GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE PROGRAM REVIEW

I. INTRODUCTION

The University of Michigan - Flint (UM-Flint) is committed to offer graduate programs of the highest standards. The University aspires to achieve this goal partly through timely program reviews as reflected in the Faculty Code of the University of Michigan – Flint. The Code has entrusted the oversight on ensuring the promotion of quality of graduate programs in part to the Graduate Board. It states, “The board shall promote the quality of graduate programs through timely review, which may include consideration of reports and documents submitted to external review organizations, and shall act as a liaison with the Rackham Graduate School.”

The primary purpose of graduate program review is to improve graduate education at UM-Flint. Therefore, it is critical that the review process be conducted in partnership with the academic unit faculty and administrators offering the program under review. This collaborative process will help identify opportunities to improve the program by sharing information with the academic unit. It will also serve as a source of information sharing with the Graduate Board as it makes policy.

New graduate degree programs including specializations, concentrations, and tracks (i.e., new programs that require Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) approval) complete a preliminary review process at the end of the second year (during the fall semester of the third year.) If a program is not meeting all of its goals, the Graduate Board may ask for an interim progress report within a year or longer. Otherwise, the program will have a comprehensive review during the sixth year of the program. Subsequently, all graduate programs are reviewed every six years using five years of data at each comprehensive review. The objectives of the program review are to:

- Provide a basis for planning and to assess progress on plans,
- Improve programs by identifying strengths upon which to build,
- Develop plans of action to address program weaknesses or challenges,
- Identify future resource needs to assist with budget planning for the program, unit, and campus, and to
- Ensure graduate programs are aligned with the university strategic directions and planning efforts.

II. DEFINITION OF GRADUATE PROGRAM

A graduate program is a coherent set of curricular offerings that produces a demonstrable intellectual outcome, and generally leads to a degree or a certificate. Generally, programs that require approval by the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) (when first proposed) or those identified for learning outcomes assessment purposes are academic programs for review purposes. Graduate programs and/or certificate programs may contain one or more tracks, concentrations, specializations, etc. (tracks). In most cases, a graduate program is reviewed in its entirety, including all of its tracks. However, it is conceivable that a program may contain a track with significant distinctive features which may warrant a separate review for that track. Determination of a need for a separate review is at the discretion of the school or the College in

1 These guidelines pertain to all graduate programs at the University of Michigan-Flint.
consultation with the Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate Programs. Alternatively, the self-study report for the entire program may contain a separate section, addressing issues related to such a track (rather than a separate review for the track.)

III. PRELIMINARY REVIEW PROCESS FOR NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS

A preliminary review is conducted for new graduate degree programs and tracks at the end of the second year of implementation (during the fall semester of the third year). The purposes of the preliminary review are to:

- Determine if the program has been launched successfully,
- Determine if budget projections are achieved,
- Assess the qualifications of newly enrolled students and performance of continuing students,
- Assess enrollment patterns against those projected in the proposal,
- Determine if sufficient qualified faculty and other resources have been available to support the program.

Preliminary Review Report

Please provide the following information for the preliminary review report. Note: the preliminary review must be completed in full by all programs – even if the program has received specialized accreditation.

1. Budget Template (form attached)
   a. Provide the budget information that was approved in the final version of the proposal. (Column 1)
   b. Provide the second year actual data for all applicable budget lines. (Column 2)
   c. Show comparisons of actual to proposed revenues and expenses. (Column 3)

2. Student Information
   a. Obtain a completed Student Information form from the Office of Graduate Programs.
   b. Provide comments from students in the program.
   c. If available, the Office of Graduate Programs will provide the results of the graduate student survey for your program.

3. Faculty Information
   Complete the attached Faculty Information form. For the first two years, list all courses offered by term, the faculty person responsible for each course, the highest degree held by the faculty member and the type of appointment held by the faculty member. The designations for degree and appointment only need to be made the first time the name of the faculty member appears on the form.

4. Program Information
   a. Attach a copy of the program course schedule that was included in the program proposal.
   b. Include the assessment plan and if available the implementation report and resulting feedback.
5. Narrative

Please provide comments regarding the first two years of the program. Please comment on sufficiency of resources and whether or not the program expectations were met. Specifically, comment on the program’s capacity to offer courses as planned and described in the program proposal. Describe any changes that will be made next year.

Please continue with Section V below.

IV. COMPREHENSIVE (SIX YEAR) PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS

New programs complete the preliminary self-study process and program review at the completion of the second year of the program. Assuming there are no concerns with the second year review, subsequently, all programs are reviewed every six years (using five years of data at each comprehensive review). Programs will be asked to complete their self-studies during the fall semester and submit them to the Graduate Board early in December of the fall semester of the sixth year after their last review. The purpose of program review is to improve programs by identifying strengths upon which to build and developing plans of action to address program weaknesses.

