**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater**

**Committee Form: Review of Audit & Review Self-Studies**

**Graduate Programs**

Program\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Communication MS\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I. Program Purpose & Overview**

**A. Centrality**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program contributes to the fulfillment of UW-Whitewater’s mission, core values, and Strategic Plan.  |  |  | 11 |
| The program is well-integrated with other undergraduate and graduate programs offered at UW-W as appropriate.  |  | 3 | 8 |
| The program has been responsive to actions recommended from the previous Audit and Review Evaluation Report. |  | 5 | 6 |

Comments:

--The program has worked diligently to respond to the concerns expressed in the previous Audit & Review, but progress has been hindered by faculty turnover and turnover in the Graduate Coordinator position. Turnover has made it difficult to achieve sufficient administrative “traction” for desired changes.

**B. Program Mission, Goals, & Accomplishments**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program’s mission statement aligns with the mission of the School of Graduate Studies.  |  | 3 | 8 |
| Goals and objectives were undertaken during the review period to improve or advance the program.  |  | 2 | 9 |
| Potential revisions to program’s mission, goals, and/or objectives are responsive to performance data. |  | 4 | 5 |
| Faculty and students involved in the program are engaged with the region in ways that benefit both the community and the program.  |  | 2 | 7 |
| The program achieved or maintained accreditation (if applicable) and/or earned recognition or awards.  |  | 6 | 2 |

Comments:

--The program was forthcoming in recognizing the areas I which there was less accomplishment than intended or hoped for. However, this is a strength as far as the A & R process is concerned.

--Declining program competitiveness is important. It is recognized by the program, but deserves additional emphasis/attention.

--The assertion that the program cannot necessarily impact the community is weak. Communication is a key aspect in community engagement initiatives.

**II. Assessment: Curriculum & the Assessment of Students’ Learning**

**A. Curriculum**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has a clearly articulated, efficient, and purposeful curriculum, complete with a capstone experience.  |  | 1 | 9 |
| Expectations of graduate students differ from undergraduate students in dual-listed courses.  | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| The program provides opportunities for students to learn in ways that extend beyond the classroom.  |  | 3 | 7 |
| Online course are evaluated in ways that ensure effective delivery and continuous improvement (if applicable) | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Comments:

--More detailed information is needed on how the expectations for graduate students differ from those of undergraduate students in dual-listed courses.

--The self-study makes the argument that it is committed to diversity. However, diversity isn’t evident in the “sample New Curriculum.”

**B. Assessment of Student Learning**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has clearly articulated learning performance outcomes for students.  |  | 1 | 10 |
| The program’s curriculum aligns with the student learning performance outcomes.  |  | 6 | 5 |
| Research/scholarly activity, as defined by the program, is incorporated in the achievement of student learning outcomes. |  | 3 | 7 |
| The program collected assessment data during the review period allowing judgments about the extent to which students are achieving learning performance outcomes.  |  | 3 | 8 |
| The program has made changes/improvements during the review period that clearly align with the assessment data collected during the current (or previous) review period.  |  | 8 | 2 |
| Results of assessment efforts have been shared with internal and external constituencies.  |  | 6 | 4 |

Comments:

--Changes in assessment center mostly on the process—objectives were added, but the assessment of the new objectives wasn’t updated.

--Learning goals are clearly defined, but not all seem to be assessed. For example, the specification of learning objectives in the three core courses is clear, but it’s not clear how the learning objectives are addressed in other courses in the program. The capstone assessment addresses some (5 of the 8 objectives); it’s not clear how the other three are assessed.

--The program has collected significant data during the review period. Less clear is how that data has been interpreted and used to make improvements to the program or students’ learning experiences (“closing the loop”).

--Assessment-driven program changes have all come from indirect assessment methods, though, especially the exit survey.

--Results of assessment efforts have been shared with internal constituencies, but there isn’t much evidence to suggest that they have been shared with external constituencies.

**III. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation**

**A. Trend Data**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Five-year enrollments trends reflect program vitality. |  | 8 | 2 |
| Graduation rates indicate that students complete the program in a timely manner.  |  | 3 | 6 |

Comments:

--The program has data on enrollments and graduation rates, but not much interpretation of what the data means.

--Enrollment data suggests a decline beginning in 2005. More recent data suggests the beginning of an upswing.

