



Program Quality Assessment

CGS New Deans Institute

Patrick S. Osmer
Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Examples of Quality Indicators

- Placement of graduates
- Scholarly productivity
- Research funding of faculty
- GRE scores, 1st-year students with external fellowships
- Completion rates, time to degree

Examples of National Rankings that Matter

- *US News & World Report*
 - Reputation, some use of data
- NRC
 - Data-based (20 variables), illustrative rankings
- World Rankings
 - e.g., Shanghai ARWU: Data-based (Nobel laureates, highly cited researchers, overall citations, per capita performance)

Politics of Assessment

- Need clear goals
- Support of president and provost
- Discussion on process with and feedback from units being assessed
- Openness on criteria for assessment
- Formal communication plan and protocols for announcement of results

Quality Assessment, Budgets, Strategic Plans, Fellowship Allocations

- All are interrelated
- Strategic plans and goals should provide overall direction and priorities
- Quality assessment should be a factor in
 - Budget allocations
 - Fellowship allocations

Quality Assessment and Program Development

- Quality Assessment *plus* strategic plans/goals *plus* budget situation facilitate decisions on
 - Program development
 - Program restructuring
 - Program downsizing or elimination



The Ohio State Review of Doctoral Programs

Goals

- Identify doctoral programs that will enhance the standing of Ohio State
- Identify weak, non-core programs and develop a plan for disinvesting in them
- Reallocate resources to the strongest programs

Process

- A three-way partnership of Graduate School, Academic Affairs, and the colleges
- Used data compiled for NRC survey plus additional information
- Each college submitted a report assessing its programs
- Graduate School and faculty review committee reviewed college reports and prepared findings and recommendations for the provost

Indicators

- GRE scores
- Placement of doctoral graduates
- Overall program quality and centrality
- Time to candidacy and time to degree
- Percentage of entering students completing Ph.D.
- Student diversity

Criteria for Judging the College Reports

- New or emerging opportunities where Ohio State can excel
- Gaining a competitive edge
- Improvements in addressing diversity
- New approaches to recruiting high-quality students
- Commitment of department and college to strengthening the program

Classification

- Doctoral programs were classified into 6 groups:
 - High Quality (12 programs)
 - Strong (17)
 - Good (16)
 - New and/or Developing (11)
 - Reassess and/or Restructure (29)
 - Disinvest or Eliminate (5)

University-Wide Findings

- Need to assess and improve structure and organization of the 21 doctoral programs in the biological and life sciences
- Need similar effort for earth and environmental sciences, which are spread across 8 colleges
- Implement advanced practice doctoral degrees in some professional and health programs so that Ph.D. programs can focus on research

Outcomes

- Enhance central fellowship stipends and multi-year support packages for the top 29 programs
- Form task forces to address the organization and structure of the life sciences and of the environmental sciences

Next Steps

- Colleges are responding to specific issues in the strategic plans they prepared for the provost
- Deans are reporting annually on progress in doctoral programs
- Repeat entire process on 4-5 year time scale

For More Information

- Graduate School report is available on the internet
- See link on Graduate School web site
www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/doctoral-review.html
- Click on “Doctoral Program Assessment”
- Doctoral Program Review Status Report (yearly)