UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURES

I. Overview

Systematic, regular review of undergraduate academic programs is intended to ensure that students are learning what we intend to teach, that our educational efforts are appropriate to a diverse student body, and that the benefits of scholarly inquiry will inform educational processes and outcomes. All academic programs – majors, free-standing minors, and General Education – are subject to Program Review.

Program Review is therefore both formative, in that it shapes the actions of a program in its ongoing development, and summative, in that it identifies particular issues and problems that may need to be addressed and identifies actions required to address such issues and problems. There are three phases to Program Review:

1. **Preparation**: The program under review develops a detailed self-study of its program and its effectiveness; the Program Review Committee (PRC) conducts confidential surveys of faculty and students.
2. **Site Visit**: A review team, with both internal and external members, visits the campus and meets with faculty and students in the program, administrators, and faculty from adjacent programs.
3. **Follow-up**: the Program Chair and relevant Dean respond to the self-study and present the response to the PRC.

The Program Review is closed only when the PRC reports to the Undergraduate Council (UGC) that the response of the program to the report adequately addresses the recommendations of the report. This normally takes place by the end of the second year of the Review. The combination of these activities allows for an evidence-based assessment of programs which engages faculty and administration, and that can be used as the basis for ongoing academic planning and for resource allocation.

Reviews of undergraduate programs are conducted under the authority of the Standing Orders of the University of California, the University of California Academic Senate, and the Merced Divisional Bylaws. Under Merced Divisional Bylaw II.4.B., UGC has the authority to establish and review undergraduate programs. Thus, UGC, with the aid of extramural review teams, and supported by the UCM Office of the Academic Senate is responsible for Undergraduate Program Review. The details of Program Review are coordinated by the Program Review Subcommittee of UGC, which consists of two members of UGC, and three additional tenured Senate faculty. While the Senate coordinates and oversees Program Review, the process, particularly during the site visit and follow-up phase, engages Senate and Administration. This ensures that recommendations from Program Review are integrated in campus planning processes.

The Undergraduate Council establishes the sequence of program reviews, a sequence which is revisited annually. The current sequence is posted on the Program Review section of the Senate website. The sequence can be altered by action of the UGC. Usually programs will be reviewed every seven years, though circumstances in the interim (such as radical change in a program requiring UGC approval or the need to coordinate with allied graduate program

review) may justify acceleration or delay of reviews.
Program Review is a two-year process. In the first year, the program prepares a self-study and has a site visit by a program review team. In the second year, the administration and program respond to the findings of the review.

Program Review Schedule

Year One	**June 1**: Formal notification of programs to be reviewed **October**: Program Review Committee (PRC) undertakes confidential survey of faculty, students. PRC solicits recommendations for external reviewers from programs, and for internal reviewers from deans and program coordinators **November**: PRC invites review team members **December**: Date for review team visit set **January**: Program self-study due in Senate office on first day of class **March**: Review team visit scheduled **April**: Review team reports received by PRC; when corrections have been received, they are forwarded to UGC **May**: Reports forwarded by UGC to EVC, VPUE, Deans and Program
Year Two	**November**: Program and Dean submit response to Review Team Report to PRC **December**: Implementation plan approved by PRC **January**: Revised strategic plan submitted to Schools. Any programmatic changes submitted to UGC for review **February**: Budget requests to reflect recommendations.

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Appendix I - Program Review Committee

The Program Review Committee (PRC) of UGC consists of two members of UGC, and at least three additional members appointed by the Committee on Committees (CoC). Members of the PRC are tenured members of the Academic Senate. Members of the PRC oversee the Program Review process from its initiation to its closure. They normally serve for three years, on staggered terms. The PRC:

- Determines and publishes the schedule of Program Reviews
- Collaborates, as necessary, with GRC to coordinate Program Review when there is a simultaneous review of graduate and undergraduate programs
- Invites reviewers to serve on Program Review teams
- Designs and conducts confidential surveys of students and faculty for each program under review
- Receives the final review team reports and submits them, along with any corrections of fact, to UGC
- Reviews the response of the Program and Dean to the Program Review Report
- Recommends to UGC that the Program Review be closed
- Reviews the implementation of the response plan by programs and administration
- Provides UGC and the Senate Administration Council on Assessment (SACA) with an analysis of the aggregate results and actions of the Program Reviews completed in a given year to be shared with UGC and SACA. Any patterns will be highlighted for future investigation
- Every year, the PRC reviews the last three years of Program Review results; a report on patterns and recurring issues will be shared with UGC and SACA; results for particular schools, if relevant, will be shared with the School Curriculum Committee.

In addition, members of the Program Review Committee serve as Chairs and Coordinators of Program Review teams.

Appendix II - Program Self-Study

The most important part of Program Review is the self-study, which builds upon annual and cyclical assessment of learning outcomes, but should address a much wider range of issues. This is a time to reflect on changing patterns in scholarship, in student demographics, in societal needs, etc., as they pertain to a program's educational goals. Thus, faculty, students, staff, and alumni should be involved in the review.

The undergraduate program to be reviewed is notified at least six months before the upcoming self-study is due. At the time of the notification, the program is asked by the UGC Chair, with a cc to the relevant Dean, to prepare a self-study document which will be transmitted to the external review team. This will become a part of the permanent record of the Program Review and will be filed together with the report of the PRC. The program should direct any questions or dialogue concerning the review to the PRC Chair with a cc to the Senate Analyst. The self-study should concisely present the faculty's thoughtful and thorough evaluation of the program, based on the participation of the program's faculty, staff and students, as well as a wide range of evidence available to determine program strengths and weaknesses. The self-study is submitted electronically both to the PRC Chair and to the Senate Analyst coordinating Program Review.

The self-study consists of two parts, an Executive Summary, and Data Appendices. The Executive Summary should be between 15 and 25 pages, and provide an overview and interpretation of the material covered in the Data Appendices. The study should address the following questions:

I. Introduction: Program Mission, History, Context
II. What do you think you are doing?
III. How are you doing it?
IV. Who is doing it?
V. How well are you doing it?
VI. Future Directions/planning

Most of these are self-explanatory and should be generated internally by the program/unit. Data to support questions III. and IV. can be provided with the assistance of the School Assessment Specialist and staff from the Office of Institutional Planning and Analysis (IPA) who will work with the program and UGC on their preparation.

In the case of non-majors (i.e. General Education, free-standing minors) undergoing Program Review, the Coordinator of the program will meet with the PRC to determine the appropriate focus, as well as data for the review.

The program self-study, other than the Table of Contents, may be organized in a way that makes sense to the program, especially for programs undergoing concurrent accreditation, such as ABET. In cases where undergraduate and graduate program reviews take place simultaneously, the two PRCs will work with the program to determine the proper scope of the self-study. The questions below should serve as prompts, and should be answered as appropriate.

Table of Contents/ Contact Information

I. Introduction
This serves to orient the reader to both the Program itself, and the self-study, and can provide an overview of report, Program Mission, Program History, and internal and external contexts that shape the program. Major changes in the program since the last review or initial program approval should also be highlighted.

II. What do you think you are doing?
How does your program envision its work? This includes program philosophy, program goals, and program learning outcomes (PLOs). What do you want your students to learn, and how do you measure their learning outcomes? How do these relate to School and University missions and goals, including institutional planning documents as relevant? How does the program support General Education? How does your program relate – in mission and goals – to other similar programs?

III. How are you doing it?
This includes curriculum, extra-curricular activities, co-curricular support, advising, recruitment and retention. How do you serve majors? Minors? Non-majors? How do these compare with comparable programs at peer institutions? Are there disciplinary guidelines or best practices that have shaped the curriculum?

IV. Who is doing it?
Overview of faculty, including non-senate lecturers, Senate faculty, and TAs; their qualifications and contributions to the program; their roles in planning and assessment.

V. How well are you doing it, and how do you know?
This section should reflect on the results of annual assessments, the development and effectiveness of the Assessment Plan, and the ways the annual and cyclical assessments have been used to improve student learning, to improve teaching, to improve the learning environment, to improve student support, and to improve curriculum. It may also reflect on the adequacy of institutional support in improving both student learning and assessment itself. It should also draw on relevant student data from IPA that is provided in the appendices, including time to degree, and where possible, disaggregated data on student outcomes (by major, ethnicity, high school, etc.)
This data should be used to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program.

VI. Future Directions/planning
Summarize main points of current strategic plan, as well as any long-term thinking about the program. The program may wish in this section to suggest possible changes in the assessment plan. Future planning should reflect on enrollment trends in the program, current student/faculty ratios, necessary institutional support, and any other issues that impinge on sustainability. **Note**: if in the course of the self-study a program begins to think about changes to its curriculum, we recommend that these be outlined here, but not submitted to UGC for review until after the site visit has been completed. This section may also include any issue the program wants to bring up that would be

helpful to the review.

Self-Study Data Appendices

Documents from the Previous Program Review

This section contains either the documents from the program's previous review or the program's approved proposal (for programs being reviewed for the first time). The PRC and/or Senate Analyst will provide one copy of the documents.

Program Administration

a. Administrative Profile

The Administrative Profile is an overview of the organizational structure of the program. Provide the following information:

- Program name: If the name of the program has changed since the program was approved, provide the history of the name.
- Officers: List any current and past officers for program's committees, and/or for any other aspects of program administrations (e.g., Chair, if applicable, advisor, etc.)
- Administrative support staff

b. Faculty Membership List

Provide a list of the Senate faculty who have held membership in the program for the last three years, their academic titles, and school affiliations (if joint appointments).

Student Information

a. Current Undergraduate Students

Provide a summary of current major and minor enrollments including:

- Class status
- Entering GPA, current GPA, standardized test scores
- Retention, time to degree and GPA for graduating seniors over the past five years for all students and disaggregated by student profiles (gender, race/ethnicity, family background, income, first language, transfer student, etc.); if possible, comparison to national norms
- Diversity: first generation, income, first language, race/ethnicity/ gender, family background, High School API
- Number of double majors, number of students participating in undergraduate research projects, number of students participating in Honors tracks
- Student/faculty ratios
- Enrollment trends.

The appropriate administrative units (e.g. Admissions office, Dean's office, IPA) are responsible for furnishing this information.

b. Alumni

Provide a list of students who have graduated since the last review and include the following information:

- Student name
- Year graduated
- Most recent placement information: Graduate program or employer, job title City/state/country.

c. Benchmark Data

A benchmark data report will be provided to the program to be inserted in the self-study. This report is generated from Banner and includes the number of applicants and the number of degrees conferred. The report should be inserted in the self-review document. No other action is required for this section.

Admitting and Advising Students

a. Advising Guidelines

Provide a copy of the advising guidelines for the program. Note: If a program has no advising guidelines, then the chair (or faculty representative) should discuss with the program faculty the need for the development of such guidelines.

Any notices sent to students in the previous year that reference advising guidelines or other information that helps students in the program.

b. Degree Requirements

Each undergraduate program must have a document approved by the UGC that contains all of the degree requirements for the undergraduate degrees that it offers and must share this document with its students. **A program may not impose requirements that have not been approved by UGC.**

Provide a copy of the program's most recently approved degree requirements and a copy of the approval letter from UGC. If you do not have a copy of these documents contact the PRC and/or Senate analyst for assistance. Note: if the information is posted on the undergraduate program's website it must include:

- The date the degree requirements were approved by UGC; and
- The exact wording of the document as approved by the UGC.

c. Courses Taught

Provide a list of the program's core and elective courses, when they were taught and by whom for the past five years. Also provide a list of courses taught by program faculty for other programs, including General Education This information should be organized by year.

d. Recruitment Materials

- Current recruitment materials, such as brochures and website print-outs; and
- Sample letters to applicants and admitted students and/or email messages used in place of a letter.
- Include copies of letters and materials used by the School.

Faculty Information

a. Abbreviated CVs

For each faculty member of the undergraduate program, provide an abbreviated CV (two

pages at the most) that covers important career information and more detailed information for the last five years. Provide the following information:

- Name
- Highest degree, institution, year of degree
- Area of expertise (two lines)
- Membership on the program's committees and other services to the program or university
- Number of publications, performances, and exhibits and five key publications or works
- Professional awards and honors (three lines maximum)
- Conference participation and lectures; and
- Service to the profession (including consulting, where appropriate).

Co-curricular and Administrative support (as relevant)

Learning Outcomes Assessment
Include all assessment plans, annual reports, and a significant sample of direct evidence used to support the conclusions in the annual reports. Tabular presentation of the alignment between the learning outcomes of core and elective courses and the program learning outcomes.

Additional materials
Any additional materials, including information on comparable programs, disciplinary guidelines regarding best practices, that may be of use to the review team and which support the claims of the self-study.

Appendix III - Review Team

The Review Team is chaired by a member of the PRC from UC Merced; it includes one other tenured Senate faculty from UC Merced; and two or three faculty from another peer institution. At least one of those external faculty should be from another UC campus, and one from a peer institution. Suggestions for potential review team members are solicited from the program under review as well as the relevant dean. At least one member of the Review Team will have expertise in assessment. Potential team members will be ranked by the PRC committee. They will be contacted by the PRC member in charge of the review; and when they have accepted, they will be sent an official appointment letter. The Senate Office coordinates the Review Team travel, travel expense reimbursements and honoraria payments.

The Program Review Committee, in consultation with the Deans and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE), formulates a "standard" set of questions that the Review Team may (not "must") use to guide its deliberations; most of the questions are used for all programs, but some are program-specific. These are based on the Review Team Guidelines (see below) but may be more specific. The program is provided with the questions that are sent to the Extramural Team.

About thirty days prior to the scheduled visit, the information from the program self-study and a package of additional information (contents of the package follow below) are sent by the Senate Analyst to each member of the Review Team. Members can request electronic or hard copies of the documents. An identical information package is provided electronically to the members of the Program Review Committee. The program receives a copy of the package of the material without the faculty survey, but with a copy of the student survey from which the identifying questionnaire responses have been redacted for purposes of student/faculty confidentiality. The program does not receive a copy of the faculty survey. The School Dean and Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost receive only redacted copies of the student and faculty survey.

The following items are included in the packets sent to members of the Review Team along with the Program self-study and a cover letter signed by the PRC chair:

1. Tentative schedule for visit
2. Results of confidential surveys of faculty and students
3. Current UCM General Catalog
4. Guidelines and Questions for reviewers

Appendix IV - Review Team Guidelines

UC Merced is interested in your overall assessment of the teaching and research accomplishments and potential of the unit you are reviewing. We are interested in the evaluation of the educational program and assessment practices, as well as comparisons to peer programs. Recommendations to increase resources may follow from your review, but are not in themselves the primary responsibility of the reviewers.

It might be helpful to think of your review with the following questions in mind:

1. Is the undergraduate program coherent in the areas of teaching, counseling, mentoring, and introduction to research for its students? Is it adequate in scope and depth to ensure education is appropriate for the B.A./B.S.? How well does the program align with and demonstrably support UC Merced's mission and goals, including General Education?

2. Are the program goals clear and explicit in regards to what students should be learning in the major, and what skills and knowledge they should be taking away from each course? Is the program meeting its goals?

3. What is the overall quality of the program with respect to the following?

    a. Faculty teaching for both majors and non-majors
    b. Student learning
    c. Student satisfaction

4. Evaluate the program's assessment of undergraduate students' learning outcomes. Is the assessment plan appropriate? Effectively administered? Is it used to improve teaching and learning? Has the program had adequate support in developing and responding to its assessments? The team may also wish to comment on its appraisal of student learning in the program, based on both examples of student work and the program's assessments.

5. Are students provided frequent opportunities to assess their skills and knowledge, and provided feedback to help them reflect on what they have learned and what they still need to learn?

6. How well does this program prepare graduates for careers it says it supports? Would students from the program be viable candidates for graduate programs? Professional programs?

