NRC Program Questionnaire
Instructions and FAQs

1. The online survey link for filling out the program questionnaire can be found here:

   http://ir.unc.edu/NRC/nrc.htm

2. You should collect answers to all survey questions prior to filling out the survey. The survey must be filled out in one sitting.

3. All fields are formatted according to how the data must be submitted back to NRC. Please pay close attention to the format required for each response.

4. You will be provided some data and rosters relevant to your specific program in the coming days. These data are to assist you in filling out the survey questions and include some information we will be providing centrally. We do not need these forms returned to us.

5. We are here to assist with questions. The following pages list some of the most common questions and their answers. *Please check here first.* Please contact us if we can help.

   – Technical survey questions: Institutional_Research@unc.edu
   – Policy or interpretation questions: sschmitt@email.unc.edu

   For additional details, please see our website: http://gradschool.unc.edu/nrc/index.html

Please return your completed survey by Monday, January 22.

Common Questions and Answers

1. Why are only some questions from the Program Questionnaire in the online survey?

We are attempting to make this process as easy as possible for the individual programs. Data that we have centrally will be merged together with your individual program responses. We will submit one batch file to NRC that includes all the data.

Though you will not need to fill it out, the full Program Questionnaire can be downloaded from our website at: http://gradschool.unc.edu/nrc/program__questionnaire.pdf

2. Some questions ask for total graduates yet other questions ask for information about a specific cohort of entering students. How should we answer these?

Please pay close attention to what is being requested from each question. Some questions do focus on a particular cohort of students (e.g. C5, C16-C18), while other questions are asking about total numbers of students regardless of their entering date. Many questions ask about the fall 2005 term specifically. If this particular term is anomaly for your program (e.g. you enrolled zero students in that term) please get in touch with us before responding.

3. For the median time to degree calculations, what is the start date: date of first enrollment in PhD program, date of first enrollment in the program (including those first admitted as Master's students) or date of first enrollment at the university (regardless of program)?

Most time to degree data will be provided centrally. NRC provided the following guidelines.

For the median time to degree, please calculate elapsed time (including semesters not enrolled) since first enrollment in the program in question to completion of PhD requirements. This includes those students first admitted as Master's students who later switched into the PhD program, regardless of whether they completed the Master's degree or not. Do not include the years the student was enrolled in any other program (whether at the same or a different university -- the program the student left would report the student as a non-completer).

Similarly for the completion tables, for students who are currently in the PhD program, list them with the cohort when they first enrolled in the program, regardless of whether they first enrolled as master's students or doctoral students. Do not include those students currently enrolled in the master's program.

For time to degree for students who were "full-time during their entire time in the program," please only include those students who were enrolled full-time every semester/quarter from first enrolling through completing. Do not include students who were part-time or on a leave of

absence or otherwise not enrolled at any time between first enrolling and completing the PhD requirements.

4. Several questions ask about full-time versus part-time status. Can you provide more detail?

Chapel Hill students rarely have part-time status except in programs designed for part-time studies or in special situations when a student may request a leave of absence. We want to ensure students who were full-time their entire careers are split out from those students who may have taken time away that might increase time to degree counts.

For example, question E8 asks for data on students enrolled full-time in the fall 2005 term regardless of time spent not enrolled during their careers. So when filling out the grid, use the following:

Year 1 = students admitted Fall '05
Year 2 = students admitted Fall '04
Year 3 = students admitted Fall '03
etc.

5. We do not have an official "advanced to candidacy" stage that is required of all graduate students at UNC-Chapel Hill. How are we to answer questions related to this stage (e.g. C13, C14, C16-C18)?

While not required, UNC-Chapel Hill does have an admission to candidacy process (see: http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html). Students may apply for admission to candidacy by filling out the Application for Admission to Candidacy after they have passed both the doctoral written and oral examinations, have submitted an acceptable dissertation prospectus, have completed all courses required by the major and minor programs, and have satisfied any foreign language or language substitute requirements. The student is then designated ABD—all but dissertation.

If your program allows students to follow this process, you may answer these questions accordingly. If it is not the practice in your program to grant students ABD status, you may answer "No" to C13 and leave enter "0" in C16a/C17a and C18a. In this case, we will answer C16b, C17b and C18b for ALL doctoral students in your program.

6. What is the definition of Teaching Assistant (for questions D5-D7)?

There are two separate definitions, depending on the question. In D5-D6, the implicit definition of a teaching assistant is a person who engages in teaching duties, regardless of whether they are compensated for it. In D7, we are only asking about TA's who teach in return for a stipend/remuneration.

7. **Please provide additional clarification on D13 requesting information on interdisciplinary centers, programs or clinics.**

NRC is asking this question in order to convey to prospective students and others the interdisciplinary research opportunities open to students in the program. We do not need to limit ourselves to on-campus opportunities. However, please ensure that any external settings for interdisciplinary research actually involve doctoral students from the program in question.