**B. Demand for Graduates**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduates of the program find employment or continue their education.  |  | 3 | 8 |
| Data suggests that employment opportunities for graduates of this program will remain strong.  | 2 | 6 | 3 |
| Program is cognizant of differences in student populations (e.g., full-time/part-time students, working adults, recent undergraduate degree recipients, etc.)  | 1 |  | 10 |
| The program effectively recruits prospective students and tracks graduates of the program.  |  | 8 | 3 |

Comments:

--It is good that the program has made efforts to establish relationships with a strong alumni base. However, with only one set of data collected thus far and uncertainty of the sample size, it’s difficult to draw conclusions.

--Information on market demand in the field at state or national levels is missing—hard to determine if employment opportunities for graduates in this program will remain strong.

**C. Comparative Advantage(s)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has unique features that distinguish it from competing programs—giving it a competitive edge.  | 1 | 6 | 4 |

Comments:

--The focus of this section is on what differentiates competitor programs, but doesn’t have the same level of discussion on what the program DOES have to offer that competing programs do not.

--Students’ ability to take classes at night is a key factor—perhaps the most important factor—in the program’s attractiveness.

**IV. Resource Availability & Development**

**A. Graduate Faculty Characteristics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The preparation and work experience of the graduate faculty is conducive to the effective delivery of the program.  |  | 2 | 8 |
| The program has identified staffing needs and pending changes that will affect the delivery of the program.  |  | 3 | 8 |

Comments:

--Staffing seems to be the single largest challenge facing the program. Staffing needs may go unmet because of continued uncertainty over faculty retention at UW-W. The program may wish to compile information on the competitiveness of the faculty compensation package and workload for presentation to administrators.

--Program recognizes stability deficit in the graduate coordinator position.

**B. Teaching & Learning Enhancement**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty engage in activities to improve their teaching, advising, involvement in course or curricular revision, new course development, etc.  | 6 | 3 | 2 |

Comments:

--CVs are included, and list of graduate courses taught by faculty are included in the self-study, but there is no discussion or details about the learning activities or course revisions/new courses faculty have developed.

**C. Research & other Scholarly/Creative Activities**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty engage in scholarly/creative activity in ways that support or advance the graduate program.  | 1 | 2 | 8 |

Comments:

--Current scholarship is listed on several CVs, but the discussion of general expectations for research/scholarly activities in this field is lacking; a brief discussion would be helpful in drawing conclusions about program faculty productivity in relation to expectations/norms in the field.

 **D. External Funding**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty pursue funding through grants, contract, and/or gifts.  | 3 | 6 | 2 |

Comments:

--Some intramural grant activity; not much external grant work..

**E. Professional & Public Service**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| Graduate faculty engage in professional and public service in ways that benefit internal and external constituencies.  | 1 | 4 | 6 |

Comments:

--Discussion is lacking regarding departmental expectations regarding service; a discussion would be helpful in assessing program faculty members’ contributions in this area.

**F. Resources for Students in the Program**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has adequate personnel, student help, and service and supplies to serve its graduate student population.  | 1 | 6 | 4 |

Comments:

--Personnel limitations are a genuine problem for this program.

**G. Facilities, Equipment, & Library Holdings**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Patterns of Evidence** |
|  | No/Limited Evidence | Some/Partial Evidence | Sufficient Evidence |
| The program has adequate facilities, equipment, and technological resources to effectively serve its students.  |  | 1 | 10 |

Comments:

--Good base of technology

**Other comments/questions:**

--Self-study is well-written and clearly structured; possible candidate as a “model” self-study.

--The program used this period to take a long, data-informed look at itself and to have been very honest with itself about perceived shortcomings in the program. The real question is how the program evolves and develops after this introspection. What does the program want to look like in terms of enrollments, student profiles, alumni profiles, graduate faculty roles, ideal curricula, revised learning outcomes, etc.? What is the preferred identity of the program?

**Recommended Actions:**

1. Develop methods/processes by which all learning objectives are being assessed.

2. Consider putting data from the student learning outcome efforts on the graduate program’s web page.

3. Consider developing and offering online courses; Quality Matters will provide an excellent tool if the program decides to go this route.

4. Include an update on the status of the GIA proposal in the next self-study.

**Recommended Result:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Insufficient information in the self-study to make a determination; revise self-study & resubmit.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continuation without qualification.

\_\_\_X\_\_ Continuation with minor concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_ Continuation with major concerns in one or more of the four areas, & minor concerns in one or

more of the other areas;;submit annual progress reports to the College Dean & Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on progress in addressing the major concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_ Withhold recommendation for continuation, place on probation, and require another complete

 Audit & Review self-study within 1-3 years, at the Committee’s discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Withhold recommendation for continuation, place on probation, recommend placing in

receivership within the college, and require another complete Audit & Review self-study within 1-3 years at the Committee’s discretion.

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-continuation of the program.

3/09