7. Is the faculty quality and breadth of coverage adequate for a strong undergraduate program?

    a. Areas that should (must) be strengthened or added?
    b. Areas that should (must) be de-emphasized or removed?
    c. In which area should the next appointment (resources permitting) be made?

8. In many fields, long-range planning and strategic choices about areas of teaching and research are necessary. Does the program provide an imaginative, workable long-range

plan that will allow it to make major contributions to the discipline and to pursue appropriate specializations with distinction? If not, what do you suggest?

9. What would be needed for this program (or some component) to achieve national distinction giving due consideration to present UCM faculty resources compared to those available at top ranked programs elsewhere?

10. Do students feel welcome in the major and is there adequate advising to meet their needs?

11. How do students and faculty feel about class size in relation to program learning objectives? How do they feel about the proportion of classes taught by TA's and non-senate lecturers as opposed to regular faculty? How do students feel about grading standards and the responses they get to written work for their classes?

12. Do the current administrative structures at UCM foster undergraduate education in the program you are reviewing? Are there closely related units, including co-curricular units, at UCM or other UC campuses with which more collaboration should be undertaken? Are there appropriate support facilities such as libraries, teaching and research space, computer labs and training?

13. Is there sufficient interaction between the program and any campus programs with which it should interact?

14. Do students find it reasonable to complete the major on a four-year schedule?

15. Is the program doing enough to recruit high quality students?

16. Are there any questions we have not asked that you feel should be addressed?

We are aware that each program under review presents a special set of circumstances and that your review will need to take these distinctions into account. We intend these guidelines to be suggested topics that you may want to pursue rather than prescriptions of the process. As an External Reviewer, you should feel entirely free to pursue what avenues of investigation will yield constructive and relevant insights into the particular programs. We hope to obtain well thought-out and forthright judgments of where we stand in the academic picture, so that UCM may best capitalize on its strengths and take effective steps to correct weaknesses. The Academic Senate will give serious consideration to whatever directions you believe to be most worthwhile in achieving those ends.

Any questions concerning the review should be directed to the PRC Chair with a c/c to the Senate Analyst.

<u>Review Team Visit</u>
The review team visit is scheduled by the PRC Chair with the assistance of the Senate Analyst. It generally begins with a dinner, followed by a day or day and a half of meetings on campus. The initial dinner should include the Review Team, the PRC Chair, the Dean of the School and/or VPUE, the Program Chair, and a representative of Student Affairs; other

people may be included as appropriate.

The first morning of the visit begins with a meeting with the PRC Chair and UGC Chair, who will outline procedures and note any special issues for the review. Meetings will be scheduled with the Dean and appropriate Associate Dean for the discipline, the VPUE, the EVC, and a representative for Student Affairs. In addition, the Review Team meets with the Program Chair, the coordinator of Undergraduate programs, and with the faculty as a whole. A separate meeting with non-Senate faculty, TAs, and lab staff is also scheduled. Finally, the team meets with students and with faculty from closely related programs. As appropriate, there may be a tour of the facilities.

The final activity of the review team is an exit interview. The team meets with the PRC Chair, the UGC Chair, the Dean, VPUE, and EVC as well as the Program Coordinator to deliver an oral summary of their findings and recommendations.

Review Team Report

The review team is asked to provide an assessment of the quality of faculty, students, and the program; effectiveness of learning outcomes assessment; areas of strengths and weaknesses; advice on areas to remove or strengthen; adequacy of facilities; morale, and any other issues they wish to address. They are also asked to provide recommendations for faculty or programmatic development. While these findings are summarized in the exit interview, the review team is also asked to furnish a written report of approximately 5-10 pages **within four weeks** of their visit. Recommendations for change and future development should be prioritized by level of significance; the review team may, at its discretion, recommend a shorter time between reviews than is usually the case. When the review team report is received, the honoraria are sent to the reviewers.

The review team will submit their report to the PRC and UGC Chair within **one month** of the site visit. A copy will be sent to the Senate Analyst.

V. Follow Up

After the review team report is received, the PRC Chair will send a copy to the program coordinator. The Program Chair will have the opportunity to review the report for factual inaccuracies and misperceptions; any corrections should be submitted to the PRC within two weeks. The PRC will forward the review team report, along with any corrections submitted by the program, to UGC. UGC will receive the report, and forward it to the Chair of the Program, the relevant Dean, the VPUE, the EVC, and any other relevant parties.

Response Phase

In the semester following receipt of the Review Team Report, the program faculty will discuss its recommendations with the Dean and any other relevant people. The program shall seek and collect input from all constituents (faculty, students, and administration) and prepare a detailed response. The program response consists of a narrative response and a detailed action plan, including a revised assessment plan. While the narrative response is the work of the program alone, the action plan may be developed collaboratively with (as appropriate) the Dean, the VPUE, faculty in adjacent programs, and representatives of the PRC or UGC. The action plan should include a timetable and an outline of the resources needed.

The program response, including the action plan, are both approved by the Dean, and submitted to the PRC by the end of November. When the PRC determines that the response adequately addresses the concerns of the report, it proposes to UGC that the Program Review be closed. A Program Review is not closed until the PRC agrees that the response to the review is adequate. If a review is not closed, the PRC and UGC may implement curricular sanctions, and may recommend administrative sanctions to the Dean and EVC. Sanctions may include a moratorium on faculty appointments, undergraduate admissions or other actions.

In the following months, the recommendations will be implemented as appropriate through revisions to the Program Strategic Plan, the Dean's budget requests to the EVC/Provost, and any revisions of policy/ies and program(s) that are submitted to UGC.

CLOSING THE REVIEW: When the program's response has been approved, the PRC will recommend to UGC that the Program Review be closed.

DISTRIBUTION OF CLOSED REVIEW MATERIALS: Copies of the unedited review team report, the program's response, and other pertinent documents shall be sent to the Chancellor, EVC/Provost, College Dean and the UCM Office of the Academic Senate, as well as the Senate-Administration Committee on Assessment (SACA). File copies of these documents, along with the original self-study and the results of the student and faculty surveys, will be stored in the Office of the Academic Senate. A brief summary of the programs reviewed and UGC actions are included in the UGC Annual Report to the Academic Senate, Merced Division.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Undergraduate Program Reviews will be treated with confidentiality until they are closed. The self-study, the review team report, and the final implementation plan are open to examination after the Review is closed. The results of student and faculty surveys are available only in redacted form. Particular documents and sections of the report may be maintained as confidential documents available only as needed for particular reasons

at the request of either the Program or the PRC. Petitions to review confidential material will be reviewed by the PRC.

SEVEN-YEAR CYCLE OF UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEWS

Year 1	**2010-11**
	Environmental Engineering
	Physics
	Economics
	Writing (program/minor)
Year 2	**2011-12**
	Computer Science Engineering
	Earth Systems Science
	History
	Political Science
	Natural Science Education (minor)
Year 3	**2012-13**
	Mechanical Engineering
	Chemistry
	Management
	Cognitive Science
	American Studies (minor)
Year 4	**2013-14**
	Material Sciences Engineering
	Biology
	Psychology
	General Education
	Spanish (minor)
Year 5	**2014-15**
	Bioengineering
	Anthropology
	Arts (minor)
Year 6	**2015-16**
	Sociology
	Literature and Cultures
	Philosophy (minor)
	Services Sciences (minor)
Year 7	**2016-17**
	Applied Mathematics
	Public Health (minor)
	Chicano Studies (minor)
	Envronmental Science and Sustainability

GRADAUTE PROGRAM REVIEW GUIDELINES

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

MERCED

Chapter 1 Program Review Information

1.1 UC Merced Graduate Program[1] Reviews

One of the mandates of the Graduate Research Council (GRC) of the Academic Senate is to conduct regular reviews of current graduate programs for their quality and appropriateness. The purpose is to promote excellence in graduate education. It is an opportunity of graduate programs to evaluate past achievements, current status, and plan for the future.

Each graduate program is normally reviewed every five years. There is a 3-year period for self-review and external review. Thus, the full cycle for program review is 8 years. The first review begins five years subsequent to CCGA program approval. Annual assessment and data collection is ongoing throughout the 8-year review cycle. A program may be reviewed more frequently by administrative request or where problems have arisen that require GRC's consideration. Where opportunity for improvement is identified, the review will give guidance to the program and to administrators about how such opportunities may be pursued. Where programs are inadequate, the review will suggest concrete steps to rectify weaknesses and enable a return to an acceptable standard. In some cases, GRC may recommend suspension of admission that could lead to the closure of the graduate program. For those programs that are healthy, the review process will endorse the program's operation and direction.

The Program Review Committee (PRC), to be created, a standing committee of the GRC, conducts the Graduate Program Review. The PRC consists of 3 to 5 Academic Senate members, one graduate student representative, and two ex-officio members. The ex-officio members are the Graduate Dean and a Graduate Division or Academic Senate staff analyst.

For each review, a review team is recruited that is composed of an *ad hoc* committee and at least one external reviewer. The review team is selected from lists generated with input from the program chair and faculty, relevant deans, and PRC members. The *ad hoc* committee is chaired by the PRC liaison (an active member of the PRC) and has two to four other UC Merced faculty members in aligned fields who are not members of the graduate program under review. External reviewers are selected from a list of prominent members of the appropriate fields who are outside UC Merced. (Normally there is one external reviewer, but in the case where conflicts of interest make it difficult to identify at least 3 UC Merced faculty members for the ad hoc review committee, more than one external reviewer may be included.)

The graduate review process requires documentation and self-evaluation, including:

- the program's self-review;
- confidential questionnaires completed by the graduate program's faculty and students;
- two day meeting by the review team with the faculty and students of the program;
- reports from the review team;

[1] In this document, the term graduate program is taken to also include graduate groups.

- the program's corrections of fact to the review team's reports;
- the PRC's report and GRC's letter of transmittal;
- responses from the program and administrators to the PRC report; and
- the PRC's assessment of the responses from the program to the PRC report;
- a recommendation to GRC for closure of the review or for further action.
- a conclusion of the process with a vote by GRC.

1.2 Guidelines for Evaluating and Prioritizing Graduate Programs

Approved by Graduate Research Council on 5/20/09

Rationale: At UC Merced, the development and evaluation of graduate academic programs is the responsibility of the faculty. In order to maintain the quality of graduate education, the faculty, through the GRC, bears a responsibility to engage in the process of renewal of academic programs. The process of establishing, disestablishing, and regulating graduate programs is the ongoing responsibility of the Graduate Research Council. The Graduate Research Council will use the following set of guidelines in evaluating graduate programs at UC Merced.

Guidelines: It is the GRC's responsibility to evaluate the academic components of graduate programs and to identify those that define the distinctive character of UC Merced as a research university. In collaboration with Administration, those that define the academic character of UC Merced should be supported and managed in such a manner as to optimize graduate education and research across the campus.

Criteria to be considered in identifying and prioritizing graduate programs that contribute to the quality of the campus include:

- the quality of curriculum, faculty and students;
- the record of achievement of the program;
- the place of the program in the field as a whole;
- the anticipated future of the program and the discipline;
- the contribution and centrality of the program to the missions and goals of the campus and the state;
- the contribution of the program to other fields of study at UC Merced at the graduate and upper division undergraduate levels;
- the FTE, financial and facilities resources required for developing or maintaining the strength of the program.

As scholarship is dynamic, it is expected that the faculty will propose new graduate programs. The criteria for evaluating newly proposed programs differ from those used in evaluating existing programs, in that a new program would not have a record of accomplishment.

Standards and Measures: *Academic Quality* – The paramount criterion on which all academic programs are to be judged must be quality, which is the excellence of achievements. This includes quality of the faculty, entering students, graduates, and the overall quality of the academic experience, including learning and research as perceived by those associated with the program and by external evaluators. The quality of graduate programs must be judged in a manner that is independent of the final degree objectives of the students. In assessing the quality of graduate programs, the following will apply:

1. *Programs* – Quality in a graduate program refers to the degree to which a program has:
   - a clear statement of its mission and goals;
   - a curriculum that is appropriate to the mission and reflects current thinking in the discipline or field;
   - consistently good teaching in courses;
   - good faculty mentoring of graduate students.
   - members contributing to the establishment and attainment of program goals;
   - appropriate, assessable and aligned statements of student learning goals and outcomes at the course and program levels;
   - engaged annually in assessment processes and used appropriate feedback and student learning results to inform programmatic practices.

2. *Faculty* – Quality with regards to faculty refers to the degree to which students are:
   - actively engaged in significant research or other relevant creative endeavors;
   - making a contribution to their discipline or field;
   - good teachers;
   - good mentors for graduate students;
   - contributing to improving the program.

3. *Students* – Quality with regard to students refers to the degree to which students;
   - are highly qualified for admission into a program
   - produce excellent research or creative works in projects, theses or dissertations, and, if relevant, publications;
   - successfully compete for placements after graduation (employment, admission to further graduate education, post-doctoral appointments);
   - successfully compete for campus, UC, national, and international scholarships, fellowships, and research funding;
   - are retained and able to complete their degree in accordance with expected timelines;
   - demonstrate achievements of learning outcomes at expected levels.

4. *The place of programs in the field as a whole* – Assessing the place of a program in the field as a whole refers to internal and external recognition of:
   - outstanding faculty achievement in research;

- effective teaching programs;
- successful students;
- public service relevant to disciplinary potential;
- scholarship at the frontier of inquiry.

5. *The future of the program and discipline* – Assessing the future of the program and the discipline refers to an assessment of the degree to which a program:
   - reflects academic vitality and is engaged with distinctive or emerging intellectual directions;
   - recognizes and adopts new trends in graduate education;
   - provides an education that will allow graduates to pursue current and future employment opportunities.

6. *The record of achievement of programs* – The record of achievement of existing programs refers to the degree to which a program is successful in;
   - recruiting highly qualified students to the graduate program;
   - honoring the University's goals of diversity in its student cohorts[2];
   - retaining and supporting its graduate students;
   - providing the facilities necessary for student research;
   - facilitating/ensuring students' completion of their degrees in a timely fashion;
   - placing its students in appropriate positions after graduation;
   - effectively using assessment processes to improve programmatic practices related to student attainment of education and outcomes.

Priorities: These guidelines will be used by the GRC and the PRC and review teams in reviewing existing programs and by the GRC in establishing new programs. The GRC will use these measures in recommendations of establishment, continuation, or disestablishment of individual programs. The degree to which programs demonstrate success in meeting these guidelines will be used to recommend resource allocations (e.g. faculty FTE, block grant funds, graduate student admission quotas) and to determine the viability of programs within the broad context of graduate education on the campus.

Practicalities: UC Merced is a new and developing campus with multiple graduate programs in various stages of development. As such, it is expected that some review activities and/or criteria will be impossible to complete or unavoidably poorly developed when undergoing graduate program review. In such cases, the limitations on the assessment possible should be stated succinctly. For example, some statistical measures may simply have sample sizes that are too small to be interpreted confidently.

The burden of program review may be large for small graduate programs, in which case existing methods of assessment should be used and independent metrics should be co-opted in the circumstances in which this makes sense. Two examples are given in appendices B (which provides a generic template for assessment of scientific papers or presentations that can be applied across programs) and C (which suggests using external peer review as a component of program review).

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[2] University of California Diversity Statement, adopted by the Assembly of the Academic Senate May 10, 2006; endorsed by the President of the University of California June 20, 2006.

Chapter 2 Guidelines for the Review Team

2.1 Basis of the Review

The review will be based on the guidelines established by GRC that are contained in the Guidelines for Evaluating and Prioritizing Graduate Programs in Section 1.2.

2.2 Meetings

The review team will meet with the program's faculty (including the Chair, graduate advisers, and the executive committee), graduate students, staff and relevant deans. The PRC expects a minimum of 50-75% of the faculty and students to participate in the review meetings.

