**Graduate Program Review Self-Study Template**

*Office of Academic Programs & Planning*

The graduate self-study is typically a stand-alone document that represents a single master's degree program. If a graduate program has specializations, details that are specific to each specialization should be highlighted within the self-study. If the program supports blended students, data that is pertinent to the integration of blended students should also be highlighted within the self-study.

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| --- | --- |
| **Program(s):** |  |
| **Department:** |  |
| **College:** |  |
| **Graduate Coordinator:** |  |
| **Additional Self-Study Faculty Leaders:** |  |
| **Program/Department Website:** |  |
| **Reviewer Names and Affiliations:** |  |

*Preamble:*

*The format and prompts within this template are provided in an effort to stimulate a thorough reflection and analysis of your program. It is not intended that you must respond to each and every question; rather, we offer this template as a helpful guide, which is based on our experience of the review process. Please use your professional judgment and disciplinary experience in determining the most effective order, structure, and content for presenting your program to the institution and your review team.*

**I. Identity**

**A. History and Context**

*Provide a brief history of the degree program within the overall context of the department, including the year that the program was implemented. List the other degree programs and subprograms — areas of emphasis, concentrations, specializations, certifications, and blended degrees — that are offered by the department.*

**B. Mission and Goals**

*State the mission or purpose of the department and provide any other statements that might relate to this mission, such as the department’s vision, values, and goals. If the department has a strategic plan, provide a link in this section, or include a copy in Appendix A.*

**C. Progress Since the Last Review**

*Summarize both the findings and recommendations of the previous self-study and reviewer’s report. Explain the progress made since that time in reference to the program’s last action plan. Include the most recent action plan report in Appendix A.*

**II. Degree Program**

**A. Program Learning Objectives**

*State the program learning objectives/outcomes (PLOs) as they are currently published in the Cal Poly Catalog. Describe any changes that have been made to the PLOs since the last program review. Do the PLOs provide a reasonable, appropriate, and comprehensive summary of the knowledge, skills, and values expected of program graduates? Do they reflect national disciplinary standards?[[1]](#footnote-1)*

**B. Curriculum**

*Describe the program curriculum as published in the Cal Poly Catalog. What courses are required and how many are electives? How has the curriculum changed since the last program review? How does the curriculum compare with those of other peer and aspirational programs? While not required, it may be useful to conduct a comparative analysis using the table in Appendix B.*

*Using the table in Appendix C, map the curriculum to the PLOs, indicating the expected level of skill development (introduced, developed, or mastered) for each course. Discuss any patterns, imbalances, or gaps. Do the skills developed in these courses build on each other in an intentional, progressive manner to form a scaffold toward the degree? What unique knowledge and skills does this program provide that are beyond those obtained from an undergraduate degree?*

*Verify that 60% of the total required units for this degree are at the 500-level. These courses must be exclusively at the graduate level (not paired with undergraduate courses). Do all 500-level courses listed in the catalog require graduate standing as a prerequisite? Do they reflect the proper degree of mastery that is expected from a graduate level course? How do students with a non-Cal Poly undergraduate background satisfy anticipated course prerequisite knowledge?*

*If the program offers specializations, provide evidence that there is a common core of curricular units across all specializations that is at least 51% of the total units required.*

*If a blended program is offered, describe the value provided to your students by having a blended option. Identify any double-counted units and how they improve time-to-graduation. How does the program ensure that if a student does not complete their graduate degree, they are still able to satisfy their undergraduate requirements?*

**C. Culminating Event**

*Clearly define the culminating event options that are available for this degree (e.g. thesis, project, and/or exam).*

*If the culminating event is collaborative, describe how the individual student's contribution is defined.*

*If the blended program utilizes a thesis or project as the culminating experience, please describe how the blended program conforms to AS-877-19 and describe the process used to independently assess the outcomes of the senior project and culminating experience.*

*As a part of program review, programs should gather information from participating faculty that assesses the quality of the culminating event(s) in terms of both learning outcomes and student experiences.*

*What is the average time to completion for the culminating event (e.g., how many quarters to complete a thesis/project; how many attempts to pass a comprehensive exam)? Does the culminating experience delay in time to graduation for some or many students?*

