

# **SELF-STUDY GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

Sam Houston State University  
The Graduate and Professional School

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# Outline of the Self-Study

This study will cover data from the ten (10) previous academic years, or the period since the last graduate program review.

Sources of data/information may include but are not limited to university data supplied by Institutional Research through the Graduate and Professional School; the graduate catalog; departmental records; college records; the program and department websites; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; faculty interviews; student interviews and polling; and accreditation standards where applicable.

All self-studies will adhere to the following outline:

- I. **Program Profile** (for this section, members will review the university strategic planning statement, annual program assessment reporting, Institutional Effectiveness data, and graduate faculty interviews)
  - A. Mission of program
    1. Briefly describe the unit's mission, vision, goals and objectives.
    2. How does this align with the university's strategic plan?
    3. What unique role does your unit play or special contributions does it make to the university, state, and/or region?
  - B. History of the program
  - C. Program demographics (e.g., number of students/classes, number of degrees conferred annually, number of core faculty, etc.)
  - D. Faculty/Student ratio for each of the academic semesters under review
  - E. Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
    1. How does the program align with the program goals and the university goals?
    2. In the next several years, what factors will affect the demand for what you do?
    3. How can you position the unit to respond to changes in demand?

- II. Program Administration** (For this section, committee authors will need to discuss and clarify the differences between procedures/processes and university policies)
- A. Administrative processes including admission processes, etc.
    - 1. Evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures noting strengths to retain.
    - 2. Describe any planned changes.
  - B. Administrative policies
    - 1. What are the academic and administrative policies affecting your unit?
    - 2. What, if any, university infrastructural barriers impede your operations?
    - 3. What specific policy changes would the department propose to remedy/overcome those barriers?
  - C. Mentoring and Academic Advising
    - 1. Who designates and assigns advisors?
    - 2. Who monitors the student academic progress?
- III. Curriculum** (For this section, members will consult the most recently published University Graduate Catalogue, SHSU Online where applicable, the public records of comparable programs/institutions, and the published standards of appropriate accrediting bodies. Please see **Appendix E** for the online class evaluation rubric.)
- A. Description of curriculum (e.g., program length, degree plan, specializations, etc.)
    - 1. Describe major curriculum changes in the last several years.
    - 2. Discuss proposed changes to the curriculum. What evidence indicates the need for changes?
  - B. Appropriateness of curriculum
    - 1. Degree plan/s
    - 2. Content by course description. List all courses with their university catalogue descriptions.
    - 3. Compare Items B1 and B2 to any applicable accreditation standards.
    - 4. Compare Items B1 and B2 with similar programs of at least three (3) peer or near-peer aspirational institutions. At least one of these must be outside of Texas.
  - C. Description of comprehensive exams and dissertation/thesis processes
  - D. Cite and give brief descriptions of any/all accreditations.
  - E. Quality of Instruction
    - 1. Create a table IDEA scores for courses offered during the period under review
    - 2. Other evidence of quality of instruction
  - F. Quality of Online Course Offerings
    - 1. SHSU Online will supply a summary of the findings based upon the rubric in **Appendix F**.