2.3 Review Questions

The review team may address any questions they deem appropriate. The following questions are provided to the review team as a guide and to assist the program members in their preparation for the review. Of the suggested questions, certainly only those should be addressed that are relevant to the program.

2.3.1 General

1. What are the program's educational goals and outcomes? What role is it expected to play on campus in terms of its educational offerings and research? How do the program's goals and outcomes align with those of the University of California as whole? Is the program meeting its educational goals and outcomes, as well as the expectations of others? How do you know?

2. Does the program fulfill its role in:
   (a) attracting students of promise?
   (b) recruiting and retaining faculty members of quality following its University and campus affirmative action plans?
   (c) justifying the instructional resources it requires?
   (d) flexibility in accommodating changes in the campus mission?

3. How does the quality and productivity of the program compare with other programs in the same discipline?

4. Using relative standards of comparison from the most outstanding programs in the discipline (indicate comparison within the University of California, nationally and internationally), how does the program compare in:
   (a) breadth of faculty (collectively) and their professional reputations?

(b) facilities, library holdings, and financial support for further development?
(c) providing a learning environment conducive to excellence in research and scholarship?
(d) the quality and number of students in view of the facilities for research, the size of the faculty, and career opportunities for graduates?
(e) student demand (e.g. for graduate students, the ratio between applications and admission within the previous five years)?
(f) placement of graduates in prestigious positions?
(g) scientific fieldwork and publications
(h) retention, completion and time to degree metrics.

5. Are the national rankings of this program reflecting the state of the program?

6. What special characteristics does the program possess in relation to other analogous programs within the University? Does the program exploit opportunities for interaction with related programs on the campus or within the University? What is the impact on other campus programs and within the University?

7. Has the program changed or developed special emphases to incorporate new knowledge and skills to meet the changing needs of students and the University?

8. What are the plans for future growth and investments?

9. Is the program meeting the needs of the discipline? Of the students? Of the state? Of society?

10. What is needed to improve the program significantly?

2.3.2 Faculty

1. What is the state of faculty morale?

2. Has the program motivated and enabled faculty members to use and develop new knowledge in the discipline?

3. Are there sufficient faculty FTE to support the program?

4. Is faculty participation adequate to support the objectives of the program?

5. Do the faculty receive appropriate credit for participation in graduate education?

6. Are there sufficient facilities in terms of infrastructure and laboratories?

7. How are faculty involved in annual assessment of student learning, including review of student work and assessment results, and the identification and implementation of programmatic changes based on assessment results?

2.3.3 Student Education

1. What is the state of the student morale?

2. With what other universities is the program competing in regards to graduate student recruitment?

3. Has the program motivated students to participate fully in enquiry in the discipline?

4. Are the students being mentored and advised in a manner that is appropriate for the discipline?

5. Does the program ensure that consistent information is provided to students as well as advising on program requirements?

6. What contributions do the programs students make to the decision-making, planning, and program organization?

7. Are the students involved in research projects, teamwork, scholarly meetings, national, and international activities?

8. Are students knowledgeable about the program's student learning expectations (outcomes), at both the course and program levels, and related assessments?

9. Are the students demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes at expected levels? How do you know? If not, what plans exist to improve student achievement? How will the success of these plans be assessed?

2.3.4 Course Curriculum

1. Is there a vision/cohesiveness to the course offerings in the program?

2. Are the core course curriculum, the number or types of courses/regularity of offerings and the number of electives appropriate for the discipline?

3. Is a multi-year assessment plan in place requiring annual assessment of student learning outcomes? Are annual assessments conducted, modifications implemented and complete reports filed as expected? Who receives these reports? Are they integrated into budgeting and planning processes? Are the reports reviewed by a knowledgeable person or

committee that offers timely and constructive feedback that is used by the program as appropriate?

4. In preparation for this review, have the faculty evaluated the multi-year assessment plan and the associated assessment results? How has this evaluation been used to revise the multi-year assessment plan?

5. Does the curriculum prepare students for teaching responsibilities in ways that enable knowledgeable and productive support of student learning in relation to the educational goals and outcomes of the programs they support, and the campus as a whole?

2.3.5 Student Financial Support

1. Does the program provide sufficient financial support for its students?

2. Is the number of multiyear fellowships adequate?

3. Is the nonresident tuition support adequate for the number of international students in the program?

4. Are there a sufficient number of research assistantships in the program?

5. What is the role of TA teaching in the program? What educational functions do teaching assistantships serve for the TAs? Is there a TA training program? Is there a sufficient number of TA positions available in the program? How are the TA assignments for the graduate students in the program made?

6. Are the students sufficiently informed of grant opportunities and facilities?

2.3.6 Resources and Infrastructure

1. Are sufficient resources being allocated by the University to the graduate program in order to allow it to meets it goals, such as financial resources, space, facilities and equipment?

2. Is the program as productive as possible given the resources available to it?

3. Are the number of faculty FTEs appropriate for the existing size of the program? How many FTEs will be needed to realize future objectives?

4. Is there sufficient administrative support?

5. What is the state of graduate staff morale?

6. Is there sufficient technical support?

7. Is adequate infrastructure and financial support in place for annual assessment of student learning?

8. Are the program's plans for improvement, based on annual assessment, supported by the institution?

Chapter 3 Program Review Stages

- **Stage I: Notification of Review**

In early fall semester of Year 1 of the Review, GRC will initiate the review of the graduate program. Notification of pending review will be sent to the program the previous spring semester.

The program chair is responsible for the review of the graduate program and will be considered by PRC as the main contact person for the review. In order for the self-review document to be completed on schedule, PRC encourages the chair to establish an *ad hoc* committee of faculty and staff from the graduate program to assist in preparing the self-review document.

It is emphasized that while staff could be responsible for gathering data for the review, it is the responsibility of the faculty to compose the Executive Summary for the self-review, which includes the Mission Statement and the Strategic Plan.

- **Stage II: Orientation Meeting**

In fall semester of Year 1 of the Review, the PRC chair will host an orientation meeting with the chairs of the graduate programs to be reviewed. The purpose of the meeting will be to answer questions regarding the self-review process and the self-review document. Once the meeting has been held, the graduate program chair should notify the program's faculty and students of the review; explain the importance of participating in the preparation of the self-review document, the confidential questionnaires, and the review meetings and direct them to the Program Review Web page that describes the review process.

- **Stage III: Self-Review Preparation**

The process for preparing the self-review includes three steps:

1. Gathering and compilation of the data for the program review;
2. Review by the faculty of the program's bylaws, degree requirements, faculty membership, mentoring guidelines, student's handbook, and the program's website.
3. Inclusion in the executive report of a revised multi-year assessment plan based on the self-analysis.
4. Review by the faculty of the program's bylaws, degree requirements, faculty membership, mentoring guidelines, student handbook, and the program's website.
5. Preparation by the faculty of the executive summary, based on their analysis of the data collected.

- **Stage IV: Review Team Nominations and Recruitment**

In fall or early winter of Year 1 of the Review, letters requesting nominations for the review team members will be e-mailed to the graduate program chairs and relevant deans (the chair and deans will submit separate lists). The Review Team will consist of a three to five-member ad hoc committee and an external reviewer. At least one member of the review team is knowledgeable about assessment. Programs must not contact people they are nominating. The nominations for the review team should consist of

1. A list of five or more members of the campus faculty from outside the program to serve on the *ad hoc* committee.
2. A list of three to five individuals who would be best suited to serve as the external reviewer in order to provide an independent assessment of the program. The lists of names should be in ranked order and the following information provided for each nominee:
   (a) Nominee's address, phone number and email address,
   (b) A brief statement detailing the important or unique qualifications of each nominee regarding her/his potential service as a reviewer to the graduate program.

The list should be prepared in accordance with the conflict of interest policy below. It will be the responsibility of the program to notify the PRC of all conflicts of interest. Based on the information received, PRC could decide that the conflict of interest is minor and does not present a concern for the nominee's service on the review team. However, even in such a case, all parties will be informed of any associations that have been raised as potential concerns. The request of nominations from the Deans includes instructions to supply their potential names to the program before submission to PRC so that the program can identify any conflicts of interest. The PRC will recruit the review team from a final list of nominees provided by the graduate program, the relevant deans and the PRC members, or add internal or external members as seen fit.

Conflict of Interest Policy: The chair is expected to consult with the program's faculty regarding the individuals to be nominated and ensure that there is not potential conflict of interest for any of the nominees, in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Policy below.

In the case of a perceived conflict of interest, nominees may still be submitted along with an explanation of the potential conflict. The PRC will review the information and make a determination whether a meaningful conflict of interest exists.

Ad Hoc Committee:

Internal Reviewers: Nominees should be faculty members on the UC Merced campus with expertise appropriate for assessing the program being reviewed, but who are not members of the graduate program under review. To avoid a potential conflict of interest, *ad hoc* committee members should not have been involved in teaching or advising in the program being reviewed. If potential *ad hoc* committee members have collaborated in research with any faculty in the program within the past five years, are currently listed as a co-PI on a proposed grant, or co-instructor on a proposed course, the PRC will review the nomination for conflict of interest.

External Reviewer: Nominees may be from any college or university outside UC Merced. To avoid a conflict of interest, the individuals nominated as external reviewers cannot have been involved in an active collaboration in either teaching, research, or have been a co-author on any research publications with faculty in the program within the past five years, or be currently listed as a co-PI on a proposed grant, or co-instructor on a proposed course.

- **Stage V: Confidential Questionnaires**

At the beginning of the spring semester of Year 1 of the Review, the PRC will provide program chairs with information regarding the questionnaire process. It is important the programs provide accurate and current email information on the faculty who hold membership and on the students enrolled in the program. Obtaining accurate and current email information is essential to the process. Before the email lists are submitted to the PRC, the program is responsible for testing the email addresses to confirm that they are correct and active.

During the month of March, PRC will solicit confidential and anonymous comments from the faculty and students of the graduate program, via an online questionnaire. A minimum 50-75% response rate is expected. The Review Team depends heavily on these comments to discover what is going well and what needs improvement in the actual delivery of the graduate education described by the program's materials. The response rate also signals to the Review Team the engagement or disengagement of faculty and students in the program.

- **Stage VI: Submission of Self-Review Documents**

In July of Year 1 of the Review, the self-review documentation, consisting of the Executive Summary and the Data Section, is submitted to the PRC analyst.

- **Stage VII: Review of Program**

Once the review team is recruited the PRC analyst will coordinate the scheduling of the review dates with review team members and the program chair.

The review team meets during a two-day period in Year 2 of the Review with the program's faculty (including the chair, graduate advisers, and the executive committee), the graduate students, the graduate program staff, relevant deans, and other as appropriate (e.g. off-campus faculty or representatives of industry or other stake-holder groups).

Upon confirmation of the review date, the program chair shall notify the graduate program's faculty and students of the dates, the names of the review team members, the 50-75% expected attendance at the review meetings, and convey the importance of participating in meetings.

While the responsibility for coordination of the review lies with the PRC chair, the scheduling of the review meetings is performed by academic senate and/or graduate division staff. The staff

will meet with the program chair to develop the review itinerary and explain the process for the review meetings.

Stage VIII: Reports

There are three reports associated with a graduate program review:

1. The ad hoc committee (AHC) report;
2. The external reviewer (ER) report; and
3. The PRC report. This is the final report of the review to which the program and administrators will need to prepare a response to specific recommendations.

The ACH and ER reports are submitted to the PRC chair within at least 4 weeks from the date of the review. Once the reports are received, a request for correction of fact only to the reports will be forwarded to the program chair. The purpose of the correction of fact is to look for errors only, not to make text changes or to respond to a recommendation.

Once the correction of fact is received from the program, the PRC report will be drafted. This report is a summary of the ad hoc committee and external reviewer reports and the correction of fact, if any. The report will be presented to the PRC for final edits and approval, and then to the GRC for final approval.

Graduate and Research Council's letter of transmittal and the PRC report will be forwarded to the program chair and administrators to whom the recommendations are addressed. Graduate Research Council's letter may address specific recommendations or may provide additional recommendations. The program and the administrators will be asked to respond to the PRC report by a set date.

- **Stage IX: Follow-up Phase**

The Follow-up phase occurs in Year 3 of the Review and begins once the PRC report has been forwarded to the addressees of the recommendations. It provides the opportunity for various parties to communicate regarding the review recommendations and to then implement the recommendations or provide a justification as to why this is not possible. The Program Review Closure Committee (PRCC) is charged with the follow-up and recommendation of action to Graduate Research Council. The PRC Chair chairs the committee. Members include current and past chairs of the GRC, the past Chair of the PRC, the Graduate Dean and appropriate staff.

The Committee will review the responses to the recommendations and follow up with those individuals as needed. Typically, not only the program under review is asked to provide a response. The PRCC will make a recommendation only after all parties have been given an opportunity to respond. The PRCC chair will forward a recommendation to the GRC to either close the review or for further action to be taken. The following recommendations may be made to Graduate Council:

1. Closure of a review and initiation date for the program's next review: A program has satisfactorily responded to the recommendations and implemented them to the best of its ability.

2. Closure of a review with a status report required or early initiation of the next review (instead of on the 8-year cycle). A program has responded to the recommendations but concerns remain regarding some unresolved issues in the program.

3. Further action recommended: If a program has not complied with the recommendations of the PRC report, has refused to respond to the report, or PRCC's concerns have not been addressed, a recommendation will be forwarded to GRC for further action. The process is as follows:

   The PRCC may ask the chair of GRC to forward a letter to the program chair outlining the concerns of the GRC and requesting a detailed response to outstanding issues. The program's response would be reviewed by PRCC and then forwarded to GRC to consider the matter and determine whether a recommendation is needed to the Dean of the Graduate Division for further action.

   Actions that might be recommended to the Dean include:

   - Review of the program chair's service
   - Suspension of admissions to the program
   - Closure of the graduate program.

- **Stage X: Finalizing the Date of the Next Review**

Typically, the graduate program's review cycle initiation date will be reset to fall eight years from the academic year that the program's response to the PRC report was due. Graduate Research Council retains the right to make regular adjustments to the schedule in order to balance the annual workload. In rare cases a review will be moved one year earlier. More typically a review will be moved back one year. The date of the next review will be confirmed once PRCC has completed the follow-up phase for the program review. This date will be reflected in GRC's letter to the program regarding closure of the review or further action.

Chapter 4 Self-Review Document: Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should be able to stand alone as a relatively brief, concise document of the larger self-review. The composition of the Executive Summary is the responsibility of the faculty, and not that of the staff. It is a rare, valuable opportunity for the faculty to have a conversation about the strengths, weakness and challenges of the graduate education they are delivering. The Executive Summary should be based on the data in the self-review, and thus should be prepared only after the self-review data has been compiled. Past experience has demonstrated that the best result is obtained if the chair prepares the Executive Summary based on collaboration among the faculty.

Great care should be taken in preparing the Executive Summary as:

- the review team will use it as the foundation for its interviews with faculty, students, and administrators and the foundation for their assessment and recommendations;

- it will become part of the official record that will be included in the Self-review Data section of subsequent reviews.

Graduate programs at UC Merced vary considerably; the features of the program that might not be clear to colleagues outside of the program should be explained. For example, explain the role of the master's degree in a doctoral program or the relationship between the graduate program and divisions within a home school.

The Executive Summary must be less than twenty pages, single-spaced, and summarize the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges faced in the program. The document should follow exactly the sequence of eleven topics listed below. The writing should be concise and address all topics. *Do not simply refer readers to the more detailed sections in the Self-Review Data section*.

- **Section 1: Mission Statement**

  A review provides the occasion for a graduate program to revisit its mission statement of to write a new mission statement. The mission statement should be concise and no more than five sentences. It declares a distinctive mission for the program in both teaching and research. At its best, the mission statement embodies the faculty's philosophy regarding this field of study.