**D. Pedagogy**

*Describe the pedagogy used within the curriculum and co-curriculum, including high-impact practices and any other instructional methods that are unique or distinctive to the department or discipline.[[2]](#footnote-2) How does the program share in Cal Poly’s signature pedagogy of* [*Learn by Doing*](https://morethanamotto.calpoly.edu/project/about)*?*

**III. Resources**

**A. Faculty**

***Faculty Profile.*** *Using the table in Appendix D, summarize the experience and expertise of all the program’s faculty members, whether lecturers or professors. How well do they meet the needs of the program? How are teaching assignments made within the program? What percentage of your WTU are being taught by lecturers?*

***Faculty Composition.*** *Using the table in Appendix D, analyze the program’s faculty composition by full-time-equivalent faculty (FTEF) position and by tenure density for the first and last years of the period under review. How has the faculty composition changed during this period? How does this data compare to the department as a whole?*

*Does the program utilize graduate students as teaching associates (TAs)? If yes, what undergraduate courses do they teach? Are they instructor of record or do they assist instructional activities? What type of training is provided to TAs? How does the program evaluate the performance of and provide feedback to TAs for their development?*

***Faculty Recruitment and Retention.*** *Describe the program’s history of faculty recruitment and retention over the last six years. How does the department assess and plan for future faculty hires that impact the graduate program? Has the program faced challenges in the areas of recruitment, hiring, and retention?*

*Describe the program’s projected hiring needs over the next six to seven years. What methods does the program use to substantiate these needs?*

***Faculty Scholarship.*** *Describe the department’s response to the Teacher-Scholar Model as defined in* [*AS-725-11*](http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1725&context=senateresolutions)*. Discuss the ways in which the department and program promote student research, faculty scholarship that promotes student learning, or students become involved in faculty scholarship. What role do graduate programs play in supporting the Teacher-Scholar Model? What benefits does the program receive from faculty research efforts?*

*Does the program utilize graduate assistants (GAs) to support faculty research and/or instructional development? Does the college/department/program provide any additional GA positions beyond those supported from Graduate Education (e.g., grant-, industry-, advancement-funded positions)? How are the contributions of GAs recognized, and how is their performance assessed?*

*Using the style appropriate to the discipline, create a bibliographic list of the program faculty’s scholarly achievements over the last six years and include this list in Appendix E. Organize the list according to standard headings such as books, articles, papers, awards, grants, and grant applications, as well as categories specific to the discipline. How well has the faculty as a whole met the expectations of the department and college, as expressed in policies on retention, promotion, and tenure?*

**B. Administration**

*Describe the administration of the program, both in terms of faculty (e.g., the department head/chair, graduate coordinator, and any other members released to perform administrative functions) and support staff. Describe the amount of assigned time and related duties for program administration. How well does the current administration meet the needs of the graduate program? Are there specific administrative areas that are not being fully realized?*

**C. Facilities, Equipment, and Information Resources**

*Describe the facilities, equipment, and information resources (e.g., book, journals, and databases) that are used by the program. How well do these resources meet the needs of the degree program? Are there gaps that are uniquely related to the graduate program? What plans exist for the maintenance, repair and replacement of existing resources, as well as the acquisition of new ones?*

**D. Revenues and Expenditures**

*Provide a summary of the total program expenditures (operating expenses) for the last 2-3 years. Describe any significant increases or decreases in the cost of the program, noting factors that may be influencing costs. If self-support, include the cost model for operating your program and how it impacts student tuition.*

*Provide a summary of funding sources that support thesis/project work. Describe the primary purpose for these funds. How many WTU are granted to the faculty in support of thesis/project advising? Are these part of the 36 WTU annual target workload for a faculty? Does the program grant assigned time to faculty who serve on thesis/project committees?*

*Provide a summary of any program-specific non-state funds (i.e., endowments, discretionary accounts, and other non-state accounts). What is the primary purpose of these funds?*

**IV. Program Effectiveness**

**A. Student Learning**

*Provide an overview of program-level assessment efforts during the period under review. If the program had a long-term assessment plan for this period, include it in Appendix F along with any annual assessment reports submitted to Academic Programs and Planning (APP).*

*How comprehensive were the program’s assessment efforts? Which PLOs did they address? Did the program assess the effectiveness of the culminating experience at demonstrating achievement of the program's expected learning outcomes? How successful was the program in using the assessment results to “close the loop” and improve the program?*

