program self-study reports are reviewed by the VP for Operations – Health Affairs.*

5. *Coordinator and Assessment Professional prepare draft site visit itinerary/virtual desk audit schedule and confirm with external reviewers. (Sample Itinerary in [Appendix E](#))*

C. Site Visit and Reports
Spring Semester of Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *Coordinator sends the self-study to the External Reviewers **4-6 weeks** prior to the campus site visit/virtual desk audit.*

2. *Coordinator and Assessment Professional update site visit itinerary/desk audit schedule based on External Reviewers requests and confirm with campus participants.*

3. *Coordinator and Assessment Professional conduct site visit orientation meetings with program faculty and student participants.*

4. *The Dean's Office and Assessment Professional schedule local transportation, meal arrangements based on dietary preferences, and welcome basket.*

Following Site Visit

External Reviewers prepare a single report and send it to the Graduate Program Coordinator and Department Chair **4-6 weeks** after the site visit.
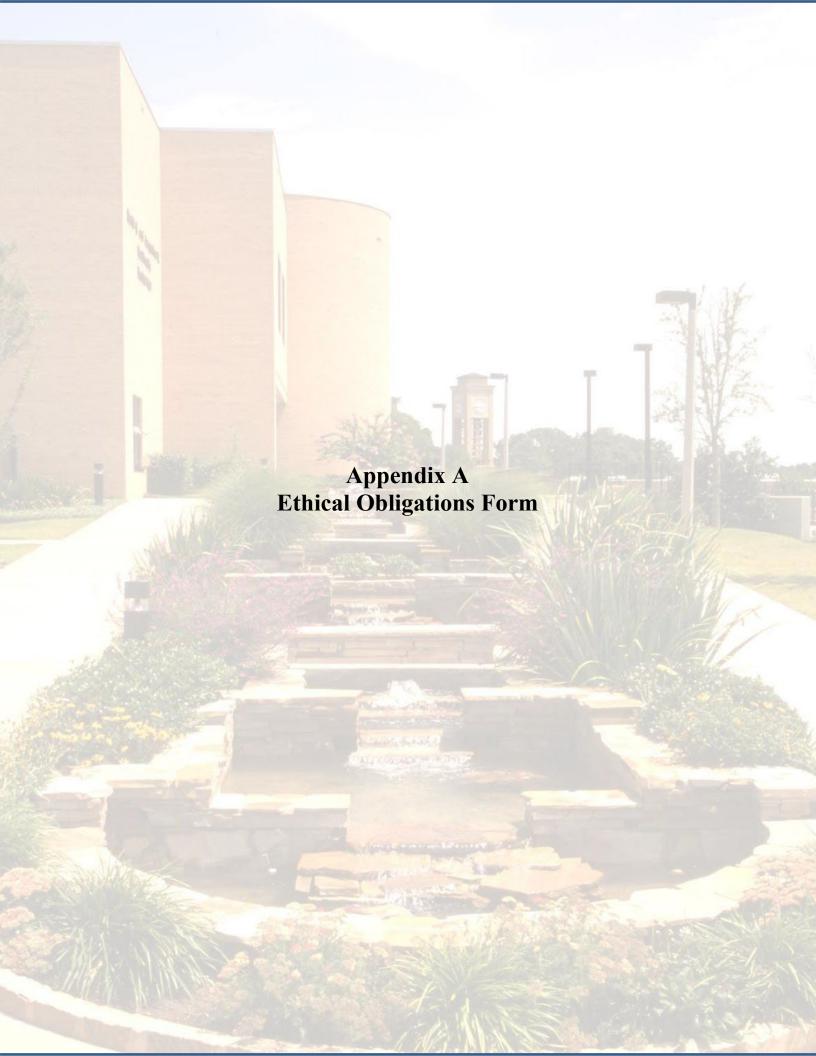
The Dean's Office completes fee-for-service and travel reimbursement process for each reviewer.

D. Institutional Response Form
Summary of Review Year

PLANNING ACTIONS

1. *Coordinator, Assessment Professional, and Dean complete the preliminary Institutional Response Form (IRF). Coordinator shares draft with the Associate Provost CIA and program faculty for comments and revisions. (See Appendix F – THECB Institutional Response Form).*

2. *The Associate Provost CIA sends the self-study, External Review Report, and draft IRF to the Provost, Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Research Officer and Graduate School Dean. Documents are sent to the VP for Operations – Health Affairs for Health Science programs. The Provost's office schedules a meeting with the program and institutional leadership to finalize the IRF response.*

3. *Coordinator finalizes IRF based on leadership meeting discussions and submits to the Associate Provost CIA.*

4. *Associate Provost CIA submits all three reports to THECB within 180 days of receiving the External Review Report.*

5. *Coordinator and Assessment Professional include GPR documents and evaluation results in the annual program assessment plan. Institutional responses to recommendations are reported as action plans. Closing the loop statements are updated in subsequent assessment cycles.*

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 UT Tyler and to the program under review.