- **Section 2: Learning Goals and Outcomes**

  1. Review of program's learning goals and outcomes in relation to School and/or campus-wide educational mission. Are they aligned?

  2. Review of program learning goals and outcomes based on review of assessment results.
  3. Summary of faculty involvement in annual assessment of student learning, including

review of student work and assessment results and the identification and implementation of programmatic changes based on these results.

4. Summary of student awareness of learning expectations and related assessments at course and program level.

5. General review of student learning achievements relative to expectations based on collective results of annual assessment plans. Address, as appropriate, benchmarking against other programs.

6. Summary of any changes that have been made to the curriculum or the program as a result of assessment. Review alignment of course and program learning outcomes.

7. Review of multi-year assessment plan implementation, including
   (a) Annual report submission rates
   (b) Timeliness and frequency of constructive feedback by assessment committee or specialist
   (c) Institutional support for and program follow-through on intended improvements based on annual learning results including efficacy of steps taken
   (d) Identification of strengths and weaknesses of the assessment plan and proposed modifications based on collective results of annual assessment of student learning.

- **Section 3: History of the Program**

Provide a brief history of the program in the order listed below.

1. Date the program was approved and date admissions were open.
2. Name changes or mergers of the program and dates associated with those changes.
3. Administrative home of the program (lead school).
4. Degree(s) offered.
5. Bylaws – date last revision was approved by GRC and the URL where posted.
6. Degree requirements - date of the last version approved by GRC and the URL where posted.
7. Mentoring guidelines - date when the guidelines were approved by the program and URL where posted.
8. Dates the last review was initiated and closed.

- **Section 4: Standing in the Field**

1. Provide a comparison with other comparable programs nationally and within the University of California system.
2. Include national rankings and sources if they are available.

- **Section 5: Strategic Plan**

Comparing the mission statement with the present state of the graduate program provides the basis for a strategic plan aimed at accomplishing the mission. The strategic plan must be developed in consultation with the program's membership and approved by them.

The strategic plan should focus on the graduate program. It should project actions over the next five to seven years and address:

1. curricular evolution;
2. changes in the student population (in number and/or quality);
3. plans to shift programmatic emphasis;
4. approaches to developing new strengths or addressing weaknesses;
5. plans to merge or subdivide to achieve programmatic focus.

- **Section 6: Research**

1. Provide a summary of the areas of research (or specialties) that the graduate program encompasses.
2. If faculty members collaborate on research with others outside of the program, briefly summarize those linkages.
3. If faculty members are involved in other collaborative efforts, provide a summary.

- **Section 7: Faculty**

The Self-review Data section will provide detailed information on individual faculty members' research interests and strengths. In this section summarize the following information:

1. Provide the total number of faculty in program for the last three years that held membership consistent with the bylaws of the graduate program. Then breakdown that total by school.
2. Include information on makers of quality such as research support, awards prizes, election to the fellows of a society, etc. The review team realizes that these markers will vary considerably by discipline and area.

- **Section 8: Students**

For the last five years, summarize and briefly comment on the information below in the order provided:

1. Total number of students, number enrolled per year, and the number who withdrew. If this program's first review, the period of time to report on is since the program was approved. Note: If the average number of admitted students is four or fewer over the previous three years, provide a rationale for maintaining a graduate program this small.
2. Master's and doctoral breakdown for domestic and international students; time to degree, include the average and range.
3. Admissions and Take Rate:
   a) Provide a brief summary of the program's current admissions policies for new and continuing graduate students. If your program's requirements differ from those required by Graduate Division, they should be emphasized (e.g., higher GPA, GRE, etc.)
   b) Summary of admission and take rate. Explain any drastic deviations in the period.
4. A summary of GPAs and standardized test scores; indicate whether the trend for these markers is rising, falling or remaining relatively constant.
5. Summarize the percentage of students with financial support for:
   a) Support from all sources;
   b) The percentage coming from block grant;
   c) Per capita support (with and without / tuition fee remissions);
   d) Include what portion of support comes from fellowship, GSRs and TAs, and training grants.
   e) Multi-year packages.
6. Student representation and involvement in the graduate program and on administrative committees.
7. Teaching evaluation and assessment.

- **Section 9: Courses and Curriculum**

The graduate student handbook and other information included in the Self-review Data section will provide details on the curriculum design, its rationale, its requirements, and descriptions of core courses. In this section summarize information for the last five years:

1. Core courses: For each course provide:
   a) Course title;
   b) Frequency of offering; and

c) A sentence or two about the course.

2. Elective: Provide a list of electives.
3. Briefly describe changes to the curriculum since the last review. If there have been no changes, provide a statement to that fact.

- **Section 10: Diversity**

Diversity, as defined by the Assembly of the Academic Senate in the University of California Diversity Statement in 2006, is a core component of excellence and quality in graduate education. As part of judging of excellence, an assessment is required of steps a program is taking to yield a diverse graduate population. Diversity in graduate education will be judged with the context of the findings of the University of California Regents Study Group on University Diversity report published in 2007.[3] In this section, the self-review report of diversity must address the following topics:

1. Evidence of a strategy for recruiting a diverse pool of applicants;
2. Demonstration that the faculty are committed to the academic success of all students and are sensitive to the special challenges faced by underrepresented and first-in-family graduate students;
3. Evidence of a culture of commitment to supporting a diverse graduate student population; and
4. Quantitative documentation of success in achieving diversity in applications, admissions, enrollment and completion.

- **Section 11: Alumni**

Graduate programs and groups are strongly encouraged to keep track of their alumni, and seek their advice and input on their graduate programs. The alumni section of the self-Review Data Section will provide detailed information. In this section summarize information on the placement record of your alumni for the last five years, including professional positions and their participation in ongoing program projects (internships, guest lectures, etc.).

- **Section 12: Status Report**

For programs previously reviewed provide:

1. Status of PRC report recommendations: Briefly provide the status of each of the recommendations from the previous PRC report.

[3] Report of the Work Team on Graduate and Professional School Diversity at http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/diversity/documents/Grad-ProfWorkTeam.pdf.

- Format: Each recommendation must reflect the same numbering and wording as in the PRC report.
- The status of the recommendations as of the date of the current review. Do not reiterate the response the program made to the recommendation during the previous review.
- Describe briefly each remedy and evaluate its present effectiveness.
- If any recommendations were not addressed, explain why.

2. Other Key Changes: Briefly describe any key developments that have not been already addressed in the previous section.

3. Briefly outline any limitations on assessment due to the stage of development of the program.

For programs being reviewed for the first time:

1. Since the program was approved: Briefly address how the program has evolved since the program proposal was approved.
2. Other key changes: Briefly describe these changes.

3. Briefly outline any limitations on assessment due to the stage of development of the program.

Chapter 5 Self-Review Document: Data Section

5.1 Documents from the Previous Program Review

This section contains either the documents from the program's previous review or the program's approved proposal (for programs being reviewed for the first time). The PRC and/or Grad Division analyst will provide one copy of the documents. The program is responsible for making the appropriate copies for the self-review binders.

For programs previously reviewed:

- The PRC and/or Grad Division analyst will provide one copy of the documents from the last review that must be included "as is" in this section.

For programs that are being reviewed for the first time:

- Change the tab and section title to: "Approved Graduate Program Proposal."
- The PRC analyst will provide one copy of the approved program proposal and the approval letter from the Office of the President, which must be included "as is" in this section.

5.2 Program Administration

5.2.1 Administrative Profile

The Administrative Profile is an overview of the organizational structure of the program. Provide the following information:

- *Program name:* If the name of the program has changed since the program was approved, provide the history of the name.
- *Chairs:* List the current and past chairs and their term of service, since the program was approved. For departmentally based programs, list the department chair and graduate program chair.
- *Graduate advisor(s)* for the current academic year, as appointed by Graduate Council.
- *Committees:* For the current academic year, list each committee and the members. This list should correspond with committees listed in the program's bylaws. Do not provide a description of the committee, that information is included in the program's bylaws.

5.2.2 Faculty Membership List

Provide a list of the faculty (according to the program's bylaws) who have held membership in the program for the last three years, their academic title, and school affiliation.

Format:

- *Name:* Provide first and last names of the faculty member
- *Academic Title:* Provide the current academic title for each member
- *School Affiliation*

5.2.3 Graduate Student Organization

Provide information on the program's graduate student organization; include how graduate students participate in policy matters pertaining to your program and the current status of any graduate student organization in your program.

1. If a student organization is currently active, the student officers may submit this statement.
2. If the program does not currently have a graduate student organization provide a statement to that fact and explain why one has not been established.

5.2.4 Bylaws

Graduate programs may not operate under bylaws that have not been reviewed and approved by GRC. All graduate programs must have approved bylaws that are in compliance with Graduate and Research Council's Bylaws Guidelines. The PRC and/or Grad Division analyst will notify the chair if the bylaws need to be revised and submitted to GRC for review. As part of the review process, programs are asked to review their bylaws for compliance with GRC's Bylaws Guidelines. Programs should complete this process once the review has been initiated and submit all revisions to the GRC no later than March 1, 2009. Future revisions should be submitted no later than three months before the self-review is due.

5.3 Student Information

5.3.1. Current Graduate Students

Provide a roster of currently enrolled graduate students in the program (include those on PELP and filing fee status). The information should be presented in a table that contains the following: i) Name of the student, ii) Year enrolled and degree status (e.g. MS, PhD, Filing Fee, PELP), iii) Graduate GPA, iv) Major Professor, v) Undergraduate degree, vi) Undergraduate institution, and vii) Undergraduate GPA. Table 5.1 is an example.

Table 5.1 Current Student Data: 2008-2009

Name	Enrolled/ Status	Grad GPA	Prof.	UG Deg.	UG Institution	UG GPA
John Jones	2005 / Ph.D	3.8	A. Smith	B.A.	Worton	3.7
Emily Seed	2004/PhD, Fil. Fee	3.9	P. Drown	B.Sc.	Peppermill	3.4
Juan Rush		3.5	R. Peters	B.A.	Swartmore	3.6

5.3.2. Aggregate Data

Most of the aggregate data is available from the Graduate Division Office annual reports, which is provided to the Graduate Program upon request.

The following information is required:

1. Basic statistics (extract data for the last eight years, and present in one table).
2. Application, admission, and new enrollment headcount (select all years available)
3. Enrollment headcount by student type (select all years available)
4. Enrollment headcount by degree objective (select all years available)
5. Enrollment headcount by gender (select all years available)
6. Enrollment headcount by citizenship (select all years available)
7. Total enrollment headcount (select all years available)
8. Annual average enrollment (select all years available)
9. Number of graduates by degree conferred (select all years available)
10. Analysis of retention and completion rates.

The average GRE scores for the admitted and enrolled students are required for one representative year. Table 5.2 is an example of what is needed.

Table 5.2 Average GRE Scores of Admitted Students – Fall 2008

	GRE Analytical	GRE Quantitative	GRE Verbal
Domestic admitted	80%	92%	86%
Domestic enrolled	84%	96%	89%
International admitted	81%	91%	83%
International Enrolled	83%	88%	78%

5.3.3. Student Financial Support

For this section Graduate Division generates a report on support that the program's graduate students received. The report will be provided to the programs by the PRC and/or Grad Division analyst. The report should be inserted in the self-review document.

5.3.4 Alumni

Provide a list of students who have graduated since the last review and include the following information:

- Student name;
- Year graduated; and
- Most recent placement information: Employer, job title, city/state/country.

5.3.5. Benchmark Data

A benchmark data report will be provided to the program to be inserted in the self-review. This report is generated from Banner and includes the number of applicants received, the number of students admitted and enrolled and the number of master's / doctoral degrees conferred. The report should be inserted in the self-review document. No other action is required for this section.

5.4 Admitting and Mentoring Students

5.4.1 Mentoring Guidelines

1. Provide a copy of the mentoring guidelines for the program. Note: If a program has no mentoring guidelines, then the chair should discuss with the program faculty the need for the development of such guidelines.

2. Provide an example of the announcement that annually notifies the faculty and students of the program mentoring guidelines and the location of the URL.

5.4.2. Degree Requirements

Each graduate program must have a document approved by the GRC, that contains all of the degree requirements for the master's and/or doctoral degrees that it offers and must share this document with its students. **A program may not impose requirements that have not been approved by GRC.**

Provide a copy of your program's most recently approved degree requirements[4] and a copy of the approval letter from GRC. If you do not have a copy of these documents contact the PRC and/or Graduate Division analyst for assistance. Note: the information is posted on the graduate program's website and it must include:

- the date the degree requirements were approved by Graduate Council;
- the exact wording as the document approved by the Graduate Council.

In the event that is determined during the self-review preparation that the program's degree requirements need revision the following policies and procedure must be followed: While a program is in the "review phase"[5] degree requirements will not be reviewed by the GRC until the PRC report and GRC's transmittal letter have been forwarded to the program. Once the program review has been conducted and is in the "follow-up phase", degree requirement changes may be submitted for review and GRC will consider them as a priority item. It is expected that the graduate program and the committee will work together to expedite the review, revision and approval process. Refer to GRC's Guidelines on Degree Requirements for information regarding format, submission of changes, etc.

5.4.3 Courses Taught

Provide a list of the program's core and elective courses, when they were taught and by whom for the past five years. This information should be organized by year.

5.4.4 Graduate Student Handbook

Each graduate program should have a "Graduate Student Handbook" with the information a graduate student needs to understand the graduate program's policies and procedures. This is a handbook separate from the Degree requirements required in Section 5.4.2. The Graduate Student Handbook should include practical information students need to negotiate the campus – how to get a cat card, where is the health center, and so on – but the far more important information for new and continuing students includes the following (as examples):

- How to find a major professor and adviser; how to change major professors;
- The curriculum with required courses, electives, and the required (or recommended) sequence in which students should take the courses;
- How to arrange for independent study (299) units as part of the student's program
- How and when to put together a qualifying examination committee and a thesis or dissertation committee and the rules about the composition of those committees;

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[4] This must be a verbatim version of the version approved by GRC

[5] The "review phase" covers the period from the date the program's self-review is submitted to the PRC to when Graduate Council sends the PRC report back to the program.

- Opportunities for graduate student participation in the governance of the graduate program;
- A sample checklist so the student can keep track of his/her progress toward the degree.

Graduate programs should consult with current graduate students while creating or revision the program's Graduate Student Handbook so that it answers the sorts of questions students have when they enter the program and at each stage in their continuing education.

If the Graduate Student Handbook is available on the graduate program's website, print out a copy and insert it in the self-review document. If a program is in the process of developing a handbook, provide a copy of the draft document and information on when the document will be finalized and provided to students.

5.4.5 Guidance Procedures

Provide the program's guidance procedures for new and continuing students. While some of this information might already be contained in the Graduate Student Handbook, for clarity the guidance procedures should be repeated here. This section should include:

- Established procedures for the selection of major professors and advisers;
- Guidelines for how recommendations regarding the appointment of examination and dissertations/thesis committees are made; and
- Samples of checklists used to track students' progress to degree.

5.4.6 Teaching Assistant Training Procedures

If your program hires and trains its Teach Assistants (TAs), please include:

1. Your procedure for hiring and training;
2. The university requires that schools hiring TAs provide the graduate student TA a clear, written statement about the duties of the TA for a course, including expectations about how the TA will spend an average of 20 h per week performing those duties.
3. If you program does not assign TAs, provide a statement to that fact on a separate page in the self-review.

Note: If the information requested for the Admissions Policies, Guidance Procedures, and TA Training Procedures subsections is provided in the program's Graduate Student Handbook (or equivalent) that document may be inserted in the self-review. Include a cover page that lists all of the requested information and the page number in the handbook where it can be found.

5.4.7 GSR Compensation Plan

Include the program's latest approved GSR compensation plan. Programs should be aware that UCOP periodically adjusts GSR salary scales which results in automatic salary increases for a given percent time appointment. Current salary scales are available at http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers. For all graduate programs, a copy of the original compensation plan and any updates to the plan should also be filed with the Graduate Division.