8. **Question E1 asks about full-time tuition, fees, and healthcare costs for academic year 2005-06. We will provide these data centrally, but for your information, here are the values.**

	Tuition and Fees	**Healthcare**
College of Arts and Sciences - *In-State*	$5,013.52	$1,522
College of Arts and Sciences - *Out-of-State*	$19,013.52	$1,522
School of Journalism - *In-State*	$8,396.52	$1,522
School of Journalism - *Out-of-State*	$20,835.52	$1,522
School of Nursing - *In-State*	$5,008.52	$1,522
School of Nursing - *Out-of-State*	$19,006.52	$1,522
School of Pharmacy - *In-State*	$5,008.52	$1,522
School of Pharmacy - *Out-of-State*	$19,006.52	$1,522
School of Public Health - *In-State*	$5,874.52	$1,522
School of Public Health - *Out-of-State*	$19,115.52	$1,522

9. **Modal values are requested in E2, E3, and E4. Can you give additional details? If the modal value for financial support is not a single number, what value should be given?**

Note that these questions are asking for the modal value per individual student, not the total amount of funding aggregated for the program.

The modal value for a distribution of numbers is defined as the most frequent value. Leave out unfunded students. If there is a bimodal distribution or a range of values that is most common, then the response should be the average value that most closely represents the level of support. For example, if most of the students receive amounts near $18,000 or $26,000, then the average would be taken over these two groupings and might be a number near $22,000, or if there is a range from $21,000 to $25,000 with a somewhat even distribution of values, then the average would be taken over that range.

Also, the modal distribution at the total level may differ from that at the itemized levels. The modal amount of support in E2 is not necessarily the sum of the amounts from the three categories in E3.

10. Question E7 asks for a typical five-year pattern of support by funding mechanism. Does the total need to add up to five years or can we reflect a mixture of support among our students?

The NRC is trying to get at what kinds of support a student might expect to receive over his/her first five years in the program. It does not need to add up to five years, because the categories may not be exclusive. For example, a student may be a TA and an RA at the same time; or you may have a subset of students who receive a TA and another subset who receive an RA depending on the specialization.

If the program supports the student for less than five years, that should be reported. An answer might reflect a statement like "The typical student in our program receives a fellowship for one year, then will spend two years as a graduate teaching assistant and is expected to apply for an external grant or fellowship or support himself through savings for the final dissertation years."

11. Can you provide more clarification on Question E8?

When filling out the grid, use the following:

Year 1 = students admitted Fall '05
Year 2 = students admitted Fall '04
Year 3 = students admitted Fall '03
etc.

In the fall of 2005, in a given program, students of different "vintages" are receiving different kinds of financial assistance. What the NRC wants to know is what kinds of aid students of each vintage are receiving. So the total count for the entire table should add up to the total number of full-time students in the program in fall of 2005.

There may also be confusion about the use of the word "only" for several of the responses. At Carolina, most of our students receive some combination of support (e.g. a TA position that also carries tuition support). Tuition support is covered in other questions, so here we should consider the primary source of payment (in our example, the TA would be counted as "d" teaching assistantship only even though they also received tuition support). If the student truly does carry more than one source of support (e.g. someone holding an external fellowship as well as a TA position) then we would select the appropriate mix of support response.

12. In the final section, should postdoctoral scholars be counted by their home department or by interdisciplinary program/faculty sponsor since postdocs usually go with faculty and faculty may be in more than one unit at once?

NRC has stated it is acceptable to double count postdocs, so you may count by faculty association.

13. On F3, does country of origin refer to birth country or visa country?

NRC prefers to have birth country data, however, they will accept the country of destination issuing the visa if that is all we have. This question asks for data on temporary visa holders only.

Added on January 17, 2007:

14. In C10, what does MD refer to?

MD/PhD students are dual degree students in the School of Medicine (MD doctor program) and some other discipline, generally a PhD in the basic sciences. Most Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences will not have these types of students.

15. We require students to meet all requirements in C14. Does this mean we must check " "Yes" in question C13 and fill out C16a and C17a?

No. Just because you require all these steps to earn a doctorate does not mean you use a formal admit or advance to candidacy stage. Many programs at UNC-Chapel Hill are selecting "No" to C13 and leaving C16a and C17a blank. Additional details can be found above in FAQ #5.

16. Does Question D8 refer only to those support services we offer in our own program? What about those services that are provided by the campus?

You should only answer for those services your own program provides. There is a separate question that asks about the services provided on campus at the institutional level, and we will be answering that for everyone. We feel we can check 'yes' for every service on campus, so please know that will be reflected. We just need you to address your own program's services.

17. Section E on student funding is still causing some confusion. How should we designate odd situations that don't nicely fit into some of the given answers?

Many of the questions in Section E have specific FAQ responses above. The best advice we can provide is to put your best foot forward in your responses. Keep in mind the results of the NRC survey will be used to help rate your program nationally, as well as by prospective doctoral students. You should present an accurate yet positive account of your program, so look for ways to present all types of funding in the best manner possible. If you have specific oddities, please feel free to contact us.

For additional details, please see our website: http://gradschool.unc.edu/nrc/index.html or email Stephanie Schmitt at sschmitt@email.unc.edu

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