Self-Study Report

The self-study report is, in effect, the program’s review of itself and is a critical part of the process. NOTE: If your program participates in specialized accreditation, please go to point C for instructions on how to address the requirements of the self-study report for a comprehensive review.

A. Please prepare an overall self-study report of the program that includes the following:

1. Introduction: Include a brief background description of the program, statement of mission/purpose of the program, and describe, in general terms, the student population in the program.

2. Goals and Objectives: Describe the program goals and objectives for the past six years. Indicate status of goals and describe factors that have contributed to their attainment or have been barriers to their attainment. Please provide information about previous reviews and recommendations from the Graduate Board. State how the recommendations were addressed.

3. Students/Enrollments/Degree Completion: Please contact the Office of Graduate Programs to obtain a completed six-year student information form. Please comment on the average time for degree completion. Please describe efforts undertaken by program personnel to promote a diverse student population. The Office of Graduate Programs will provide the latest results of the graduate student satisfaction survey for your program.

4. Faculty: Provide a general assessment of faculty staffing patterns for the past six years. Please comment on regularly appointed and adjunct faculty and how each contributes to the program. Attach recent CVs for regularly appointed and adjunct faculty and comment on any activities contributing to their remaining current in areas in which they teach for the program that may not appear on their CVs. Please complete attached faculty information sheet for the past six years.
5. Curriculum Changes: Describe any **major** curriculum changes made in the program the past six years. Describe the types (formative and summative) of information that have been used to assist in making curriculum changes. Describe how you have used outcome assessment and other survey data (graduation, Office of Graduate Programs satisfaction survey, and alumni surveys) to improve the program curriculum. Please attach a copy of the latest outcome assessment implementation report.

6. If this program is completely online, please comment on aspects of the program that might be distinctive from a face-to-face program and may require extra attention and/or support.

7. Resources: Describe the status of resources available to the program and how their presence or absence has impact on the program. Please complete the attached budget template for the previous academic year showing actual data. (If projected values are not available, just report the actual.)

8. Strengths of the Program: Summarize the strengths of the program from perspectives of faculty and current students. Please include comments related to graduation and alumni survey data and your program’s outcome assessment data.

9. Weaknesses of the Program: Summarize the weaknesses of the program from perspectives of faculty and current students. Please include comments related to graduation and alumni survey data and your program’s outcome assessment data.

10. Future Plans: Describe future plans or prospects for the program. This may include program development, program improvement, enrollment targets, student populations to attract, etc.

11. Self-Study Participants: Please list the names of faculty, staff, and students who participated in the self-study.

12. Other: Please provide any other relevant information or data not addressed in the above points but which you would consider to be important for the Graduate Board to examine.

**B. External Peer Review**

If your program does not participate in specialized accreditation, please provide the names of at least two persons from two different institutions who are faculty in similar programs at institutions comparable to that of UM-Flint. Your self-study report will be submitted to the external peer reviewers. The external reviewers will be asked to conduct a paper review of your program. This review will consist of reading the self-study report and other relevant documents that the program faculty and Graduate Board deem as useful for the review. External reviewers will be encouraged to talk with faculty, staff and students by telephone. Please provide telephone numbers for their reference.

The external review is intended to provide objective feedback that can be useful for improving the program. The Office of Graduate Programs coordinates the external peer review and covers all expenses related to it.

**C. Programs with External Accreditation**

If your program participates in an external accreditation review, please provide the following information in your self-study report:
1. Executive Summary

2. See items listed in point A above. Please write a brief response for each item, which includes a reference to where the information can be found in the self-study report that you submitted to your external accrediting organization. Please provide updates on any substantive changes that have occurred for each item since the self-study for accreditation was submitted.

3. Copy of most recent self-study report submitted to your accrediting body.

4. The accreditation team report and the decision from the accrediting body.

V. Graduate Board Process

a. The Graduate Board will review the Preliminary Review Report (for the Preliminary Review) or self-study report (for the Comprehensive Review), or the augmented report of the accreditation team and accrediting agency (for programs that have professional accreditation.)

b. The program director may be invited to meet with the Graduate Board during its review of the program. Feedback may be sought also from other faculty and students to assist the Graduate Board in its review.

c. In line with the objectives of the program review, the Graduate Board shall prepare a report, highlighting the program strengths, challenges, and if necessary make recommendations regarding future course of action to be taken by the program faculty, program administrator(s), and/or the unit dean.

d. Copies of the Graduate Board report will be sent to the program director, the academic unit’s dean, and the Provost.

e. The dean or his/her designate may be invited to a meeting with the program director, the Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate Programs, and the Chair of the Graduate Board. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the outcome of the review and if needed to develop an action plan, designed to address the recommendations from the review report.