5.4.8 Recruitment Materials

Provide a copy of the program's current recruitment materials:

- Current recruitment materials, such as brochures and website print-outs; and
- Sample letters to applicants and admitted students and/or email messages used in a place of a letter.
- Include copies of letters and materials used by the Graduate Division.

5.5 Faculty Information

5.5.1 Faculty Research Grants

For the last five years, provide a listing of the grants held by faculty in the graduate program – **only** those grants that support graduate students in the program. That is, grants that do not support the graduate students in the program should not be included. If the grant also supports students in other programs, the information must be broken down only to account for the number of students in the graduate program under review.

Provide the following information:

1. source (e.g. NIH, not name of grant)
2. dates of the grant (life of the grant)
3. estimate the number of students in the graduate program under review supported by the grant by providing
   a) time period of that support; and
   b) total percentage appointed per semester.

5.5.2 Abbreviated CVs

For each faculty member of the graduate program, provide an abbreviated CV (two pages at the most) that span over the last five years. Often this information is already available in grant

proposals that a faculty member has submitted recently such as to NIH or NSF. In such an instance, use this abbreviated CV. Otherwise, provide the following information:

- Name
- Highest degree, institution, year of degree;
- Area of expertise (two lines);
- Membership in the program's committees and other services to the program;
- Number of published, peer-reviewed papers. If the faculty member is in a book discipline (e.g. humanities), then briefly describe the book project. Faculty members in the performing or fine arts should indicate major performances or exhibitions;
- Five key papers that were published related to the program. Humanities and performing/fine arts faculty should indicate their work with most relevance to the graduate program;
- Professional awards and honors (three lines maximum); and
- Service to the profession (including consulting, where appropriate).

Chapter 6 Format of Self-Review Document

6.1 Number of Copies Needed

Six copies of the Self-review document are needed.

6.2 Presentation

The information must be presented precisely in the format described next.[6] The Executive Summary and the Data section must be presented in two separate binders. The presentation of the **Executive Summary** document shall be as follows:

- Cover page: Include **Executive Summary**, the name of the graduate program and the year in which the review was initiated.

The presentation of **Data Section** document shall be as follows:

- Cover page: Include the **Data Section**, name of the graduate program, and the year in which the review was initiated.
- Major headings: Each section and subsection must be present in following order and separated by tabs and a colored sheet of paper with the title of the section or subsection:

1. Documents from the Previous Program Review[7]
2. Program Administration
   a) Administrative Profile
   b) Faculty Membership List
   c) Graduate Student Organization
   d) Bylaws
3. Student Information
   a) Current Graduate Students
   b) Academic Qualifications
   c) Student Financial Support
   d) Alumni
   e) Benchmark Data
4. Admitting and Mentoring Students
   a) Mentoring Guidelines
   b) Degree Requirements

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[6] If it is not in the required format, the PRC analyst will return the documents to the program for correction.

[7] If the program is being reviewed for the first time, the section title and tab should be **Approved Graduate Proposal**

c) Courses Taught
d) Graduate Student Handbook
e) Guidance Procedures
f) TA Training Procedures
g) Recruitment Materials

5. Faculty Information
   a) Faculty Research Grants
   b) Abbreviated CV
   c) Graduate teaching evaluations

Chapter 7 Deadlines and Contact Information

7.1 Deadlines for 201X

1. January, 201X: Review Team Nominations due to PRC analyst.

2. March, 201X: Revised bylaws submitted to GRC for review and approval (see section 5.2.4)

3. March, 201X: Faculty and student information submitted for the confidential questionnaire process.

4. April, 201X: The confidential questionnaire process is initiated.

5. May, 201X: Optional – Programs can submit a draft of the self-review to be checked for format by the PRC and/or Grad Division analyst. Content will not be reviewed.

6. July, 201X: Deadline for submitting the self-review. Copies of the self-review should be submitted to the PRC and/or Grad Division analyst.

7. July, 201X: Submission of any changes to the Degree Requirement. While the requirements may be reviewed by GRC, the changes will only go into effect after the PRC submits their report to GRC on the program review, and after GRC communicates it findings to the program.

7.2 Contact Person

For questions regarding the format and procedures used during the review, contact the PRC and/or Grad Division analyst.

Appendix A Sample E- mail to Faculty

The sample email below has been developed to assist the program chair in obtaining information from the faculty:

Dear Colleagues: The [*insert name of graduate program*] is being reviewed this year by the Program Review Committee, a sub-committee of Graduate Research Council. We are required to submit a self-review for which we need the following information from you by [*insert deadline*]:

1. Current Faculty Research Grants (extramural support only that pertains to the graduate program):

   a) Source (e.g. NIH, not name of grant);
   b) Dates of the grant (life of the grant); and
   c) Estimate the number of students in the program under review supported by the grant by providing:

      i) Time period of that support
      ii) Total percentage appointed per semester.

   If none of the funds are used to support students in the program, indicate "none".

2. Alumni: Attached is a list of your past students. Please update the following information for each student:

   a) Current job title and employer.
   b) City/State/Country.

3. Abbreviated CV: Provide an abbreviated CV (two pages at the most) that span over the last five years. Often this information is available in grants that a faculty member has submitted recently to NIH or NSF. In such an instance, use that abbreviated CV. Otherwise, provide the following information:

   - Name;
   - Highest degree, institution, year of degree;
   - Area of expertise (two lines);
   - Membership in the program's committees and other services to the program;
   - Number of published, peer-reviewed papers. If the faculty member is in a book discipline (e.g., humanities), then describe briefly the book-length project. Faculty members in the performing or fine arts should indicate their work with most relevance to the graduate program;
   - Professional awards and honors (three lines maximum); and
   - Service to the profession (including consulting, where appropriate).

Appendix B Template for review of a scientific paper or presentation

All the students at the end of a SSHA Ph.D. course have to present in class the results of their research and activities through a multimedia presentation and a scientific paper (typically 15-20 cc.).

The evaluation of the paper is based on a template concerning the main research topics and the structure of the paper. The goal is to analyze the structure of the paper from the methodological point of view and to evaluate it according to formal and substantial content.

The total grade is calculated from 0-100; for each theme the grades comprehend different percentages of merit.

KEY CONCEPT AND STRUCTURE (0-5)

Focus of the paper and the main formal structure.

CREATIVITY (0-10)

Level of creativity of the paper.

INNOVATION (0-35)

Innovation factors in comparison with the state of the art

CONSISTENCY (0-10)

Level of consistency of the paper in relation with the different sections and paragraphs

DISCUSSION (0-10)

Quality and exhaustibility of the discussion in comparison with the premises.

WRITING (0-10)

Formal analysis of style and content

CONCLUSIONS AND REFERENCES (0-20)

Quality of the conclusion and consistency with the main goal of the research. Correct analysis of the literature and state of art.

Appendix C Using external peer review as a component of program review

During the normal course of research and teaching, members of graduate programs including students and faculty regularly undertake activities that require external review or assessment in some manner. For example, review of manuscripts for publication in peer-review journals and grant review. These activities implicitly provide objective outside review of the work being conducted by graduate programs and therefore provide a useful resource for program assessment. Mechanisms for bringing these metrics to a central point for incorporation in review – for example, by gathering annual faculty biobibs, and requiring students maintain an online CV- is encouraged.

In addition to documenting the numbers of grants or publications gained, the 'quality' of the journals, it should also be possible to gather examples of reviews that speak objectively to the quality of the work produced.

Furthermore, on occasion it may be possible to request simple metrics from agencies that provide grants, such as number of applicants, # of institutions represented, % funded, etc. that provide additional information about the quality of academics at UC Merced.

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ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION
GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL (GRC)
CHRIS KELLO, CHAIR
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(209) 228-7930; fax (209) 228-7955

October 21, 2010

To: Graduate Group Chairs

From: Chris Kello, Chair, Graduate and Research Council

Re: Graduate Groups Proposed Budget for Recruitment

Dear Graduate Group Chairs,

The main purpose of this memo is to solicit a proposed budget from each graduate group to use graduate support funds (i.e. the 500K managed by GRC) for recruitment this year. Please submit the proposed budget by November 1st, 2010, following the instructions below. As context, this memo also provides updates on graduate program recruitment, admissions, review, and funding.

In terms of recruitment, a total of 9 Chancellor's Graduate Fellowships are available to incoming Ph.D. students this year. Each one provides the recipient with an additional $4K per year for 4 years. Fellowship recipients must receive their regular support (at the normal level) from TA or GSR appointments, and tuition and fees are covered as usual. Please feel free to advertise these during your recruiting efforts. The competition for them is planned to be similar to last year, i.e. graduate groups will submit some number of applicants, each of whom must meet certain merit criteria.

In terms of admissions, the administration is working to determine the levels of NRT support that will be available for AY 2011-2012 by November 1st 2010, and the number of TA slots available by December 1. The best graduate applicants often receive offers early in the admissions cycle, so the administration is working to allow graduate programs to send out some offers before Christmas. Also, GRC will work with the VCR to review these applicants in time so that some of these offers may include fellowships. Finally, the EVC has agreed to allow graduate groups to make twice as many admissions offers to Ph.D. students as there are funded slots available. This ratio is based on an approximate 50-60% Ph.D. yield rate in the past. If twice as many offers go out and the yield ends up greater than 50%, next year's graduate support funds will be used to make up the difference. Masters admissions will remain 1-for-1 because their yield is historically much closer to 100%.

In terms of review, UGC recently revised its review policy to include a 7-year review cycle, and GRC will be revising its review policy this academic year. In the meantime, GRC plans to adopt the 7-year review cycle (e.g. so that coupled undergraduate and graduate programs may undergo coupled reviews if desired). For emphasis areas, submitting a graduate program proposal to CCGA counts as a review. Therefore the review status of graduate programs and emphasis areas is as follows:

- QSB – Started in 2004, under CCGA review
- CIS and Psych – Started in 2005 under SCS, under CCGA review
- WC, SCS* excluding Psych and CIS – Started in 2005, will need to undergo review by AY 2011-2012
- Applied Mathematics and EECS – Started in 2006, will need to undergo review by AY 2012-2013
- BEST, MEAM, Physics & Chemistry, and ES – Started in 2007, will need to undergo review by AY 2013-2014

Finally, in terms of funding, the VCR has been working with GRC to change the format of NRT support. Instead of allocating NRT "slots", the VCR will allocate a dollar amount per graduate group, and previous NRT allocations will be converted into dollar amounts. Thus each graduate group will have an NRT budget that is incremented each year, and the graduate group will work with administration to manage the budget. The purpose of this budget is to make NRT funds transparent, and to make explicit the cost of out-of-state versus international students. The dollar amounts, along with further details, will be communicated in a separate memo from the Graduate Division.

In addition, the EVC has made a second installment of 500K available for graduate student support, to be managed by GRC in coordination with the VCR. Roughly half of these funds is planned for support of current graduate students, and the remainder will be for recruiting new students (but the proportion may change as plans unfold). GRC is still discussing how to best invest these funds this year, but for starters, GRC plans to recommend that each group be given a recruitment budget as soon as possible.

GRC is asking each graduate group to submit a proposed recruiting budget for e.g. advertising costs, travel costs, and offer enhancements (e.g. laptops, small fellowships). The budget must include the following:

- A summary of how funds will be used, including estimated costs.
- A summary of how last year's GRC funds were used, and how much remains. Provide specifics in terms of number of students funded, and approximate amounts per student. Also summarize plans for using the remaining funds left over from last year.

*The remainder of SCS (Economics, Political Science, Sociology) would normally need to undergo review in 2011-2012. However, given that very few graduate students have been admitted other than Psychology and CIS students, a special provision will need to be made.

- The number of admissions from last year, and the anticipated number of admissions this year.
- For those emphasis not yet undergoing CCGA review, provide a target time for submitting a graduate program proposal, and the estimated resources (e.g. faculty, space) necessary for achieving this target.
- For Applied Math, BEST, and World Cultures, please include a draft (rough or final) of your Program Learning Outcomes. All active programs need PLOs, and PLOs are needed as soon as possible for the WASC EER report (PLOs are already in the report for the other active programs).

Please submit your proposed budget by emailing it to Fatima Paul (fpaul@ucmerced.edu) by November 1st, 2010.

Cc: Graduate and Research Council
Division Council
Graduate Groups Coordinators
Senate Office

UC Merced
Division of Student Affairs

Program Review Guidelines
2009-2011

February 2009

Thanks goes to our colleagues at UCLA for providing us with their materials that have been tailored to meet the needs of UC Merced.

Program Review Guidelines

Introduction & Purpose

The UC Merced Student Affairs Strategic Plan, WASC guidelines and the Student Fee Advisory Committee all expect that the Division of Student Affairs will establish a process that ensures Student Affairs programs and services are ready and able to meet the needs of an ever-changing student body. As a Division committed to continuous programmatic improvement, Student Affairs must systematically assess, acknowledge, and appropriately respond to new challenges, identify potential opportunities, and routinely strive to enhance our programs and services. The adoption and implementation of the program review guidelines detailed in this document are important steps towards achieving many of Student Affairs' goals. In addition, the program review process provides a powerful vehicle for answering public calls for increased organizational accountability and providing documentation of Student Affairs' valuable contributions to student learning and development outcomes.

Key Guiding Principles

The Student Affairs Program Review process is a formative assessment tool designed to enhance organizational performance via the systematic review of data pertaining to department activities, service delivery and use, resource management, and contributions to the advancement of the Student Affairs mission and strategic plan.

More specifically, the purposes of program review are:

- Facilitate systematic reflection and documentation within Student Affairs units on organizational performance with respect to objectives, university priorities, and the Student Affairs mission, aspirations, and strategic goals;
- Provide evidence of the excellence and effectiveness of the units' programs, activities, services, and operations;
- Foster a contemporary understanding of UC Merced's students' characteristics, needs, and experiences;
- Assess the department's effectiveness with respect to contributing to student learning and development outcomes and/or business and service outcomes;
- Encourage strategic thinking about the department's plans for the future;
- Define ways, primarily within existing resources, that a department can continue to improve in the quality of its programs, services, activities, and operations; and
- Identify obstacles that inhibit the unit from achieving its desired goals and develop an action plan for managing these obstacles.
- Provide an opportunity for a simultaneous evaluation of the unit head independent of the evaluation of the department.

The Division of Student Affairs mission statement, learning objectives and current strategic plan provide the foundation for the Student Affairs Program Review process.

UC Merced Student Affairs Mission Statement

Student Affairs recruits and develops dedicated students and staff who are committed to lifelong learning. In keeping with the University's Principles of Community, we cultivate a campus environment characterized by respect for human dignity and diversity. Toward these aims, Student Affairs promotes an enriched learning environment, often collaborating with faculty and units campus wide, to provide students with opportunities to realize their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional potential.

Vision Statement

The Division of Student Affairs strives to become a leading model of innovative approaches for student-centered initiatives as we deliberately grow to meet the expanding needs of our richly diverse students, alumni, and greater community.

Learning Outcomes Statement

The Division of Student Affairs strives to add to the students' complete educational experience at UC Merced through our efforts to:

- Improve confidence in their abilities (learning, social, critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, and purposeful risk taking)
- Develop a sense of civic responsibility and engagement
- Demonstrate effective written, verbal, and technological communication
- Increase capacity for leadership and teamwork
- Articulate a sense of self, identity, and knowledge of their effect on others
- Develop an understanding and appreciation of human differences

Consistent with our mission, vision and learning objectives, the program review process provides an opportunity for Student Affairs staff members to systematically review organizational efforts directed towards enhancing the academic and educational experiences of UC Merced students; listening and responding to the experiences, needs, and interests of students from all backgrounds and communities; cultivating respectful and learning-centered professional environments; maximizing technological efficiencies; and serving as responsible stewards of institutional resources. Beyond merely providing a means to systematically survey unit activities and management practices, the program review process facilitates the translation of assessment data into strategic action plans focused on ensuring the continuous improvement of organizational performance and the advancement of mission-critical activities.