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 if the individual:

- is employed at a Texas higher education institution;
- has been a consultant at UT Tyler within the last ten years;
- has been an employee of UT Tyler or any UT System higher education institution;
- has been a candidate for employment at UT Tyler within the last ten years;
- is a graduate of UT Tyler;
- has a close 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.

PROSPECTIVE EXTERNAL REVIEWER: 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: _____
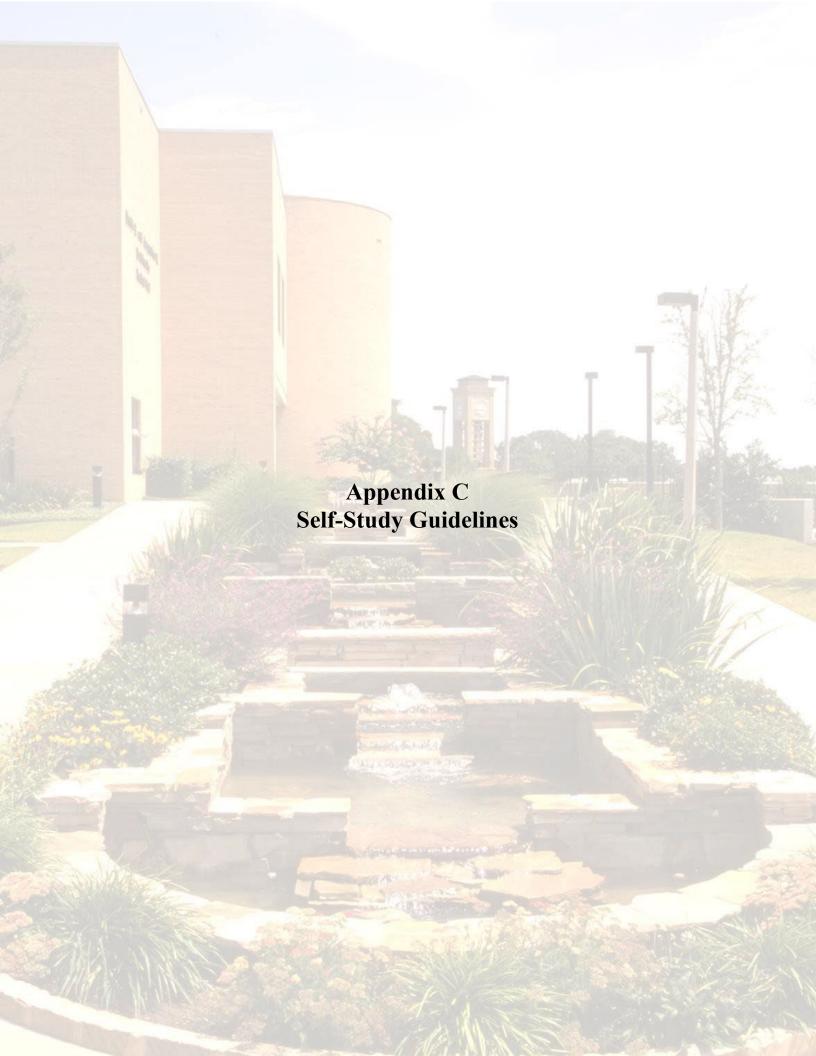
Appendix B
Texas Administrative Code 2.181

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.

Appendix C
Self-Study Guidelines

Institutional and Academic Program Overview

1) University Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Plan

Summarize the UT Tyler mission, vision, strategic plan, governance structure, and notable milestones.

Evidence in this category includes:
- [University Description](#)
- [University Strategic Plan](#)
- [University Organizational Chart](#)

2) Mission, Vision, and Goals

Summarize the Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic plan of the college/school and the academic department. Explain how the program supports the UT Tyler and the college/school missions and strategic goals.

Describe the long-term vision of the college/school/ department and the program. Outline and describe the strategic priorities for the graduate program over the next 3-5 years (academic, research, community engagement, enrollment, or post-graduation outcomes).

A. Academic Unit Overview

Outline the history and purpose of the academic unit, including its founding date and role within the university.

Provide a brief overview of the graduate program, summarizing significant program changes with an emphasis on recent updates. List and describe any certificates, tracks, concentrations, options, or other components included in the program. Provide examples of using curriculum updates based on labor market information, advisory council recommendations, professional trends, etc., to ensure the program content is current and relevant.

