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June 19, 2009

PROFESSOR GREGG CAMFIELD, CHAIR
WASC STEERING COMMITTEE

RE: Program Review Guidelines

The development of policies and procedures and guidelines is one of the major activities of the UC Merced Divisional Council and committees. In a mature campus, most of this infrastructure is in place, so the main function of the Undergraduate Council (UGC) and the Graduate and Research Council (GRC) is to conduct academic program reviews. To institute program reviews, Divisional Council is cognizant of both developing the guidelines, policies and procedures and the commitment of resources to implement such policies. In this letter, I am sharing the policy review process and the current progress on these policies.

Late this spring UGC and GRC approved Program Review Guidelines, after careful consideration of established guidelines at other UC campuses. Although we chose UC Davis policies as a model, these guidelines had to be modified to include program learning outcome assessments and structure at UC Merced. As program review will be performed by all academic units, we felt that they should be given an opportunity to comment on these guidelines. These have been sent out to the Schools and to other Senate committees for comments. There is a general agreement that the content of the Program Review Guidelines is acceptable; however, there are major concerns about their implementation. The primary concern is the staffing level required to support these guidelines and data and document management systems to support the accumulation of evidence and assessments, issues are currently being discussed with the administration. More minor comments related to the streamlining of faculty effort and more coordination between UGC and GRC are being discussed.

I am transmitting the Undergraduate Council and the Graduate and Research Council-approved Program Review Guidelines. The next step in the approval procedure will be for UGC and GRC to consider recommendations and send to their final version to Divisional Council for approval. Changes will likely involve developing a framework to implement these guidelines rather than modifying them (e.g., coordinated review between graduate and undergraduate programs). Although the guidelines are not approved by Divisional Council, faculty are implementing assessment plans. Meanwhile, the Divisional Council is working with the administration to insure that resources are available to undertake these reviews.

Sincerely,

Martha Conklin, Chair

cc: Divisional Council
Senate Director Clarke
Attachments

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.