The program review guidelines also reflect the values that have historically guided Student Affairs assessment activities. More specifically, the guidelines outlined in this document:

- demonstrate a respect for students from all backgrounds and communities;
- highlight the importance of including student voices in the process and products of assessment;
- underscore the value of identifying and assessing student learning and development outcomes;
- promote the effective use of organizational resources;
- prioritize the development of quality programs that meet students' ever-changing needs; and
- maintain a focus on connecting Student Affairs activities to the broader institutional mission and strategic priorities.

The primary reason for conducting program reviews is to ensure the continuation of high quality programs and services in Student Affairs and to make sure that our offerings are central to the role and mission, priorities, and strategic goals of Student Affairs and the University.

Program Review Budget

The Student Affairs Program Review process will require a commitment of time and resources from everyone involved. It is assumed that the financial support for all steps in the program review process will be absorbed at the department level. As such, cost efficiency should be a consideration (although not necessarily the deciding factor) with respect to selection of panel members for both the internal and external phases of the program review process. If the program review process causes financial hardship for a department, the Director should submit a program review budget and request for funds to his/her AVC who will discuss the request with the VCSA and the other AVCs. Budget requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Program Review Cycle

Student Affairs unit reviews will normally occur on a five-year cycle. Since this is a new process for UC Merced's Student Affairs units, a pilot will be conducted with three units starting in the summer of 2009. Based upon that experience, modifications of these guidelines may occur and then a schedule will be developed by the VCSA and the AVCs in consultation with the unit directors and the Student Fee Advisory Committee, if Registration Fee funding is involved.

When possible, the schedule will be coordinated with other review and accreditation activities. It is important to note that accreditation reviews are conducted for other purposes and do not take the place of the Student Affairs' Program Review. However, elements of and preparation for these reviews may overlap and therefore coordination of these reviews will occur to eliminate unnecessary duplication of effort.

A unit may request a program review at any time. If human and fiscal resources are available, this request will be accommodated. When circumstances warrant, a request to extend or postpone a scheduled program review may be submitted in writing to the appropriate AVC. The VCSA and the other AVCs will review this request and respond to the Director of the department. In situations where the program review findings indicated very serious problems in the department, the department may be added back into the schedule for re-review on an accelerated basis to ensure that the identified problems have been addressed.

Program Review Process and Timeline

The Student Affairs Program Review process consists of six steps: 1) Pre-Review Preparation, 2) Department Self-Study and Report, 3) External Program Review Site Visit and Report, 4) Developing the Department Action Plan, 5) Implementing the Department Action Plan and 6) Comprehensive Unit Head Evaluation. The guidelines for each step are provided below. While these guidelines are not binding and may be adapted to the needs of the individual department under review, they should be followed as closely as possible.

As outlined below, the Student Affairs Program Review protocol should take approximately 16 months to complete. The program review cycle begins in May when the department receives written notification that they are scheduled for review and ends in August of the following year with the submission of the department's action plan. Departmental pre-review preparations will likely begin well in advance of the program review cycle, however, as many units engage in the annual collection and analysis of assessment data.

Although the suggested 16 month timeline is intended to structure and standardize the review process, the actual time needed to complete each program review step may vary according to the department and the unique needs of each review.

The suggested Student Affairs Program Review timeline is as follows:

Step 1: Pre-Review Preparation (3 - 4 months)

I. **Notification in Writing to Unit(s) Scheduled for Review**

Using the established five-year review calendar, departments that are slated for review in the coming academic year will be formally notified in writing via a letter from the VCSA's Office. The letter of notification will include a copy of the Program Review Guidelines and other specific information regarding the review process.

II. Department Review Orientation Meeting Scheduled/Held

The appropriate AVC will meet with the staff of the unit undergoing review in order to discuss the review process, answer questions and provide clarification about the process, and to help create a participatory process of program review in which all staff members are engaged and involved.

III. Identification of the Self-Study Protocol

The program review self-study protocol is selected by the Director of the department in consultation with the AVC and the VCSA. The Director of Institutional Planning and Analysis and her staff are also valuable resources in this process. Following are the four primary choices with respect to the self-study format:

A. Any mandated or optional professional accreditation processes: Program review is intended to provide Student Affairs departments an opportunity to evaluate their programs and services to ensure that they are ready and able to meet the needs of an ever-changing student body. However, certain departments are required or encouraged to participate in accreditation procedures specific to their functional area. In an effort to reduce unnecessary duplication of effort and help ease the overall workload of preparing for agency accreditation, the self-study or department profile component of an accreditation process may be used to fulfill some or all of the UC Merced Student Affairs Program Review self-study expectations.

B. Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS): CAS "has been the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs since its inception in 1979. For the ultimate purpose of fostering and enhancing student learning, development, and achievement and in general to promote good citizenship,"[1] CAS provides a set of industry-approved standards and self-assessment guidelines for 34 functional areas.

1. Those Student Affairs departments for which CAS standards and guidelines exist may choose to utilize the CAS Self-Assessment Guide as the frame for the self-study review process and report

2. If the department has completed a CAS self-study within the academic year prior to their Student Affairs Program Review cycle, it may use that CAS self-assessment process as the foundation for the program review self-study report

[1] Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education. Retrieved July 10, 2007, from http://www.cas.edu.

3. It is important to note that although the CAS Self-Assessment Guides include worksheets and overview questions intended to facilitate the compilation of reviewer ratings for each of the CAS criterion measures, these completed worksheets and short answer responses do not fulfill the UC Merced's Student Affairs Program Review self-study report expectations. Rather the information and insights gleaned from the CAS self-assessment process should inform the development of a comprehensive and coherent self-study narrative that addresses the thirteen organizational domains outlined in the CAS Standards and Guidelines.

C. Industry Standards and Guidelines for Self-Study: If there is a set of standards and/or guidelines that are published by a representative, governing body, or professional association for the units's area of Student Affairs or for the types of services that the office provides, the department may propose them as the protocol for the self-study portion of the department's program review process. Please submit the complete description of standards and guidelines for self-study to the appropriate AVC for consideration.

D. UC Merced Student Affairs Program Review Self-Study Guidelines:. These criteria are intended to provide a structure for the review and should be augmented by whatever information is deemed necessary to create an effective self-assessment. General areas include:

1. Department Mission, Purpose, and Function
2. Strategic Position and Planning
3. Organizational Resources
4. Gauging Department Performance and Effectiveness
5. Summary of Findings

IV. Data Audit

Each department undergoing review will conduct an audit of all data and information resources available to assist and inform the program review process. This audit will include:

A. A review of assessment activities conducted at the unit level. The department must submit a completed copy of this updated inventory to the appropriate AVC as well as include it in the appendices of the self-study report.

1. Please describe any departmental efforts to collect data. This can include any method of data collection, including survey data, focus groups, interviews, utilization counts (e.g., card swipe counts), etc. Further, please be sure to document assessment efforts of any

population such as students, other clientele, staff, etc. Please be sure that you address the following fields in your description:

a. Title of assessment effort/topic

b. Brief description (purpose, sample, methods, schedule, etc.)

c. Is the data used for planning purposes? If so, how?

d. Are reports and/or data available to share?

e. Highlights of most recent findings

2. A review of any external assessment processes (e.g., participation in CAS Standards or industry benchmarking studies) or accreditation practices or mandates. Please be sure that you address the following fields in your description:

a. Title of assessment effort/topic

b. Brief description (purpose, sample, methods, schedule, focus, etc.)

c. Is the data used for planning purposes? If so, how?

d. Are reports and/or data available to share?

e. Highlights of most recent findings

f. Under the "Comments" field of the template, please also include the entity that conducts the assessment/accreditation as well as the timeline for the process.

B. A review of data collected at the organizational or institutional levels. This can include survey data (e.g., University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey, UCUES and the National Survey of Student Engagement, NSSE) that provide measurement of the department's effectiveness or impact with respect to articulated student outcomes and/or departmental objectives. It can also include qualitative data that capture students' experiences with the unit or information on those developmental processes that the department intends to foster in students.

C. The collection and review of department data relevant to specific questions posed in the self-study protocol. Each of the self-study protocols outlined in Section III require the self-study panel to gather and reflect on information pertaining to a wide range of departmental processes and performance measures (e.g., budgeting, human resources,

technology, legal responsibility, etc). After selecting a self-study protocol, the units's program review coordinator and/or self-study panel should carefully review the protocol, identify the information needed to develop a thorough self-study report, and begin collecting this information in the interest of expediting the self-study review process.

V. Formation of the Self-Study Review Panel

The Director of the department, in consultation with department staff, will identify/invite people to serve as members of the self-study team. Following are guidelines with respect to the membership of the Self-Study Review Panel:

A. External Members: In order to provide a more objective yet informed viewpoint, one member of the Self-Study Review Panel must be external to the department. Some suggestions for this member include:

1. If an advisory panel/council exists for the department, it is suggested that representation from this group be included on the Self-Study Review Panel.

2. In an effort to make the Student Affairs Program review process as collaborative as possible across departments, Directors are encouraged to consider fellow Directors of Student Affairs departments slated to undergo program review in future cycles as a potential external member of the Self-Study Review Panel.

3. The collaboration between Student Affairs and our colleagues in Academic Affairs is a priority for the advancement of the Student Affairs strategic plan and a critical element in our ability to effectively serve students. As such, Directors are encouraged to consider inviting faculty or colleagues from the Schools or other academic departments to serve as an external member of the Self-Study Review Panel.

B. Student Members: Students are the primary constituents of our efforts. Thus, the Self-Study Review Panel must include at least one student. It is advisable that the student(s) have experience with the department (e.g., frequent user, student employee, intern, etc.). If the unit receives Registration Fees, the unit must request the SFAC to appoint a student member.

C. Internal Members: There are no restrictions on the identification and inclusion of internal members for the Self-Study Review Panel.

VI. Identification/Formation of External Review Panel and Site Visit Scheduled

The External Department Review Panel will consist of 1-2 people from outside the University with expertise in the area(s) being reviewed. Although the Department

under review may select anyone from other universities, other non-profits, or the private sector who has relevant knowledge and expertise, units are strongly encouraged to consider their UC colleagues and counterparts as members of the External Review Panel.

The process for selecting members of the External Review Panel will be as follows:

1. The department Director will generate a list of potential external panel participants. This list will include twice the number of names (i.e., 4-6) than there are slots to fill. Sound rationale should be presented for why each person has been nominated. If there is an order of preference, the names on the list must be presented in priority order.

2. This list of suitable panel members will be forwarded to the VCSA for consideration. Please also provide a copy of this correspondence to the appropriate AVC who supervises the department undergoing program review. In consultation with the AVCs, the Vice Chancellor will respond in one of the following ways:

    a. Approval of the list of potential External Review Panel members as submitted.

    b. Approval of the list of potential External Review Panel members in a different priority order.

    c. A request for additional names to be considered for External Review Panel members.

B. Invitations to serve on an external review panel may come from the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs or the unit head/manager. Once the panel is confirmed, the department is responsible for scheduling the 1-2 day site visit and establishing the agenda. The Director/Manager of the department under review must be present for the site visit as well as the VCSA and the appropriate AVC.

<u>Step 2: Department Self-Study/Report</u> (5 - 6 months)

The department self-study provides the basis for the entire review process. It represents a valuable opportunity for the department to make a candid assessment of itself and to consider future directions and opportunities for improvement that would strengthen the department. Each unit undergoing review will prepare a self-study report using as its organizing framework the criteria and questions identified in the protocol selected as part of the pre-review preparation (Step 1, Section III above).

The purpose of the Department Self-Study Report is to:

A. Outline the department's objectives, priorities, resources, programs and strategic plans as well as its position within Student Affairs and the University.

B. Address how well the department performs in relation to its mission, goals and strategic plans.

C. Define ways, primarily within existing resources, that the department can continue to improve in the quality of its programs, services, activities, and operations.

D. Provide evidence of the excellence and effectiveness of its programs, activities, services and operations.

E. Identify priorities and key questions for external review.

The self-study narrative and supporting documentation should fulfill the purposes outlined above. The specific format and content of the report will be determined by the particular self-study framework selected by the Self-Study Review Panel. Regardless of the self-study protocol selected, the self-study report should conclude with a 1-2 page **External Review Issues Statement** that clearly outlines the key issues and questions identified during the self-study process that the department would like external reviewers to address during the site visit and in their final report.

Report Submission Guidelines:

A. While the Director of the department under review has latitude with respect to decisions regarding the preparation of the self-study report, the final report should represent the input of <u>all</u> members of the Self-Study Review Panel. As such, the department is encouraged to create a system in which the Panel is able to provide feedback on a draft of the document.

B. While there is no firm limit with respect to the length of the report, it would be challenging to address fully the criteria of most self-study protocols in less than 10-15 pages of narrative (exclusive of appendices).

C. Departments need to submit a final draft of the report to the appropriate AVC prior to submitting the final report to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the External Review Panel. Incomplete reports will be returned to the department with detailed feedback on how the report is to be revised.

D. The final self-study report should be submitted in electronic format. One copy of the self-study report also should be submitted to:

1. Each member of the External Review Panel prior to his/her visit

2. The Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and appropriate AVC

Step 3: External Program Review Site Visit and Report (2 - 3 months)

The External Review Panel, as experts in the field, will be encouraged to evaluate the department and provide insight and feedback on issues and trends particular to the departmental operations being reviewed. The external reviewers will receive and are asked to study the Department Self-Study Report and supporting documents in advance of their site visit. The site visit should span a 1-2 day period to allow sufficient time for the reviewers to meet with members of the Self-Study Panel, department staff, administrators, faculty, students, and others; to visit facilities; and to meet as a review team to discuss points that will be included in their analysis.

The department and Self-Study Panel are encouraged to solicit insight from the External Review Panel regarding questions and issues they would like to discuss from a viewpoint that is external to the university, that is broader in scope (e.g., from a regional, national or disciplinary perspective), or for which members of the External Review Panel are more qualified to answer. This External Review Issues Statement should be attached to the self-study report and submitted to the External Review Panel prior to their visit. Further, a detailed agenda for the visit should be established well in advance of the site visit to allow for adequate time to schedule meetings, prepare materials, reserve rooms, etc.

It is expected that the External Review Panel will adhere to the schedule and address the list of questions and issues provided by the Self-Study Panel. However, it is also anticipated that the background and expertise of the External Review Panel members may help them identify other, related areas and topics of interest during the site visit. As such, all members of the Self-Study Review Panel and External Review Panel are expected to remain open to the different issues and questions that are raised by all participants in the site visit.

At the conclusion of their visit, the External Review Panel will meet with the Director of the department, selected department staff, and members of the Self-Study Panel to share their initial observations. Within 4 - 6 weeks after their visit, the External Review Panel will be asked to provide a written assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, operational practices, and management opportunities for the department. The External Review Report should be submitted directly to the department Director who will then distribute copies to the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, the appropriate AVC and the Student Fee Advisory Committee, if a Registration Fee funded unit.

Step 4: Developing the Department Action Plan (2-3 months)

Following consultation with the Self-Study Panel, department staff, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, and appropriate AVC, the department will develop a plan of action that addresses the recommendations outlined in the Program Review Report prepared by the External Review Panel as well as reflects information and insights included in the Self-Study Report. The departmental action plan should specify proposed actions, implementation strategies, an action timeline, and responsible parties for carrying out each action. If there are External Review Panel recommendations that the department is not in agreement with, the action plan should acknowledge these differences in thinking and where appropriate, present alternative recommendations.

The completed Department Action Plan will be submitted to the VCSA, the appropriate AVC, and the SFAC if a Registration Fee funded unit.