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

Support documentation to include:
- Academic Unit Organizational Chart
- Current Program Catalog Admission Requirements
- Current Program Catalog Graduation Requirements
- Current Degree Plan
- Academic and Program Website Hyperlinks

B. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan

1) Mission, Vision, and Goals

State the mission of the graduate program's college/school, if applicable, the department in which the program resides, and the program mission. Summarize alignment of the program mission with the college and UT Tyler mission strategic plan, and strategic priorities (Student Success, Faculty Excellence, Community Engagement, Workforce Development, Etc.,).

Describe the long-term vision of the college/school, the department (if applicable), and the graduate program. The vision should reflect aspirational goals and the desired future impact of the program on students, the profession, and the broader community.

Outline and describe strategic priorities for the graduate program over the next 3-5 years (academic relevance and excellence, research, community engagement, enrollment, or post-graduation outcomes). Provide examples of how each goal is assessed, reported to senior leadership, and included in data-informed continuous improvement planning.

Support documentation to include:
- University Mission, Vision Statements, and Strategic Plan
- College/School Mission, Vision Statements, and Strategic Plan
- Department Mission, Vision Statements, and Strategic Plan (if applicable)
- Program Mission and Strategic Plan

2) Comparison With Texas Peer Programs

Compare program curriculum with Texas Peer Programs - Total SCH, Modality, Term lengths, UT Tyler Market Share, Embedded Academic and/or Industry Certificates, Degrees Awarded, and Program Enrollment. National peer programs may be included as appropriate. (Table Format)

Summarize national and/or state trends in peer programs content and course offerings.

Provide accompanying narrative on UT Tyler program distinctions.

Support documentation to include:
- Comparison table of Texas peer programs provided by the Office of Information Analysis, THECB, and Graduate School

C. Program Curriculum

1) Curriculum Development, Modification, and Continuous Improvement Planning

Summarize the curriculum development and modification through faculty-led processes. Briefly describe the roles of faculty, committees, and administrators in proposing and approving changes.

If the program is offered in more than one modality and/or at more than one instructional location, explain how consistency and quality are maintained across modalities.

Support Documentation to Include:
- Program, Departmental, and/or College/School Curriculum Meeting Minutes
- Graduate Council Meeting Minutes

2) Evidence of Graduate-Level Rigor and Academic Progression

Summarize the process faculty use to review program curriculum and content to ensure post-baccalaureate rigor.

Explain how the curriculum builds upon undergraduate foundations with progressively advanced academic content.

Highlight how students engage with the scholarly literature of the discipline and participate in research and/or professional practice appropriate to the field.

Support Documentation to include:
- University Catalog Course Descriptions with undergraduate program in the same discipline
- Course Rotation and Sequencing
- Selected Course Syllabi with Signature Assignments
- Assessment Rubric for the Signature Assignments
- Redacted Student Deliverable Examples

3) Curriculum Sequence, Student Learning Outcomes, and Marketable Skills

Provide a program curriculum semester sequence including any embedded certificates (include embedded industry certificates or digital badges required in courses)

Summarize how the curriculum aligns with professional/business trends and practices.

Identify current program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

List Current Program Marketable Skills.

If the program has Embedded Academic Certificate(s), list the SLOs and Marketable Skills for each certificate separately. Provide specific examples of how each certificate adds value for graduates above the program curriculum.

Support Documentation to include:
- Current Program Student Learning Outcomes
- Current Program Marketable Skills
- Certificate Inventory (including course level industry certificates and digital badges)

4) Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes and Continuous Improvement Planning

Summarize how the program is included in the UT Tyler process for assessment of educational program Student Learning Outcomes and continuous improvement planning based on faculty analysis of assessment results.

Provide examples of scaffolding student learning with meaningful formative and summative assessment methods.

Provide examples of recent faculty analysis of assessment results to plan for curriculum updates and improving the student learning experience

Identify signature assignments such as capstone projects, theses, clinical/practice experiences, or applied research to illustrate graduate-level expectations. Provide student deliverables (redacted) for the selected signature assignments and the rubric used to assess student learning.

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

Include the most recent completed assessment cycle documents In the case of courses shared between programs, explain how UT Tyler faculty ensure that the *individual program outcomes are assessed by qualified faculty in the discipline and all academic awards are determine by qualified UT Tyler faculty.*

Support Documentation to include:

- Most Recent 3-year Program Assessment Report
- Current Program Curriculum Map
- Completed Graduate Program Assessment Plan Review Rubric
- Selected Course Syllabi with signature assignments, examples of formative and summative assessment methods, and assignment rubrics.
- Redacted student deliverables for selected signature assignments
- Academic Partnership MOUs (if applicable)

D. Faculty Productivity

Summarize the UT Tyler review process to ensure graduate faculty teaching qualifications.

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

Address teaching loads, student ratios, and professional development. Include the fall semester roster of the review year with information from the previous two years.

