Program Quality Assessment

CGS New Deans Institute

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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](http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/doctoral-review.html)
- Click on “Doctoral Program Assessment”
- Doctoral Program Review Status Report (yearly)