Step 5: Implementing the Department Action Plan (final month and beyond)

Progress on the Department Action Plan will be evaluated via updates included in the department's annual year-end reports. Further, the points and progress on the Department Action Plan will represent the foundation of the pre-review preparation for the next cycle of program review five years later.

Step 6: Comprehensive Unit Head Performance Review (to occur during external review phase)

In an effort to distinguish Program Review (the formative assessment of a department's effectiveness with respect to its contributions to student learning and development and or business and service outcomes), from the Performance Review (the formative feedback of the Manager/Director of a department on her/his role in leading), a separate process will occur simultaneously with the Program Review.

This comprehensive evaluation will occur once every five years and be in addition to the annual self-evaluation and supervisor evaluation. Each unit head, working with the appropriate AVC, will select individuals to collect feedback from which should include students who work in or use the services of the unit, from staff who work within the unit, from colleagues within student affairs, and from colleagues in other areas at the university. The unit head may, with agreement from the AVC, include individuals in similar positions at other UC campuses. Issues that might be included in the evaluation are: ability to effectively communicate, leadership, partnering with units within and outside of Student Affairs, diversity initiatives and hiring, management of the unit's resources including personnel and budget, fundraising (if appropriate) and vision for the future of the unit.

The feedback will be captured electronically and summarized anonymously by the appropriate AVC or Director of Administrative Services based upon the relationship between the unit head and the individuals who provided the feedback. The written

summary will be shared with the unit head, appropriate AVC and the VCSA and discussed at an in-person meeting.

As the Division of Student Affairs strives to improve its efforts, the knowledge of how unit heads perform, what we do well and how we can grow professionally, becomes critical.

Student Affairs
Program Review Schedule

2009 (Pilot)
Career Services Center
Student Advising and Learning Center
Students First Center
2010
Registrar's Office
Office of Student Life
2011
Recreation and Athletics
Housing and Residence Life
2012
Financial Aid and Scholarships
Health Services
Dining Services
2013
College Store
Center for Educational Partnerships
Counseling and Psychological Services
2014
International Affairs
Office of Admissions
Health Promotion
2015
Graduate Student Services
Disability Services
2016 (repeats from year one)
Career Services Center
Student Advising and Learning Center
Students First Center

UC MERCED

POLICY FOR ANNUAL ASSESSMENT AND PERIODIC REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

Overview

To promote continuous, evidence-based improvement in support of the University's mission of teaching, research and service, the UC Merced Administrative Unit Assessment Policy (AUAP) outlines the minimum requirements for a coupled Annual Assessment and Periodic Review process. As an umbrella policy, the AUAP recognizes differences in the professional cultures of administrative units across the campus.

Introduction & Purpose

Every administrative unit uniquely contributes to the realization of UC Merced's mission[1], with the quality of this work influencing the degree to which UC Merced achieves excellence. For the purposes of this policy a "unit" is a functional group tasked with specific responsibilities that is located within a School or administrative entity (ex. a Division) led by a Dean, Vice Chancellor or equivalent. The term Division refers to a non-academic, administrative domain composed of one or more units reporting to a Vice Chancellor.

To maintain focus on contribution, quality, and improvement, and in support of transparency and accountability, the Administrative Unit Assessment Policy (AUAP) outlines the minimum requirements of a coupled Annual Assessment and Periodic Review process that is grounded in the mission, goals and outcomes of an administrative unit.

As described by this policy, Annual Assessment[2] involves an evidence-based appraisal of the extent to which a unit is meeting its desired outcomes for the purpose of taking action to improve effectiveness. Also with the goal of improvement, Periodic Review builds on Annual Assessment asking a unit to comprehensively examine the efficacy of its Annual Assessment activities for improving the quality of its services, and to review its goals and outcomes in light of the collective results of Annual Assessment and the evolving institutional and unit context.

Both Annual Assessment and Periodic Review are intended to support meaningful and effective assessment processes for the purpose of appraising the quality of a unit's work relative to an intended level of performance that is determined by the unit.

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[1] "The University of California, Merced's mission is embodied in its proud claim of being the first American research university of the twenty-first century. As the tenth campus of the University of California, UC Merced will achieve excellence in carrying out the University's mission of teaching, research and service, benefiting society through discovering and transmitting new knowledge and functioning as an active repository of organized knowledge. As a key tenet in carrying out this mission, UC Merced promotes and celebrates the diversity of all members of its community."

[2] Assessment is a process by which information is obtained relative to a desired outcome or goal. Assessment refers to the collection of data to describe or better understand an issue in order to improve unit effectiveness or student learning. Evaluation, in contrast, is the process of drawing a conclusion about worth or quality relative to a standard.

This policy also expects that the results of Annual Assessment and Periodic Review will inform the planning, decision-making, and budgeting processes of the unit and/or division in a manner that reinforces evidence-based improvement by supporting, as feasible, actions to implement improvements in function and service.

As outlined by this policy, Figures 1 and 2 represent the relationship between unit planning and assessment processes for a generic unit and the Division of Administration respectively. The latter illustrates how the policy can be implemented within the context of unit-specific planning and assessment infrastructure.

Scope and Oversight

The AUAP is an umbrella policy that outlines the minimum requirements for Annual Assessment and Periodic Review, recognizing that specific planning and assessment strategies and infrastructure may differ among the professional cultures of administrative Divisions, Schools or their equivalent. As such, these entities may develop their own policies and procedures, providing they meet the expectations outlined by this policy.

The AUAP applies to all administrative units reporting to the Chancellor, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, and Vice Chancellors for Administration and University Relations. The leadership of a Division, School or equivalent administrative entity determines the granularity at which the policy is implemented, being sure to address distinct and essential functional units.

The Chancellor or designate oversees the AUAP, including Periodic Review. The Senate-Administrative Council on Assessment (SACA) evaluates implementation of the AUAP with respect to how well assessment is conducted, including the completeness of the assessment process.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

Purpose & Process

In support of evidence-based improvement, Annual Assessment involves

(1) Developing an assessment plan anchored in the unit's mission and supporting goals, and outcomes.[3]
(2) Implementing the plan to collect data/evidence[4].
(3) Analyzing and interpreting data/evidence relative to desired levels of performance.
(4) Using these results to identify and implement actions to improve the degree to which the unit is meeting its outcomes. Actions should address both the unit's service activities and its assessment practices, the latter affecting a unit's ability to meaningfully appraise its efficacy.
(5) Reporting assessment methods, results and actions to be taken, at the unit and Division/School levels.
(6) Considering assessment conclusions in formulating the unit's budget.

[3] See Section A of Appendix A for definitions of these terms.
[4] In its broadest sense, evidence includes everything that is used to determine the truth of an assertion, including assertions in the form of outcome statements, and can be quantitative (data) or qualitative in nature.

Annual Assessment Plan:

An example template for developing an Annual Assessment plan is provided in Appendix A.

Schools, Divisions, or equivalent administrative entities may develop their own Annual Assessment planning infrastructure provided it meets the six expectations outlined above, including evidence-based mechanisms for assessing the degree to which the unit meets its outcomes, goals, and ultimately mission. To support excellence in teaching, research, and service, the unit's mission, goals and outcomes must be aligned, in hierarchical fashion, with the relevant overarching missions, including ultimately UC Merced's mission[1]. As appropriate, unit missions, goals, and outcomes should also be informed by expectations established by relevant professional societies and organizations. Section A of Appendix A provides guidance for developing mission, goals and outcomes.

All assessment plans should also attend to good assessment practices, including the generation of reliable and valid results that are appraised in relation to a desired level of performance (i.e. a standard). Appendix B explains these terms. For many administrative units, a customer satisfaction survey may be one of several useful lines of evidence for assessing achievement of unit goals.

Units also may elect to elaborate a multi-year assessment plan, developing an integrated set of annual plans based on a comprehensive set of outcomes for the unit. In this way, units can plan for assessments that may require multiple years of data or maximize the information gained from assessment tools like surveys. A multi-year assessment plan is a useful product of Periodic Review.

Unit Annual Assessment Report

An example template for an Annual Assessment Report for individual units is provided as part of Appendix A.

Schools, Divisions, or equivalent administrative entities may develop their own Annual Assessment reporting structure, provided it addresses (1) the unit's progress in meeting its outcomes, (2) associated actions for improvement addressing unit services and/or programs and, as necessary, the assessment process, (3) progress on WASC-related action items[5] and (4) contributions to Institutional Assessment Initiatives. Items 3 and 4 need only be addressed as relevant.

Annual Assessment Report for Divisions, Schools, or Equivalent Entities

On behalf of the Division, School or equivalent entity, the Vice Chancellor, Dean or equivalent shares with the Chancellor or designate and SACA an Annual Assessment Report that includes (1) a brief summary and evaluation of each unit's progress as provided in the unit's Annual Assessment Report, (2) a summary of resource needs identified through the assessment process, including an explanation of

[5] These include action items from the most recent UC Merced Self-Study, WASC Visiting Team Report and WASC Commission Action Letter. These reports are available at accreditation.ucmerced.edu.

their priority in the budgeting process, (3) as relevant, responses to Institutional Assessment Initiatives, and (4) each unit's Annual Assessment Report.

Budgeting

As appropriate, each unit's Annual Assessment Report will inform each its budget request.

Timeline

The timeline for submitting annual reports is to be determined by the Vice Chancellor or Dean or equivalent in accordance with the unit's annual budgeting and timeline process.

PERIODIC REVIEW

Purpose

Building upon Annual Assessment, Periodic Review involves a comprehensive and retrospective review of assessment results and practices to inform unit planning. Specifically, units will

(1) Compile and review Annual Assessment results, comprehensively considering what has been learned about the unit's performance relative to its responsibilities and intended performance;
(2) Evaluate the efficacy of Annual Assessment activities for improving the quality of a unit's services; and
(3) In light of the bullets 1 and 2, as well as evolving unit and institutional context and priorities, review the unit's goals and outcomes, identifying plans for improving performance, including the quality of assessment as a means of evidence-based improvement.

Schedule

Periodic Reviews of all administrative units normally must be conducted at least once every seven years. The exact time interval should be responsive to the unit's development or management needs balanced with the practical need to manage the number of reviews conducted annually.

In order to optimize the effective use of resources required for these Periodic Reviews, senior administrators may request a waiver of the scheduled formal review of a unit. The reason for the waiver should be based on a review of the unit's annual reports and the supporting evidence of consistent, strong, and effective performance. It may also be requested because of recent changes in the management of a unit that may suggest the need for additional time to implement and/or assess the unit's function. The Chancellor or designate approves requests to postpone a review.

Process

The Periodic Review process involves the following components.

(1) A self-study that includes sections addressing the three purposes of Periodic Review outlined above (see *Purposes*) and results in a report that is submitted to the appropriate Vice Chancellor or Dean. An example template is provided in Appendix C.
(2) A review phase in which a review team examines the unit's self-study documents and submits a written assessment and recommendations to the unit and Vice Chancellor or Dean. The review team should be external to the unit and include at least one member external to the campus. See Appendix D for details.
(3) A planning phase in which the unit develops an implementation plan for addressing recommendations raised in the self-study and the review team assessment. Plans should be submitted to the appropriate Vice Chancellor or Dean and be explicit, realistic, and include a timeline for implementation.
(4) A dissemination phase in which the Chancellor or designate distributes a summary of the unit's review, including recommendations and action items, to the unit head and SACA. This summary will also be available online at as evidence of the institution's commitment to institution-wide assessment.

A School, Division or equivalent entity may develop its own Periodic Review process and template provided it meets the three purposes outlined in the *Purposes* section above and includes steps equivalent to the four components outcomes in this section.

Budgeting

The results of Periodic Review should be considered in formulating the unit's budget.

Timeline for Conducting Periodic Review

By June 1 each year, after consultation with SACA, Vice Chancellors and Deans, the Chancellor or designate will notify the Vice Chancellors and/or Deans as to which administrative units have been scheduled for the formal Periodic Review. Vice Chancellors or Deans may determine the timeline for completing Periodic Review in keeping with their unit's periodic review policy, internal timelines, planning processes. An example timeline is provided in Appendix E.

Appendix A: Example Template for an Annual Assessment Plan & Report

The following template is a modification of that developed by UC Merced's Division of Student Affairs to guide annual assessment planning within the Division. It is provided as an example and, therefore, may not precisely match the assessment planning needs of all administrative units. Divisions or Schools may adapt it as necessary to meet the needs of their units in relation to this policy.

University of California-Merced
Annual Assessment Plan Template

A) Elements of an Assessment Plan:

Mission Statement

Departmental/unit missions should be directly aligned with those of the University and School/Division. A mission statement should include approximately 3-5 sentences that identify the **name** of the department, its **primary functions**, **modes of delivery** and **target audience**. Mission statement should be approximately 100 words or less.

Goals

Goals are broad statements that describe priorities and intentions of an administrative unit; what the unit intends to do. Goals are used primarily for planning, and if available linked to the School/Division/unit strategic plan. Goals may be identified on an annual basis or for a larger time interval.

Outcomes[6]

An outcome is a precise statement that describes the desired accomplishment of an administrative unit with respect to a key service, function, or program. An outcome statement should be derived from a goal and, thus, describe how a unit is fulfilling a purpose outlined by that goal in a *measurable* way. Put another way, outcome statements animate goals, specifying the manner in which the goal is to be met and measured.

Clear and precise outcomes statements define specific performance expectations for a unit. In doing so, they indicate the kind of data or evidence the unit will collect to ascertain the degree to which the desired outcome has been met. Outcomes should focus on the unit's critical processes and functions and should be written with the unit's "customers" in mind.

Two different types of outcomes can be recognized. A process-related outcome describes a desired quality like timeliness, accuracy, responsiveness, etc. in relation to key functions and services. These types of outcomes support improvement around issues related to efficiency and customer satisfaction.[7]

A learning outcome describes how a customer (or student) will demonstrate what they know or are able to do, or how they have changed, as a result of the unit's program or service. Learning outcomes often begin

[6] Some of the text below was adapted from Nichols, James O. 2008. *Measuring Student Support Services and Administrative Outcomes* from the UCF Administrative Assessment Handbook. University of Central Florida.
[7] The Division of Student Affairs refers to these types of outcomes as Program Objectives.

with the phrase "Participants will be able to…" Units that provide professional development or required training for faculty or staff will likely develop learning outcomes to assess the efficacy of their programming in meeting unit goals. Similarly, units or departments that work directly with students, like those in Student Affairs, will have student learning outcomes.

Assessing more than one outcome per goal can provide insights for improving performance that cannot be generated from consideration of a single outcome alone. For example, a unit may pair an outcome related to customer satisfaction with one considering key service-related performance metrics to generate insight into the quality of service from both customer and provider perspectives. A process-related outcome and learning outcome can be paired to similar effect. When completing an assessment plan, briefly explain why each outcome is important to measure.

Measures

Measures describe the methodology and timeframe for data collection and, as possible, the criteria/standard for evaluating sufficiency or success (ex. X% of respondents will rate X service as satisfactory or better). Measures also should identify the population from which data are collected.

B) Elements to be addressed in Annual Assessment Report:

Results

Provided for each outcome, results include a brief narrative of findings, and/or essential tables or graphs that summarize and communicate the results. The results should indicate the extent to which the outcome was met relative to the criteria or standard outlined in the measures section of the Assessment Plan.

Conclusions

Provided for each outcome, the conclusion should summarize briefly the collection and analyses of data and the meaningfulness of the results, including any lessons learned for improving the assessment process. ***Critically, the conclusion also must "close the loop" by identifying what decisions and/or program modifications, including to the assessment process, were made on the basis of these analyses.*** When drawing conclusions, please be sure to integrate results from complementary outcomes, as relevant.