Support Documentation to include:

- College/School Workload Implementation Plan
- Redacted example Faculty Qualifications Documentation
- Faculty Tables
  a. Current Faculty Roster (Rank, FT/PT, Endowed Chairs)
  b. Academic Qualifications
  c. Publications, Scholarship, Creative Endeavors, External Grants (Fac180)
  d. Awards and Achievements (Fac180)
  e. Community and Public Service (Fac180)
  f. Professional Development Opportunities and Resources (Fac180)
  g. Teaching Load
  h. Faculty-Student Ratio (Office of Information Analysis)
  i. Course Evaluations (Office of Information Analysis)

E. Students and Graduates

Provide a snapshot of student demographics, enrollment trends, time to degree, retention/graduation rates, awards, and post-graduation outcomes. Include student services, alumni engagement, and any licensure outcomes if applicable. Include the fall semester of the review year and the previous three years.

1) Student Information (Most recent three years – Table Format)

If applicable, disaggregate by instruction mode, enrollment status (part/fulltime), track/concentration. All reports are provided by the Office of Information Analysis.

- a.   Student Demographics
- b.   Admissions and Enrollment
- c.   Retention Rates (Fall to Spring and Fall to Fall)
- d.   Time to Degree
- e.   Graduation Rates (Two and Three-Year Graduation Rates)
- f.   Degree Conferred Annually

2) Student Achievement (Most recent three years – Table Format)
- a.   Publications/Awards
- b.   Licensure Pass Rates
- c.   Graduate Placement
- d.   Alumni Relations (Tracking program graduates)

3) Graduate Student Teaching/Research Assistantships

Summarize the selection process and number of filled GTA positions in the most recent three years (if applicable). Include funding sources.

Summarize the selection process and number of filled GTA Instructor of Record (IOR) positions in the most recent three years (if applicable). Include funding sources.

Summarize the selection process and number of filled GRA positions in the most recent three years (if applicable). Include funding sources

Support Documentation to include:
- Selection Process Documents for GTAs and GRAs
- Redacted GTA IOR Faculty Qualifications Document

4. Academic and Student Support Services

Provide a summary narrative on the academic and student support services available by the university/graduate school, college/school and/or department.

Highlight any program-specific support initiatives or mentorship opportunities.

Summarize how student indirect assessment of academic and student support services is used by the faculty to improve the overall student experience.

Support Documentation to include:
- Most recent 3-year Graduate Student Exit Survey (GES) Results
- Examples of how faculty used GES results to plan continuous improvement (Program Success Outcome in Program Assessment Plan)

F. Facilities and Resources

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

a. Facilities and Equipment
b. Finances and Resources
c. Development/Advancement Resources
d. Program Administration (Academic unit organizational chart)
e. Staff Resources

G. 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" and with the SACSCOC distance education standards and 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.

_____   _____   _____
Program Coordinator   Chair   Dean

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.

_____   _____   _____
Program Coordinator   Chair   Dean

3) 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.

