The University of Texas at Tyler

Office of Continuous Improvement and Accreditation

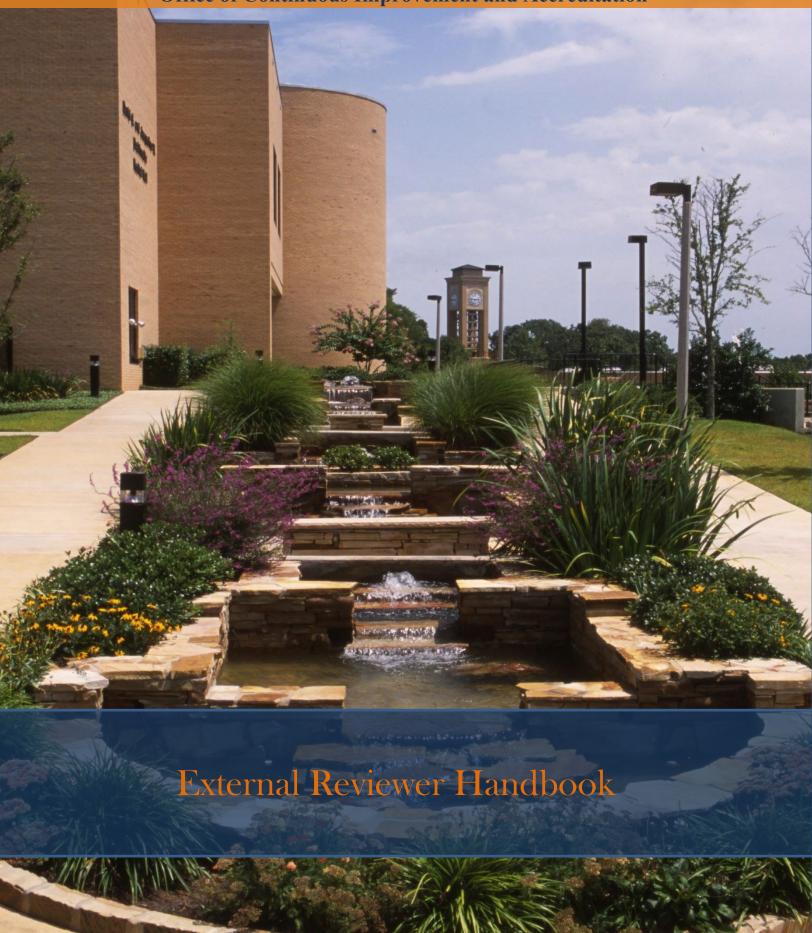


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2025-2026

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 to ensure continuing 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 considered to be 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 the 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 scheduled 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 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; 5) Completion of the Institutional Response Form. The external review may include commendations for program strengths and recommendations for continuous improvement planning. Programs that are offered only online may complete a virtual site visit. The Self-Study, External Review Report, and the Institution's Response Report are submitted to THECB by August 31 of the review year.

PLANNING ACTIONS

Summer Preceding Review Year – Reviewer Recruitment

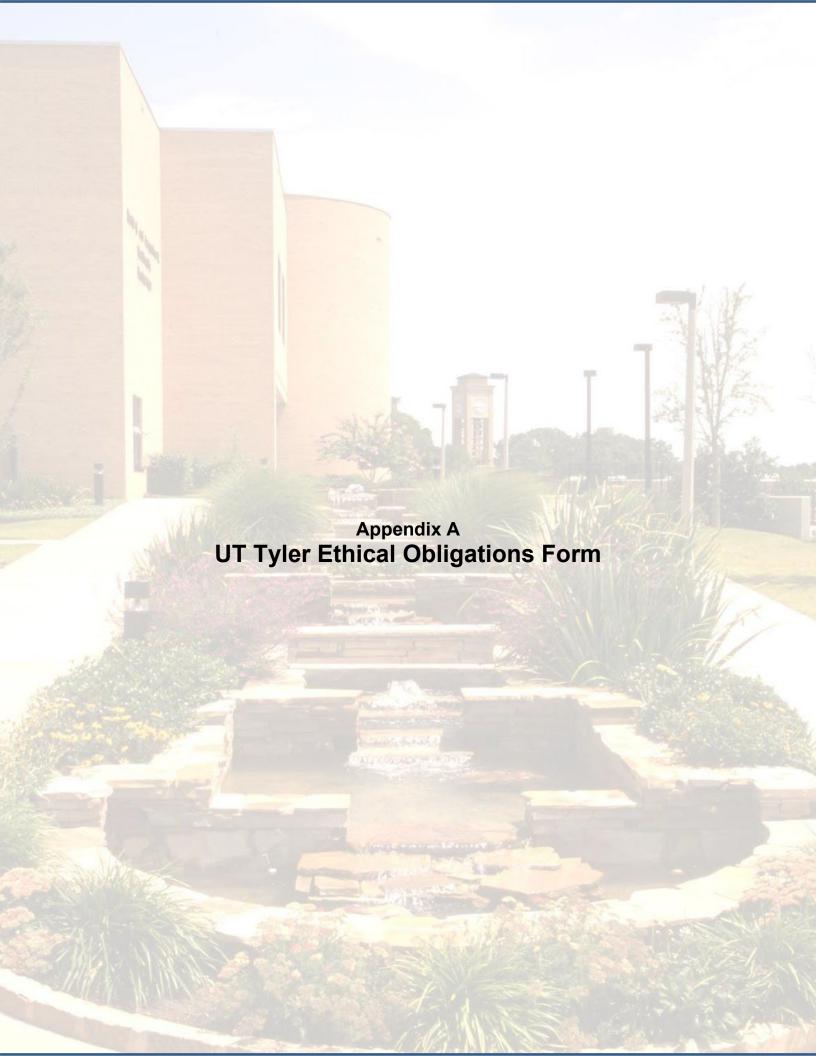
- 1. Graduate Program Coordinator (Coordinator) coordinates with the college/school dean to identify and contact prospective qualified external reviewers with details of the external review process, responsibilities, and fee for service.
- 2. Interested reviewers provide CVs and schedule tentative campus site visit dates for the spring semester.
- 3. External Reviewer finalists sign and return the UT Tyler Ethical Considerations Form.
- 4. 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.
- 5. Coordinator initiates the university contract process and documentation with the external reviewers.
- 6. External Reviewers book travel arrangements.

