



## Cornell University Faculty Committee on Program Review

### SELF-STUDY FORMAT

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The self-study is the department's portrait of itself and a blueprint for its future. It should be informative to the external reviewers, who are experts in the field, but also to internal readers who may not be. Gathering the materials and reaching consensus on how to portray the department and its future should be a constructive activity for members of the department. Useful self-studies are thorough but compact and frank. The self-study should address the broad areas described below. Typically, the self-study also includes a number of appendices.

#### Department Profile

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- State the department's mission. Provide a concise overview of the critical issues and approaches that structure the discipline(s) or field(s) represented in the department. Explain how the department's structure and activities relate to these issues and approaches.
- Describe the major areas of scholarly concentration (within and across the disciplines) represented in your department. Call attention to any past conditions or events that are critical to understanding the department's present situation and future development.

#### Strategic Direction

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- Describe how you expect the field to change nationally and internationally, and how you will respond to these changes to enhance or achieve academic distinction and leadership.
- Given constant resources, what are the strategic plans to enhance the quality and stature of the department for the future?

#### Excellence in Research, Scholarship, and Creativity

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- Evaluate total sponsored research and how it has changed in magnitude and focus over the last five years. Briefly describe major research projects underway (for sponsored projects: list sources, amounts of funding, and duration of funding). How do these findings relate to or affect your strategic vision for the next five years?
- Describe any collaborative centers or programs that play a significant role in the department's scholarly endeavors
- Compare yourself to what you believe to be the top 5 programs nationally. (Data from the NRC, or another discipline-relevant ranking may be useful here.) How do you rank in comparison? What major areas are represented in those programs but not in yours, and vice-versa? What are the distinguishing features of your program?
- Describe the status of your graduate program (PhD, Masters, Professional Masters, etc.) Using data provided by the Graduate School, summarize trends and implications related to application and admissions, graduate enrollment, median time to doctoral degree, doctoral attrition and

completion rates, doctoral student funding trends, student perceptions based on survey results from doctoral experience surveys and exit surveys for all degree programs, doctoral alumni career outcomes, and student diversity (gender, race, citizenship). Provide an explanation for any significant changes and outline your plans to strengthen your current programs and diversify the graduate program.

## **Faculty Excellence**

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As outlined in the Strategic Plan, the university sees a need to renew the faculty ranks proactively. Describe how your department plans to keep abreast of and deal with intense competition for faculty, to reduce losses of valued faculty through enhanced retention efforts, and to increase the diversity of the faculty as a whole. Consider the following:

- Describe how you track and evaluate the faculty publications and citations thereof, research funding, honors and awards, editorships, and so forth. How does the department compare with national peers on these measures?
- Describe your effort to foster and promote intellectually rewarding collaborations among faculty within and across the department.
- Describe your goals for promoting diversity (e.g., demographic, socio-economic status, ability etc.) among the faculty, and how you monitor and assess your progress in meeting those goals.
- How do you gauge the faculty's perception of the department's climate regarding diversity and inclusion?
- Describe your effort to nominate faculty for national prizes, awards, and membership in distinguished societies and how you recognize and publicize faculty who receive distinguished academic awards and honors from their peers.
- What faculty retirements and new hiring can be anticipated in the next five years?

## **Teaching Excellence**

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As described in the Strategic Plan, Cornell's strong culture in support of research and scholarship should be matched with an equally strong culture in support of outstanding and inclusive teaching. The institution needs to ensure that the best scholars are in the classroom, and that programs explicitly articulate learning goals for their students so that they may be communicated to others and evaluated for continued improvement.

- Describe how teaching responsibilities are assigned. At each course-level (e.g. intro-level undergraduate, upper-division undergraduate, and graduate), what percent of courses are taught by: tenure-track faculty, tenured faculty, and other academic titles?
- Where relevant, describe how the department ensures that courses reflect, represent and include the contributions of all people. Describe any previous review on the curriculum that address such contributions, and the response to such review.
- Describe how the department builds an inclusive learning environment where students feel that their contributions and perspectives are equally valued and respected.

- Describe any goals—at the undergraduate and graduate level—for gender, racial, ethnic, and economic (e.g., first-generation to attend college) diversity, and how you monitor and assess your progress. How do you gauge the students’ perception of the department’s climate regarding diversity and inclusion?
- Describe the learning outcomes you seek to develop for the students (undergraduate, graduate, professional, as appropriate). How are these communicated to faculty, students, and other audiences?
- Relate the learning goals of the educational program to the underlying structure of the curriculum and the rationale for requirements for majors, minors, and graduates. What program learning objectives, if any, may be met by courses outside the program’s offerings? How do you ensure that courses outside of the program’s offerings are effective in meeting your learning objectives for students?
- What expectations are there for assessing student learning in courses? How is this tracked?
- How has your assessment efforts resulted in programmatic changes? Please discuss any changes made based on assessment separately for your undergraduate and graduate programs. Please include specific examples. Is there evidence for “incremental” curricular changes that over time add up to more than a 30% change since the curriculum was last reviewed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).
- Describe how you support educational innovations within and beyond the classroom (e.g., community-engaged learning).
- Describe whether the department offers opportunities for undergraduates to pursue research opportunities and, if so, how.
- Identify key stressors in your students’ experiences and describe the support mechanisms you have in place to facilitate and promote the academic success and retention of students who may be struggling.
- Describe the department’s approach to undergraduate and graduate advising to ensure that is core to the educational function and aligns with the department’s learning goals. How do you assess the effectiveness of advising? What steps does the department take to ensure that students receive systematic, high-quality advising as part of their education.

## **Excellence in Public Engagement**

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Public engagement refers to the proactive involvement of faculty, students, and staff designed to have an impact on the world outside the university, from local to global communities.

- Describe how faculty engage with the broader public, and any efforts you have to support those activities. How do you track and recognize faculty public engagement efforts?
- Describe any efforts to help students to identify public engagement opportunities—such as engaged learning and internships—that serve their educational goals
- List and describe major extension and other outreach programs (i.e., interactions with off-campus audiences including corporate contacts). Include program evaluation data or other indicators of impact when available. How are outreach and extension responsibilities distributed among

faculty of different ranks? What are the conclusions from the analyses and what changes, if any, to outreach and extension is the department considering in response to this analysis?

- Describe how the department tracks whether it interacts with people who are representative of the local and global communities.

## Appendices

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- Previous External Review

Include a table that summarizes your last university-initiated review as well as any reviews required by accrediting groups or government agencies. Describe any recommended actions, whether the action was taken, and whether any changes were considered to be successful.

- Department's Strategic Plan, if available
- Degree programs and requirements (e.g., from Acalog)
- Department's Annual Reviews for the last two years
- Data provided by the Graduate School