_____   _____   _____
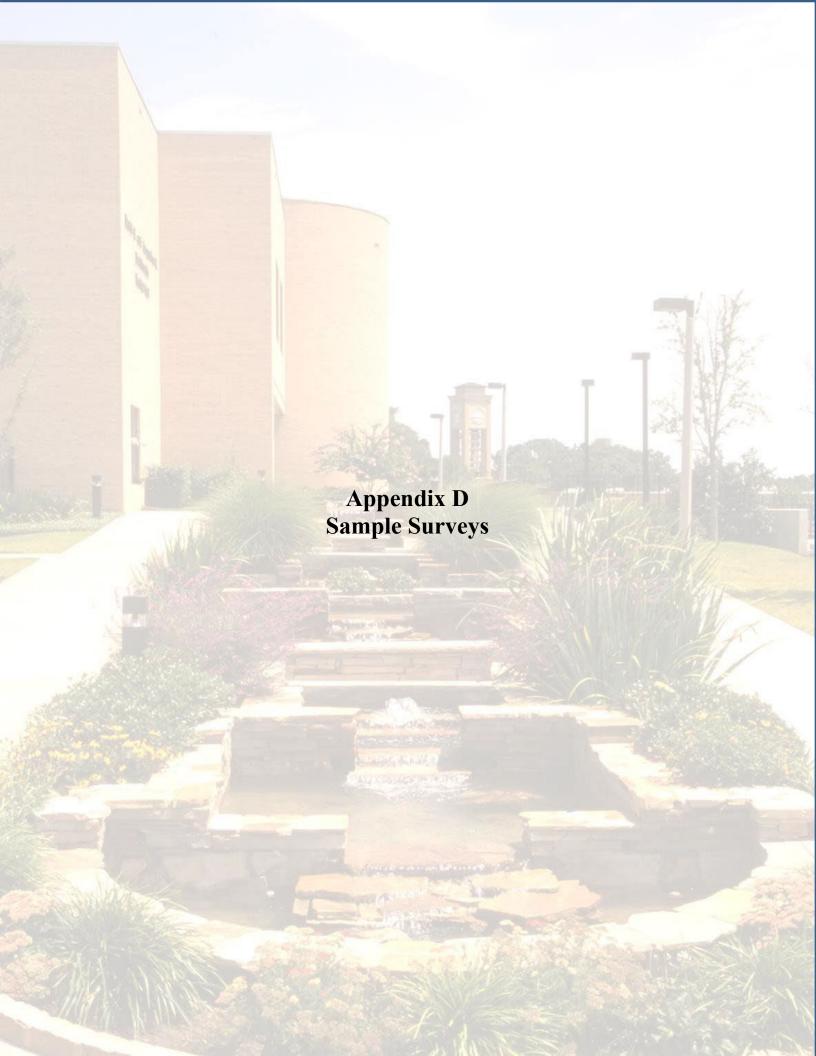
Program Coordinator   Chair   Dean

4) 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.

_____   _____   _____

Program Coordinator   Chair   Dean

5) **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   Chair   Dean

H. Overall Findings and Assessment

Appendix D
Sample Surveys

A. Graduate Faculty Self-Study Survey

Graduate faculty are invited to complete this brief survey as part of the [NAME] graduate program review self-study. Please share your thoughts and recommendations in the short-answer items below. The survey results will be included in the self-study as aggregate data and all survey responses are anonymous.

1. Identify program strengths:
2. How do you participate in outreach and recruitment activities?
3. Does program information provide students with salary and placement data for recent graduates?
4. Identify program challenges: (4 Forced Choice, 1 Open Choice)
5. Describe a recommendation to address each challenge:
6. Recommend one (1) short-term priority you would implement for student and program success with identified resources necessary to accomplish this initiative.
7. What is your priority for this graduate program review:

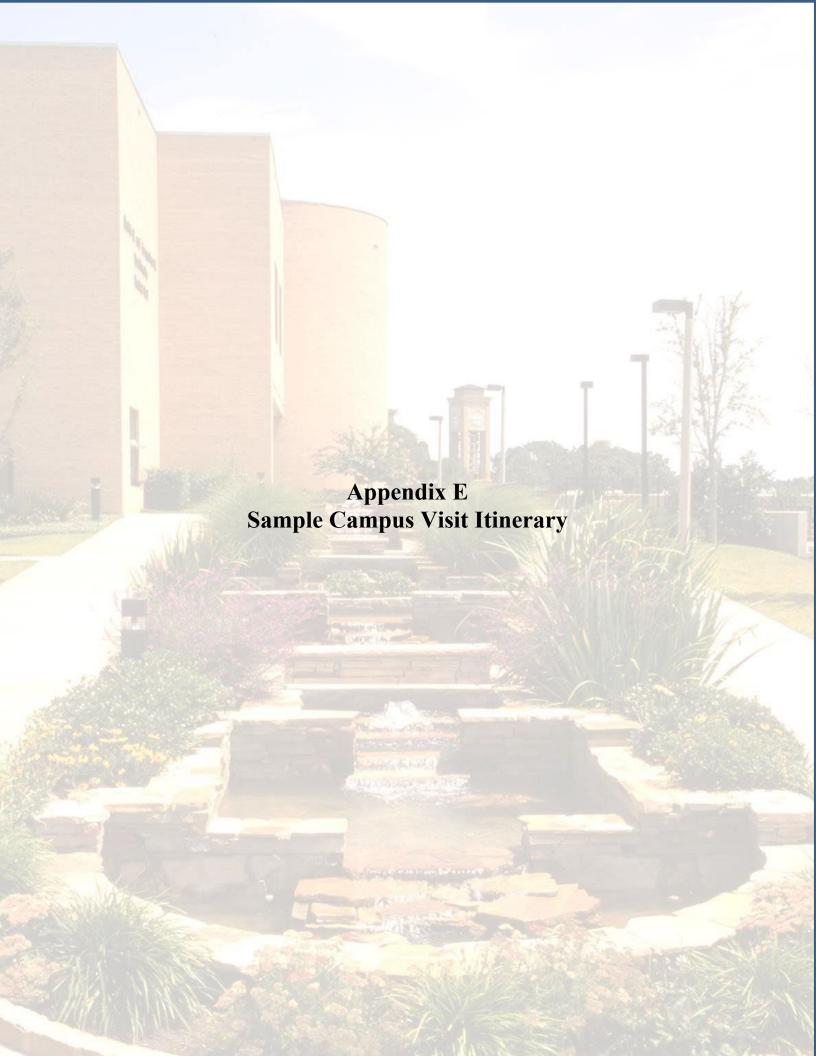# B. Graduate Student Self-Study Survey

Graduate students are invited to complete this brief survey as part of the [NAME] graduate program review self-study. Please share your thoughts and recommendations in the short-answer items below. The survey results will be included in the self-study as aggregate data and all survey responses are anonymous.