*According to WSCUC, a program that is highly developed “has a fully articulated, sustainable, multi-year assessment plan that describes when and how each outcome/objective will be assessed and how improvements based on findings will be implemented. The plan is routinely examined and revised, as necessary.”[[3]](#footnote-3) If the program had an assessment plan for this period, how did it compare to this standard? If the program did not have an assessment plan, contact Academic Assessment Director Michael Nguyen (*[*mnguy300@calpoly.edu)*](mailto:jgphelan@calpoly.edu)) *for assistance in this area.*

**B. Student Success**

***Persistence and Graduation Rates.*** *Provide data regarding graduation rates for your planned program length (typically 1 or 2 years) over the period under review. Over the same time span, how many students were discontinued from the program due to academic performance? How many students left the program without completing their degree? If offerings include a blended program, how many blended students leave with no degree? With their bachelor’s only? What are the program trends and how can the program help improve graduation rates?*

*Note: The student numbers in a small program will show a high degree of variability, making it difficult to read trends. In this case, averaging the numbers over the period under review may provide a better basis for comparison.*

*Please discuss if there are particular challenges to persistence and/or graduation rates (e.g., High Failure Rate Courses, Thesis Completion, Course Offerings, etc.).What has the program done to address these challenges?**Using the Grade Analysis dashboard, download the program’s grade distributions by course and section and include the two spreadsheets in Appendix G after deleting the instructor names. Do any of the program’s courses have noticeable patterns in grading (e.g., high failure rates, high incompletion rates, high report in progress rates If there is a noticeable trend, how has it been addressed?*

***Unique Populations.*** *Please comment on the unique populations of students in your program. (1) How many undergraduate students are enrolled in 500-level courses in the program? How does the involvement of these undergraduates impact the learning experience for your graduate students? (Please exclude undergraduate students participating in your blended program in this discussion, if applicable.) (2) What percentage of students in the program have a non-Cal Poly undergraduate degree? How does the preparation and success of these students compare with those who attended Cal Poly as undergraduates? (Please exclude undergraduate students participating in your blended program, if applicable.) (3) If applicable, please compare the performance of blended students and traditional graduate students. Are there notable differences in graduation rates, in preparation, in performance, etc.?*

***Additional Metrics of Student Success.*** *Provide data on any additional metrics of student success your program uses. This may include, but is not limited to, the number of students publishing as single or co-authors in peer-review journals; connections and work with community projects; the number of students presenting at professional conferences; grant- or industry-sponsored project work; etc.*

**C. Student Engagement**

*Describe any methods (e.g., surveys and focus groups) used during the period under review to obtain feedback on the program from currently enrolled students. What do the results suggest about student satisfaction with the degree program?*

*Describe any methods used to involve students in the governance of the department and program (e.g., College Based Fee Committee or student members of faculty committees). What has been their contribution to the program review process?*

*Note:**According to the WSCUC Program Review Rubric, students should be partners in the program review process. They may make an active contribution by offering poster sessions, demonstrating the application of rubrics, or providing their own feedback on the program in private meetings. Reviewers should be able to examine samples of student work.[[4]](#footnote-4)*

**D. Graduate Success**

*Provide data on graduate success, including employment data and additional education sought. How many of your graduates go on to doctoral or other advanced degree programs? How many go into industry, practice, or employment? Identify key industry sectors and companies that hire your graduates. How many graduates have jobs immediately upon completion of their degree? Do you have data on 3-and 5-year career/employment? Describe any other measures of graduate success used by the program (e.g., pass rates on professional exams, certification/licensing/registration rates, etc.). What do these data suggest about the effectiveness of the program in preparing students for their lives after Cal Poly?*

*Describe any measures used to obtain feedback from recent graduates, alumni, and employers (e.g., surveys, focus groups, visiting professionals, etc.). What does the feedback suggest about the effectiveness of the program?*

**V. Program Planning**

**A. Student Demand**

***Admissions.*** *Analyze admissions trends over the period under review — students who applied, were selected, and enrolled. Is the program enrolling the desired number of students?*

*Analyze trends in entrance measures over the period of review — Grade Point Average (GPA), standard test scores such as the GRE or GMAT if required (noting if such tests are required for all applicants or only for those without a Cal Poly undergraduate degree), verification of writing competency, and other factors in determining graduate success as applicable. For international students, consider TOFEL scores. Is the program enrolling the desired quality of students?*