Fall Semester of Review Year - Contract, Itinerary, and Self Study

- Coordinator writes Self Study and surveys faculty, students, and alumni. The Self Study is sent to external reviewers at the end of the fall semester or beginning of the spring semester.
- 2. Coordinator prepares draft site visit itinerary and confirms with external reviewers. Reviewers may request additional meetings with university participants by title and office.
- 3. External Reviewers finalize travel arrangements with the Coordinator.

Spring Semester of Review Year - Campus Site Visit and External Review Report

- 1. Coordinator sends the Self-Study to external reviewers **4-6 weeks** prior to the campus site visit if not sent in the fall.
- 2. Coordinator confirms campus itinerary with external reviewers. Reviewers may request additional meetings with university participants by title and office.
- 3. Coordinator/College or School Assessment Professional finalize local transportation and meal arrangements.
- 4. Coordinator/Assessment Professional adapt itinerary as needed throughout the campus visit.
- 5. Following the campus visit, the External Reviewers prepare a single report and send to the Graduate Program Coordinator/Department Chair **4-6 weeks** after site visit.
- 6. Coordinator/Department Chair issue fee-for-service and travel reimbursement to each reviewer. The Provost's Office will cover the approved expenses.



The University of Texas at Tyler ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

UT Tyler graduate program reviews are based upon 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 haves subject-matter expertise and 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 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.

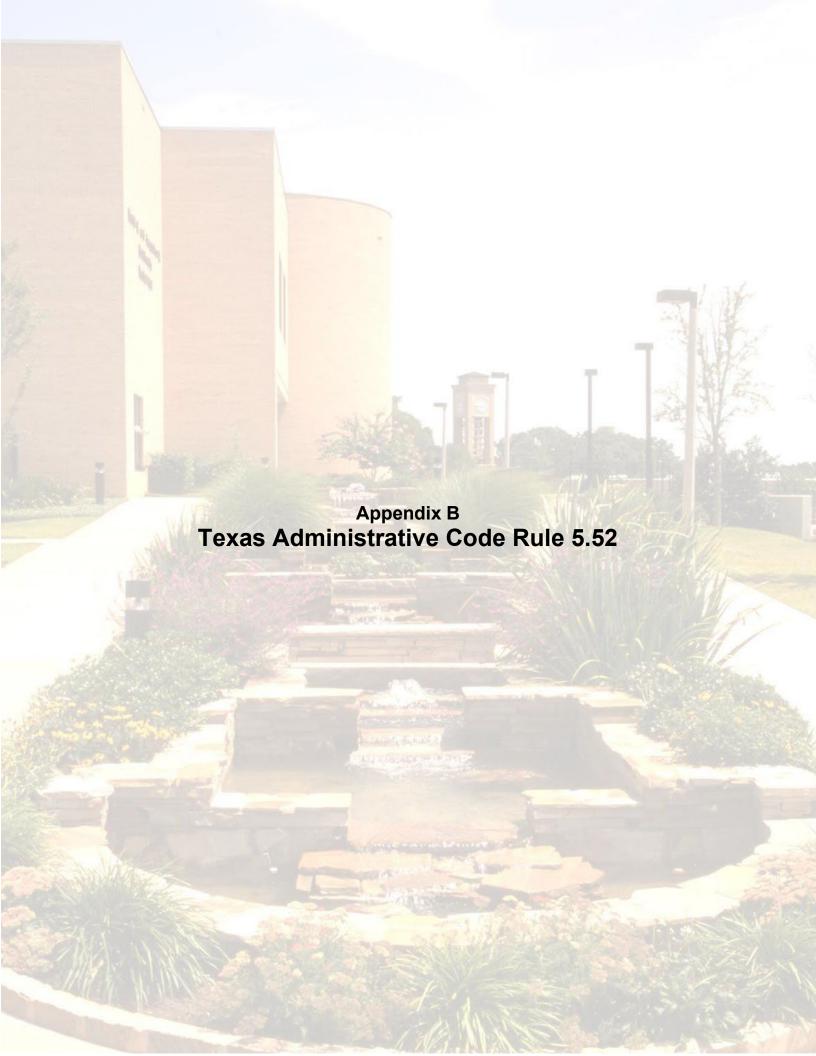
External program reviewers must maintain complete confidentiality in all activities and decisions. Confidentiality applies to all documents, correspondence, and discussions relative to all phases of the external program review. External reviewers may not disclose information about the program that includes discussions with the 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.