1. Identify program strengths:
2. Describe how the current program strengths could be enhanced:
3. Identify program challenges: (4 Forced Choice, 1 Open Choice)
4. Describe recommendations to address the challenges:
5. Recommend one (1) short-term priority you would implement for student and program success:
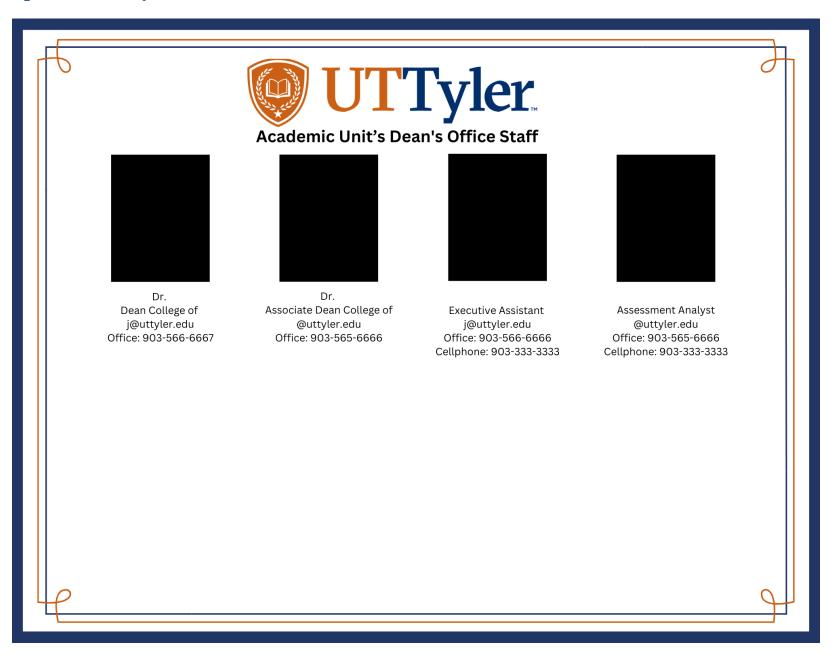6. What has been your most meaningful learning experience in this program?

C. Alumni Self-Study Survey

Alumni are invited to complete this brief survey as part of the [NAME] graduate program review self-study. Please share your thoughts and recommendations in the short-answer items below. The survey results will be included in the self-study as aggregate data, and all survey responses are anonymous.

1. Describe how well the program prepared you for your current professional role.
2. What were your strongest skills, knowledge, or competencies when you completed the program?
3. What additional professional skills, knowledge, or competencies would be helpful to include in the program for future graduates?
4. Identify new trends in your profession that program faculty could incorporate into the curriculum.
5. What was the most meaningful learning experience in the program:

Appendix E
Sample Campus Visit Itinerary

A. Sample Itinerary One

UTTyler

Academic Unit's Dean's Office Staff

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UT Tyler
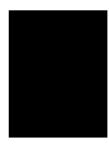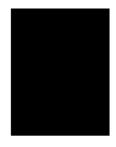
Program's Faculty and Staff

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Arrival Day - DATE

Time	Location	Activity & Purpose	Review Team Members	Institutional Participants
1:30 PM		Review Team arrive at airport and drive to the hotel		
7:00 pm		Dinner with Academic Unit and Program Leadership		*College/School Dean* *College/School Associate Dean* *Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator*

1st Review Day – DATE

Time	Location	Activity & Purpose	Review Team Members	Institutional Participants
8:00 AM		Welcome Review Team		*Graduate Coordinator* *Assessment Analyst*
8:00 – 8:30 AM		Review of Self Study and Supporting Documentation		
8:30 – 9:30 AM		Meeting with Academic Unit and Program Leadership		*College/School Dean* *College/School Associate Dean* *Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator* *OSIS Director* *COE Executive Assistant* *Director of Development & Stewardship* *Lab Manager* *Assessment Analyst* *Career Success Coach* *Grant Coordinator*
9:30 – 10:30 AM		Meeting with Program Leadership		*Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator*