C) Developing the Annual Assessment Plan:

Based on the elements described in part A of this Appendix, the Annual Assessment Plan should describe:

(1) The unit's mission;
(2) The goals to be addressed in a given year, including the rationale for each goal;
(3) For each goal, the supporting outcome(s) and rationales for each outcome; and
(4) For each outcome, the measure.

Results and conclusions will be addressed in the Annual Assessment Report, which describes the results of the work planned here.

D) Developing the Annual Assessment Report

To complete the Annual Assessment Report, add to the unit's Assessment Plan (part C of this Appendix) the results and conclusions sections described in part B of this Appendix. In other words, add the following

(5) For each outcome, describe the results.
(6) For each outcome, describe the conclusions.

Appending the final steps of the assessment process to the planning description provides the unit with a complete record of the assessment activities undertaken that year. These records will help to simplify preparation for Periodic Review. WASC will also expect this material to be available in future accreditation reviews.

Finally, as relevant, please be sure to summarize:

(7) Progress on WASC–Related Action Items. Describe, with supporting evidence, the unit's progress in addressing relevant action items that were identified in the most recent WASC report(s).[8] Append the supporting evidence to the Annual Assessment Report.
(8) Contributions to Institutional Assessment Initiatives. Provide requested materials or analyses related to Institutional Assessment Initiatives.

[8] These include action items from the most recent UC Merced Self-Study, WASC Visiting Team Report and WASC Commission Action Letter. These reports are available at accreditation.ucmerced.edu.

Appendix B: Explanation of Additional Assessment Terms.

Reliability: Reliability addresses the degree to which a procedure is expected to generate the same observation repeatedly under the same conditions. It is the consistency of the measurement or result.

Validity: Validity describes the degree to which an assessment procedure generates useful information (evidence or data) that bears directly on the expectation(s) described by the text of the unit's outcome. For learning outcomes, valid evidence must also be aligned with the criteria[9] used to evaluate learning.

Validity also depends upon sample size[10] or sampling approach, with the goal of generating data that characterize the norm for, or are representative of, the population being studied. That is, the sampling approach should produce information that is not biased. Validity is questioned, for example, when the sample size is small relative to the total size of the population of interest or if the demographics of the sample differ from those of the population from which the sample was drawn.

Together valid and reliable assessment practices are the foundation for confidence in conclusions about the degree to which the unit's outcome was met. Confidence in assessment results, and actions taken on their behalf, can also be enhanced by employing multiple and complementary lines of evidence. For example, assessment of a service-related outcome might benefit from surveying aspects of user satisfaction while also gathering information on how users actually engage with the service.

Standard: The expectation or point of comparison for determining the degree to which a unit's outcome was met (ex. X% of respondents will rate X service as satisfactory or better). The terms standard, benchmark and criterion are often used interchangeably. Standards or benchmarks may be locally determined, externally determined against peers or professional standards, or referenced against previous measurements to gauge improvement. When identifying a standard consider the purpose(s) for engaging in assessment; what is the rationale for identifying this level of performance as a goal? If locally set, be realistic but also unafraid to stretch the unit to improve. To take maximum advantage of the information collected through assessment, consider the distribution of observations (ex. the percentages of respondents reporting different degrees of satisfaction), not just a single metric like a mean or median, when assessing a unit's performance relative to a standard.

[9] Criteria are the specific skills or abilities to be measured.

[10] As an example, the number of survey respondents relative to the total number of individuals to which the survey was sent.

Appendix C: Example Periodic Review Self-Study Template

A. Introduction, Mission, Goals, Outcomes[11] and the Unit's Role within the University.

Drawing on the unit's Annual Assessment Reports,

1) Define the unit's mission; what services are provided and to whom? How does the mission support the campus' mission?

2) List the unit's goals and outcomes with reference to the unit's "customers". The outcomes should describe the essential functions of the unit in a measurable way. Do they reflect the standards of a professional association?

3) Where are the mission and outcomes publicly available? Are they well aligned with the unit's mission?

4) Describe how the unit is organized and resourced. Is the unit organized and resourced to foster its outcomes?

5) Beyond the unit's mission and outcomes, in what ways does the unit contribute to the success of the campus and other units?

B. The Planning Processes of the Unit

How does the unit use the campus' mission or campus-wide strategic planning documents to make decisions, set priorities, plan strategically, and assess its functions and services?

C. Assessment Plan and Measurement of Outcomes.

Drawing on the unit's Annual Assessment Reports,

Describe how the unit assesses its performance in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and to improve performance. For each outcome identified in Section A above describe a) the measures/data that are used to determine how well the unit meets the outcome and, thereby, serves the needs of the customers; b) the intended level of performance with respect to these measures/data; c) how frequently data are gathered; and d) how frequently results are analyzed, conclusions drawn, and, as needed, improvements identified and enacted.

D. Progress on WASC–Related Action Items

Summarize the unit's contributions to addressing WASC-related action items identified in the most recent UC Merced Self-Study, WASC Visiting Team Report and WASC Commission Action Letter. For these materials, see accreditation.ucmerced.edu.

E. Special Issues to be Addressed

1) Has the unit been reviewed by a professional organization for accreditation, credentialing or similar purposes? If so, describe the outcomes and major conclusions of this review. 2) Address any additional assessment questions or steps specific to this unit and/or this periodic review, including those related to Institutional Assessment Initiatives, as relevant.

F. Evaluation of the Unit

1) Reflect on the methods and process used to assess the unit's outcomes detailed in Section C of this Appendix. Have they been effective? Have they or can they be improved? 2) Review the unit's

[11] For definitions, see Section A of Appendix A.

responses to Sections D through F of this Appendix and identify outstanding issues to be addressed. How will these be addressed, including the time table? 3) Describe changes the unit has made based on assessment results since the last periodic review and the impact of these changes on the delivery of services and/or the alignment of services with institutional priorities. 4) What support is needed to improve or develop the skills of the staff in the unit?

Appendix D: Periodic Review External Review Process

Team Selection

The external Review Team consists of a minimum of two individuals external to the unit undergoing review. One member must be from another institution (i.e. external to the campus). The second may be drawn from another unit on campus (internal to campus but external to the unit undergoing review). If the unit serves students, the external review team should include at least one student.

The unit head submits to the Vice Chancellor or Dean a ranked roster of nominees for approval. If the Vice Chancellor or Dean's unit is undergoing review, the roster is submitted to the Executive Vice Chancellor (EVC). For each nominee, the roster includes a) contact information, b) a brief description of relevant qualifications, and c) a description of any relationship to the unit.

Team Coordination

With roster approval, the VC, Dean or unit head coordinates the Team's review of the unit's self-study according to the timeline.

Appendix E: Example Periodic Review Timeline.

June 1: Following consultation with the Vice Chancellors (VC), Deans and SACA, the EVC sends a list of administrative units scheduled for Periodic Review (PR) to Vice Chancellors and/or Deans.

July 1: The unit head submits the roster of Review Team participants to the VC or Dean.

Oct. 15: Unit submits Self-Study to appropriate VC or Dean

Nov. 1: VC or Dean submits Self-Study to Review Team.

Feb. 1: Review Team submits assessment and recommendations to Unit and VC or Dean.

March 1: Unit submits Implementation Plan, based on results of Self-Study and Review Team Assessment to VC or Dean and EVC.

May 1: Chancellor or designate distributes a summary of the unit's review, including recommendations and action items, to unit head and SACA.

Figure 1. Generic example of Annual Assessment & Periodic Review planning and implementation.

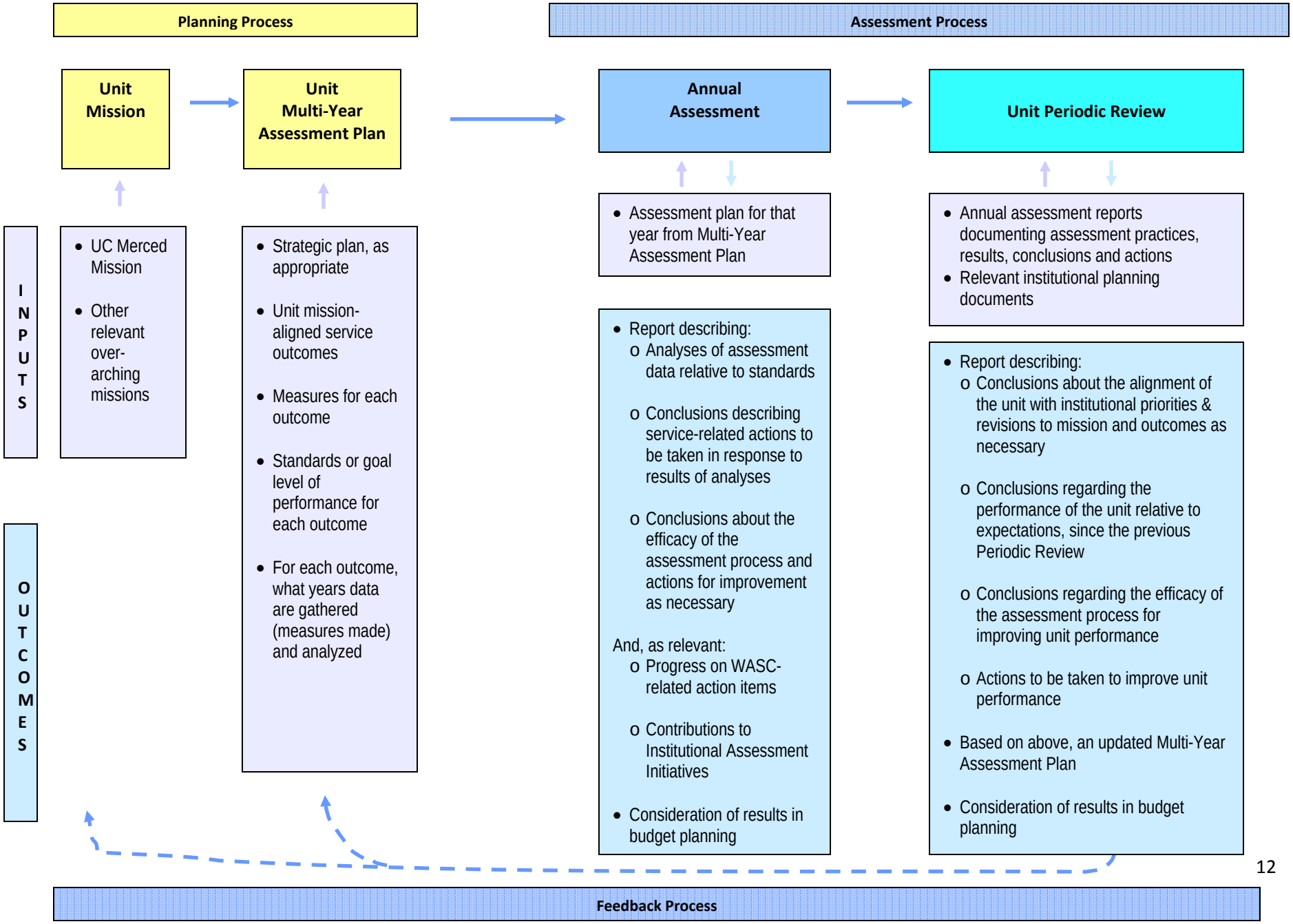
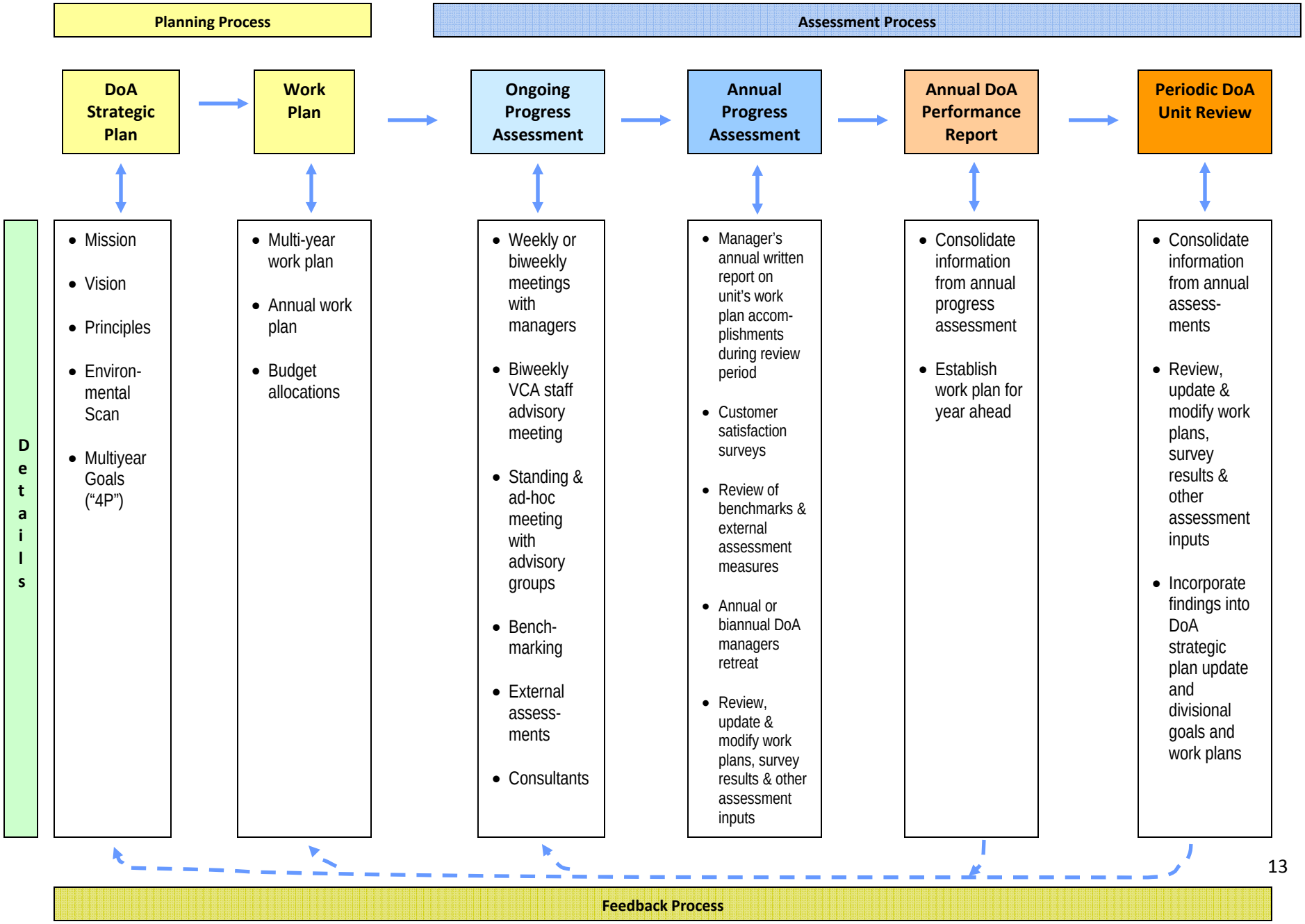


Figure 2. Division of Administration (DoA) Planning & Performance Assessment Flowchart



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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Administrative[1] Periodic Review Schedule

2011-12
Academic Personnel
Sponsored Projects
Research Development
Early Childhood Educational Center
Environmental Health & Safety

2012-13
Information Technology
Communications
Library
Graduate Division
Dean's Office, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts

2013-14
IPA
Capital Planning
Budget
Technology Transfer
Dean's Office, School of Engineering

2014-15
Academic Senate
Government Relations
Business and Financial Services
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Dean's Office, School of Natural Sciences

2015-16
Physical Planning, Design and Construction (PPD&C)
Research Compliance
EVC/Provost's Office
Public Safety

2016-17
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration
Human Resources

[1] Non-Student Affairs. The Division of Student Affairs has a separate periodic review schedule.

Vivarium

2017-18
Facilities Management
Fundraising
Chancellor's Office

2018 Cycle starts again