

# Program Review

## At UNC-Chapel Hill

*Conducted by the Office of the Provost and The Graduate School*

### OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of program review is to maintain and enhance the quality of both undergraduate and graduate programs at UNC-Chapel Hill. This is achieved using an assessment process involving a self-study, a site visit by external reviewers, and follow-up on campus with the Dean of the respective school and representatives from the Provost's Office and The Graduate School.

### REVIEW PROCESS

Institutions of higher education require regular scrutiny and self-examination in order to improve. It is well-established that one of the most effective ways to foster this process of improvement is through frequent self-study within individual programs and periodic review by knowledgeable faculty drawn from peer institutions. Therefore, the Office of the Provost has charged The Graduate School with conducting outside reviews of all programs at UNC Chapel Hill approximately once every eight to ten years.

In preparation for the review, the program conducts a self-study which provides an opportunity for the program to assess its strengths, identify areas for improvement and delineate its future goals. As it initiates its self-study, the program also develops a list of knowledgeable faculty from other peer institutions who are well-regarded in the discipline. Using the program's list as a guide, two outside reviewers are selected by The Graduate School, and a date for the site visit is determined. In addition to the outside reviewers, a faculty member from campus is selected to participate on the review team during the site visit. This individual is drawn from a discipline complementary to the program undergoing review.

The site visit begins with a dinner for the review team and program. Representatives

from the Provost's Office, the Dean's office of the respective school, and The Graduate School hold a breakfast with the review team on their first full day. The program plans the remainder of the team's schedule, with input from The Graduate School.

The same group as the initial breakfast meets for an exit interview on the last day of the site visit. At this time, the review team provides a preliminary assessment of their findings, noting areas of strength and concern, and providing input on the feasibility and appropriateness of the program's future plans.

The reviewers provide a final version of their report within the next month. Within six to nine months the program responds, outlining its reaction to the report and their plans for responding to the review's recommendations. The Graduate School coordinates a closure meeting to discuss the response and future plans. Approximately three to four years after the closure meeting, The Graduate School conducts a mid-point check to assess progress made on action items/plans identified during the closure meeting.

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The **self-study** describes the current status of the program, including data about student characteristics, curriculum, faculty research and scholarship, etc. Particular emphasis is placed on the program's future goals and specific plans for attaining those goals.

The **reviewer's report** outlines the program's strengths and areas of concern, comments on the feasibility for the program's future plans, and provides specific recommendations for improvement.

The **program response** describes specific steps the program plans to take in order to enhance its academic program.