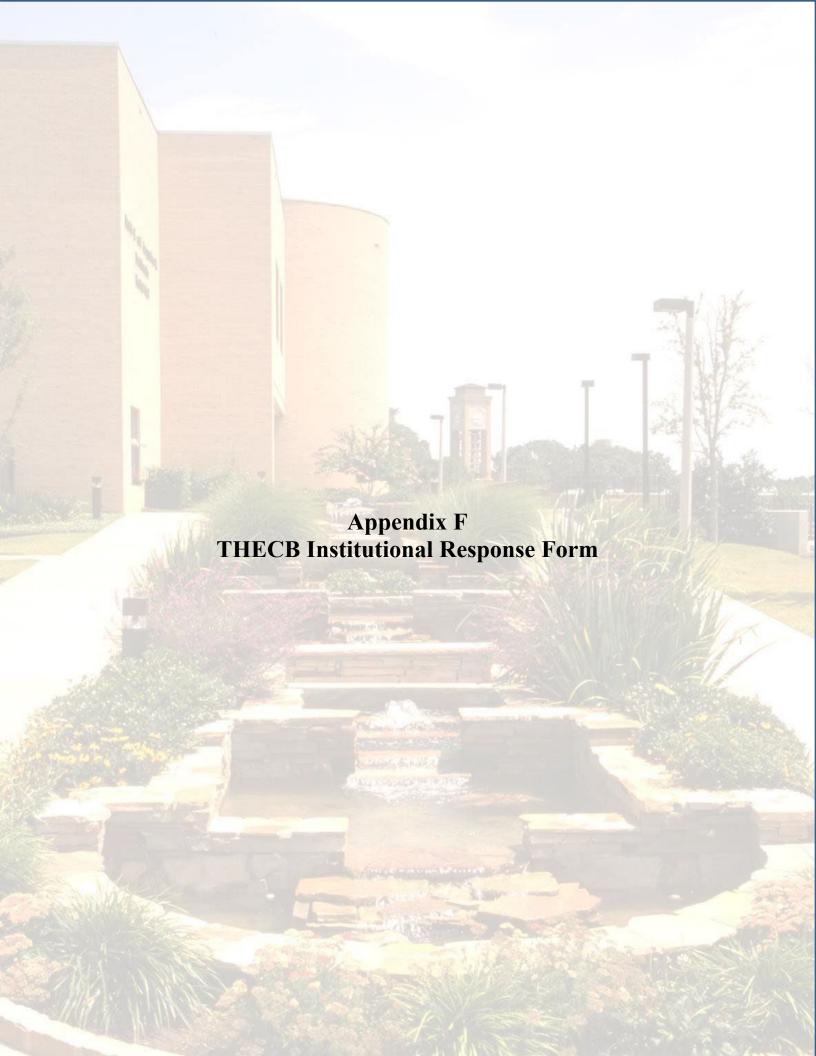| Time	Location	Activity & Purpose	Review Team Members	Institutional Participants
10:30 - 10:40 AM	Break			
10:40 - 11:30 AM		Meeting with Students and/or Program Constituents		
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM		Meeting with Student Services Personnel		*Executive Director of Graduate Admissions* *Director of Digital Learning* *Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships* *University Registrar* *Executive Director of International Programs* *Dean of Libraries* *Professional Librarian Program liaison Librarian* *Career Success Coach* *Assessment Analyst* *Lab Manager*

1st Review Day – DATE

Time	Location	Activity & Purpose	Review Team Members	Institutional Participants
12:00 - 1:00 PM	Lunch			
1:00 -1:50 PM		Meeting with UT Tyler Leadership		*University President* *University Provost* *Provost of Continuous Improvement & Accreditation* *Associate Provost for Online & Continuing Education* *Chief Strategy Officer* *VP of Information Technology* *Associate VP of Enrollment Management* *Chief Financial Officer*
1:50 – 2:50 PM		Tour of College/School Facilities		*Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator* *Lab Manager*
2:50 – 3:00 PM	Break			
3:00 – 3:30 PM		Meeting with Program Faculty		
3:30 - 4:00 PM		Program Chairs Debriefs		*Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator* *Assessment Analyst*

Time		Activity & Purpose		Institutional Participants
4:00 – 4:30 PM		Debrief Dean and Associate Dean		*College/School Dean* *College/School Associate Dean*

2nd Review Day & Departure - DATE				
Time	**Location**	**Activity & Purpose**	**Review Team Member(s)**	**Institutional Participants**
8:15 – 8:45 AM	Hotel Breakfast			
8:45 AM		Welcome Review Team		*Graduate Coordinator* *Assessment Analyst*
8:45-10:00 AM		Complete visit forms and exit statement		
10:00 – 10:30 AM		Review Draft Summary Report with Program Officials		*Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator* *Assessment Analyst*
10:30 – 11:00 AM	Break			
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM		Exit Meeting		*University President* *University Provost* *Dean of Graduate School* *Associate Provost of Continuous Improvement & Accreditation* *Dean of the College of* *Associate Dean College of* *Department Chair* *Graduate Coordinator* *Assessment Analyst*