Conflict of Interest

External reviewers should not accept appointment 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 exa	amples, an evaluator would have a conflict	of interest if the individual
	Is employed at a Texas higher education instants been a consultant at UT Tyler within thas been an employee of UT Tyler or any has been a candidate for employment at U is a graduate of UT Tyler; has a close personal or familial relationshas a strong bias regarding UT Tyler; has any other relationship that could serv rendering an impartial, objective profession program evaluation.	ne last ten years; UT System higher education institution; JT Tyler within the last ten years; ip with persons at UT Tyler; e as an impediment to
Ackn	owledgements	
Policy	/ and my signature below affirms that I a wer for the <u>[PROGRAM NAME] ,</u> witho	
PROS	SPECTIVE EXTERNAL REVIEWER:	DATE:
I ackn require	nowledge that [External Reviewer Name red eligibility qualifications and no conflic est exists.	meets of interest or appearance of conflict of
PROC	GRAM COORDINATOR:	DATE:
DEPA	ARTMENT CHAIR:	DATE:
COLL	EGE/SCHOOL DEAN:	DATE:



TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE As in effect on 6/23/2025

TITLE 19. EDUCATION

PART 1. TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD
CHAPTER 2. ACADEMIC AND WORKFORCE EDUCATION
SUBCHAPTER I. REVIEW OF EXISTING DEGREE PROGRAMS

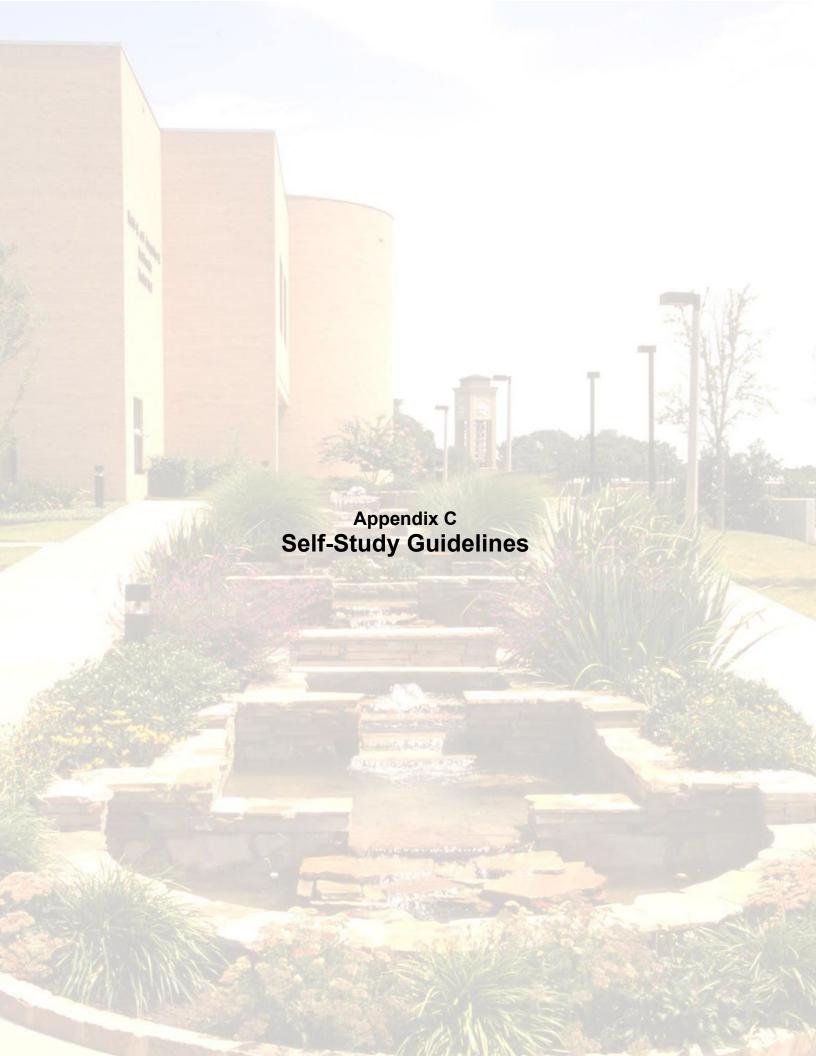
§2.181. Academic Programs at Public Universities and Public Health-Related Institutions.

- (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.

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.



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, <u>explain how consistency and quality are maintained across modalities</u>.

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 determined 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 faceto-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

	ensuring both the rigor of p	•
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 selfassess 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:
 - o 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
 - o 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.

would be establish	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