

Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs: Doctoral

The Graduate Review & Improvement Process (GRIP)

Henning Schroeder

Dean in Residence

Council of Graduate Schools/National Science Foundation

Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Education

University of Minnesota

Sally Gregory Kohlstedt

Acting Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Education

University of Minnesota

CGS Annual Meeting | 12.04.13



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM

What is GRIP?

- GRIP is a **holistic** and **adaptive** model for program review and improvement.
- The evaluation process is **tailored** to the needs and expectations of each program.
- Its approach is **student-centric** and **action-oriented**.

Where it Began

Graduate & Professional Education Assembly
University of Minnesota

Academic Program Evaluation

Monday, April 18, 2011

The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate

Keynote speakers:

Chris Golde
Stanford University

George Walker
Cleveland State University



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover™

What Do We Hope to Learn?

- What is the ***purpose*** of the program?
 - What are the desired outcomes?
- What is the ***rationale and educational purpose*** of each element of the program?
 - Which elements of the program should be retained and affirmed?
 - Which elements could usefully be changed or eliminated?
- How do you ***know***?
 - What *evidence* aids in answering those questions?
 - What evidence can be collected to determine whether changes serve the desired outcomes?

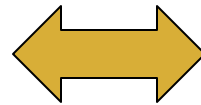
Source: “**The Challenges of Doctoral Program Assessment: Lessons from the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate,**”
Chris M. Golde, Laura Jones, Andrea Conklin Bueschel, George E. Walker

Why?

External Review: Every 5 to 10 years

Summative

- Experts in the field
- Self-study report
- Exit interview



Internal Ongoing Improvement Process

Developmental

- Systematic listening to student and faculty input
- Ongoing adjustment of educational activities to program goals
- Bottom-up approach to quality metrics

Previously administered by the Graduate School, a new academic program review model involving undergraduate education is now in development.

Qualitative Measures & Methods

- Measuring intangibles in graduate education & research
 - How can we measure **originality and innovation**?
 - How do we quantify **intellectual risk-taking**?
 - How will we gauge **opportunities to “fail or explore dead ends”**?
 - How should we evaluate the **crossing of disciplinary boundaries**?
- Methodology
 - Focus groups, interviews, town hall meetings, etc.
 - **Content analysis** of results (e.g. MAXQDA, qualitative data analysis)

How does GRIP work?

With the help of a GRIP facilitator, faculty member(s) and student(s) serve as program representatives to:

- Consider program's goals and intended outcomes
- Determine data needs for evaluation
- Gather information from faculty and students
- Exchange ideas and expertise (between programs)
- Create an internal "state of the graduate program" report

What Are the Benefits?

- Produce meaningful, actionable, **discipline-specific feedback** in the form of “state of the program” reports and actions plans for improvement
- Respond to **specific disciplinary and departmental contexts**
- Provide quantitative data for a narrative that puts the results into context and offers recommendations for how to make **changes in real time**
- **Strengthen program’s internal capacity** for ongoing review and improvement

Implementing GRIP

- **In 2012-13, eight programs volunteered for GRIP:**
 - Business Administration
 - Civil Engineering
 - Dentistry
 - Experimental and Clinical Pharmacology
 - Food Science and Nutrition
 - Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development
 - Public Policy
 - Veterinary Medicine
- **In spring 2014, up to 11 additional programs will pilot a more streamlined model of GRIP.**

Sampling of Outcomes

Differential information and responses in the 2012-13 GRIP pilot programs:

- **A high-quality, student- and faculty-tested survey** that can be administered every few years to keep a “finger” on the student pulse
- **Development of more systematic advising** and more clear guidelines on milestones to degree completion intended to improve matriculation rates and time to degree
- **New space devoted to a resource center** and lounge to respond to expressed need for more informal and formal peer connections; also **improved orientation activities**
- **Attention to range of careers** after data revealed only small number of students sought R1 academic appointments in some programs

Quantitative Metrics

Standard Measures and Program Narratives

Graduate School provided data to which programs responded:

- **Index covering 10 years** with time to degree and completion and attrition statistics; algorithm to account for leaves and other nuances
- **AAU data on graduate programs in each field;** invitation to provide any other external ranking information specific to field
- **Guidelines for a two-page narrative** for additional data including commentary on changes over time and **placement information**

Challenges and Questions

- **Decentralized model** of graduate education on campus
- **Reluctance to invest** money and time in program review
- How to **combine graduate and undergraduate information** in academic review?
- How will GRIP and emerging “graduate learning outcomes” relate to **2015 accreditation** of the U of MN Twin Cities campus?

GRIP and Program Investment

- Graduate School has contributed approximately \$200,000 since summer 2011 for GRIP:
 - Graduate assistants serving as consultants to the participating pilot programs
 - Publication/presentation costs
 - Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute (MESI)
- Programs provide student, faculty & staff time from participating programs
- Expertise comes from resources already on campus (e.g., College of Education & Human Development; graduate assistants)

GRIP Initiative Includes:

- **Workshops** on program evaluation
- Graduate **evaluation colloquium** for student leaders
- **Resources**/toolkit (survey instruments, focus group protocols)
- **Consulting assistance** from University experts in higher education and program evaluation, including the Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute (MESI)

Longer-term Prospects

- **Web repository of evaluation tools** and resources (survey instruments, focus group protocols)
- **Consulting assistance from University experts** in higher education and program evaluation, including the Minnesota Evaluation Studies Institute (MESI)
- **Interactive workshop for faculty and students** on graduate program evaluation
- Specialized graduate **evaluation colloquium for student leaders**