Appendix F
THECB Institutional Response Form

TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION
COORDINATING BOARD
Academic Quality and Workforce

Graduate Program Institutional Response Form
☐ **Master's** ☐ **Doctoral**

Institution:

Department/School:

Academic Program:

Program Review. The **[Department/School]** hosted an external review team composed of the following scholars: **[List First and Last Name, University/College Affiliation]**. The external review team visited the **[visited the campus on] [Dates][conducted a desk review]** to conduct a desk review 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 following areas were evaluated: Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan; Faculty Productivity; Students and Graduates; Facilities/Resources; and Overall Ranking. The external reviewers were asked to give a rating of excellent, very good, appropriate, or needs improvement in these areas. **Please note** this Institutional Form must be saved in PDF format when submitted.

1. **Academic Unit Description and Strategic plan**
   a. Vision, Mission and Goals
   b. Strategic Plan

Recommendations from External Review Team:

Response and Action Plan:

2. **Program Curriculum**
   a. Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
   b. Curriculum development, coordination, and delivery
   c. Student learning outcomes assessment
   d. Program curriculum compared to peer programs

Recommendations from External Review Team:

Response and Action Plan:

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

Recommendations from External Review Team:

Response and Action Plan:

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
    l. Alumni Relations

Recommendations from External Review Team:

Response and Action Plan:

5. Facilities/Resources

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

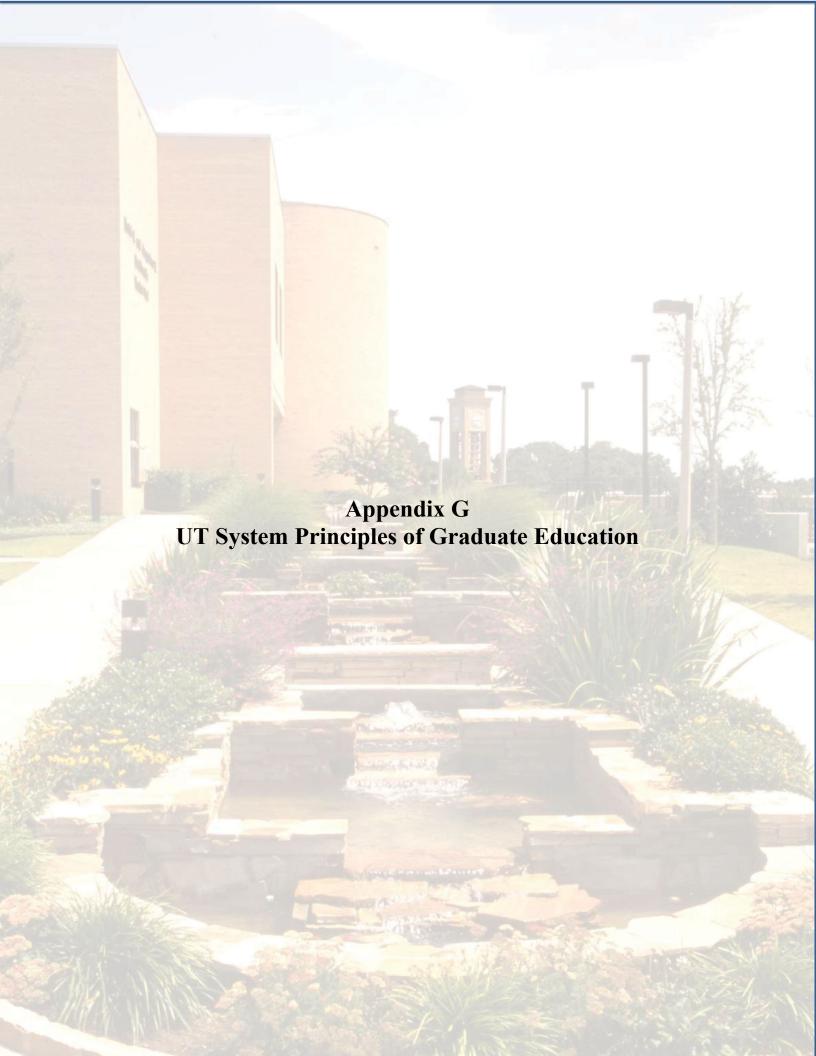*Recommendations from External Review Team:*

Response and Action Plan:

6. Overall Findings and Assessment

Recommendations from External Review Team:

Response and Action Plan:

THECB Graduate Program Institutional Response Form 3/20

Appendix G
UT System 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: http://www.60x30tx.com/home/?pnum=2

> "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, <u>when Texas students win, the state wins</u>."

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) https://cgsnet.org/best-practices—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 advance 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 in 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.