***Recruitment.*** *Identify potential undergraduate programs in CA that could supply students for your program. Describe any key educational and/or professional outcomes that differentiate your program from others offered in CA. Identify individuals who will support recruitment efforts for the program.*

**B. Instructional Capacity and Enrolled Student Demand**

*Using the SCU Production Profile (Appendix H), indicate the approximate percentage of teaching effort that is required to support the graduate program. Is the academic unit able to meet the course demand needs for your students, including the ability to offer sufficient courses and supervision support each quarter?*

*Given the existing curriculum and the resources that are currently available to the program (i.e., faculty, facilities, and equipment), estimate the numbers of unique students that the program can accommodate. How do these estimates compare to the actual numbers of unique students served over the last three years? (This information is available in the Enrollment and Schedule Planning dashboard under the Schedule Planning tab). Compare the growth or decline of faculty (Appendix D) to the growth or decline of teaching demand. Are there curricular revisions that might be made to improve the program’s educational effectiveness and increase its capacity?*

**C. Employer Demand for Graduates**

*Describe the job opportunities available to students after they complete the degree program. How well is the program meeting the needs of employers? Does the demand for graduates justify the current size and focus of the program? What does the demand suggest about the future size and focus?*

*Using the information provided by the federal* [*Bureau of Labor Statistics*](https://www.bls.gov/) *(BLS) and the state* [*Employment Development Department*](http://www.edd.ca.gov/) *(EDD), summarize the employment trends for the field(s) represented by the degree program. How has the department prepared to meet the needs of the future? The following links may be useful:*

* *BLS* [*Employment Projections*](https://www.bls.gov/emp/)*, especially the* [*Occupational Projections Data*](https://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj)*.*
* *BLS* [*Occupational Employment Statistics*](https://www.bls.gov/oes/)*, especially the* [*Occupation Profiles*](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm)*.*
* *EDD* [*Employment Projections*](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/employment-projections.html)*, especially the* [*Occupation Projections for 2014-24*](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/occproj/cal$occproj-2014-2024.xlsx)*;* [*Industry Data*](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/industries.html)*; and* [*Labor Market Information for Educators and Trainers*](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/customers/educators-trainers.html)*.*

**VI. Themes**

**A. Program-Specific Theme**

*If the program has chosen to investigate a program-specific theme, describe the question to be asked or the problem to be solved, the method of investigation, the results, and their implications for program improvement.*

**B. University Theme: Diversity and Inclusion**

***Diversity of Students.*** *Consider the program's graduate enrollment profile disaggregated by gender and underrepresented minority (URM) status (Appendix I). How diverse is the student body of the program? Is the program becoming more or less diverse over time?*

***Diversity of Faculty and Staff.*** *Describe the department’s efforts to recruit and hire a diverse faculty and staff. If the department has conducted a faculty or staff search over the period under review, what steps were taken to ensure a diverse pool of candidates? How successful were these efforts?*

*Describe the department's efforts to retain a diverse faculty and staff. How successful have these efforts been? Does the department face any special challenges in this area?*

*Note: Because of privacy concerns, the program is not being asked to track faculty and staff demographics.*

**VII. Findings**

*Based on the insights gained during the preparation of this self-study, what are the strengths of the program and what aspects should be improved? How might these findings influence the program’s strategic action plan?*

*Based on this assessment, where would the department like the degree program to be at the end of the next cycle of review? How might this forward-looking view of the program, its resources, and its effectiveness inform the department’s strategic goals?*

*Note: This final section can be considered an executive summary of the current status of the program and a suggestion of its priorities for the next seven years*

1. WSCUC Senior College and University Commission, “Program Learning Outcomes Rubric,” August 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The AAC&U promotes high-impact practices that “have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds, especially historically underserved students.” These practices include first-year experiences; common intellectual experiences; learning communities; writing-intensive courses; collaborative assignments and projects; undergraduate research; diversity/global learning; e-portfolios; service and community-based learning; internships; capstone courses and projects (e.g., Senior Project). See “[High-Impact Practices](https://www.aacu.org/resources/high-impact-practices).” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. WSCUC Senior College and University Commission, “Program Learning Outcomes Rubric,” August 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. WSCUC, “Program Review Rubric” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)