UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Quality Assurance | [YEAR]

Graduate Program Review

Self-Study Report

[Program(s) Name(s)]: Self-Study Report

[Date]

Prepared by:

[Self-study committee member name]
[Self-study committee member name]
[Self-study committee member name]
[Self-study committee member name]

Self-Study Process

Explain the process used to prepare the self-study, including the roles and contributions of students, staff, faculty, and alumni and how their perspectives have been taken into account. Student perspective can be captured in multiple ways:

- a student submission can be included in the self-study
- a town hall with students can be organized
- a student survey can be distributed to collect feedback.

Note that a session with students must be included in the site-visit schedule.

Disclosure of Generative Artificial Intelligence Use

Was generative AI used in the preparation of this report?

If yes, identify the AI tool(s) used and clearly describe how and where each tool was used. Identify the relevant sections, tables, figures, appendices, or other materials, where applicable.

Examples of AI use and disclosure may include:

- Writing and editing: ChatGPT was used to refine language, improve readability, clarify statements, correct grammar, and enhance the overall clarity and consistency of the report.
- Data visualization: Gemini was used to develop a graphic on page X that synthesizes and presents data provided in Table X.
- Data synthesis: A custom Gemini Gem was used to organize publicly available information about comparator institutions.

- Executive Summary: Gemini was used to summarize the self-study report, providing an executive summary.
- Thematic analysis: ChatGPT was used to identify themes and recurring issues in student feedback, which informed the analysis presented in *Section X*.
- Drafting and organization: [AI tool] was used to develop an initial outline or draft of *Section X* based on information, evidence, and instructions provided by the report authors.

Human oversight and accountability: All AI-generated or AI-assisted content has been subject to human review and verification. Report authors remain responsible for the accuracy, completeness, relevance, and integrity of the report, including the validation of data, interpretation of evidence, verification of sources, and confirmation of recommendations.

If no, the report should state: *"Generative AI tools were not used in the preparation or development of this report."*

Disclaimer

AI was used in the preparation of this disclaimer statement. ChatGPT was used to refine the language and provide examples of where generative AI may be used in the creation of a self-study report.

Graduate Program Review Self-Study

High quality teaching and research programs are the hallmark of the University of Alberta. The University is committed to a rigorous program of quality assurance to maintain program excellence in accordance with Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) expectations, while encouraging ongoing planning, self-assessment, and renewal.

The aim of the Graduate Program Review is to ensure programs have the necessary expertise, systems and resources to: (1) support effective and contemporary program delivery; (2) deliver content of appropriate breadth and rigour; and (3) engage, support and assess learning through a clearly defined set of learning outcomes. In addition to ensuring maintenance of expected standards, the review will consider responses to recommendations of previous reviews.

The graduate program review process includes the development of a self-study report using data as supplied by Institutional Data and Analytics (IDA), a site visit and report from the review team including member(s) from peer programs outside the University of Alberta, and a response to the visiting team's report by the program and the Dean of the Faculty under review. In the interest of accountability and transparency, a report summarizing the review outcomes will be made publicly available.

The self-study, which will guide the work of the visiting committee, should assess the strengths and challenges of the programs under review. The study should be both reflective and forward looking, and should include critical and comparative self-analysis using comparator information from three similar programs of high national and international reputation. The self-study should include input from students, graduates, faculty, and administration for the program. The self-study can be customized, adding materials required to address specific and unique features of the program.

The Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) has a mandate from the Post-Secondary Learning Act to review and monitor degree programs to ensure compliance with the standards and conditions established under the *Program of Study Regulation*. The report produced from this self-study, and the outcomes of the program reviews, may be shared with the CAQC.

Please submit your Self-Study report and appendices in electronic format.
The suggested length is **no more than 25 pages**, excluding appendices.

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Introduction

Provide a brief history of the unit, including any relevant changes in the unit and programs since the last periodic review. This may include comments specific to the department, faculty or large/impactful changes to the institution at large. Provide an introduction to the academic programs under review. Include the number of students and academic staff associated with each program. Include a URL for the unit and for each program included in the self-study.

Response to the Last Review

Summarize the most recent Graduate Program Review, accreditation, and/or other parallel review(s). Provide an update on the current status of all recommendations and actions identified in your previous quality assurance review. **Append the past excerpted report.**

NOTE: Not all previous recommendations or action plans may be relevant due to the current state of the program. Where this is the case, please indicate N/A with a brief explanation.

Teaching and Learning

Program Structure

- Describe structures for governance, academic oversight, and administration of the program (may append organizational chart) including student involvement in governance and appeals processes.
- Provide a general overview of the admission requirements and process, and where applicable, how certificates ladder into the program.
- Describe the course requirements, examinations, and other training components such as practicums or clinical experience for all streams or second level specializations.
- List the program-level learning outcomes (PLOs)[1] .
- Map courses and other program requirements to the PLOs and where applicable relate to accreditation standards. The following template may be used to map PLOs to courses and other program requirements for each specialization.
  - Curriculum Mapping to PLOs to Courses
- Summarize changes made in the last five years and/or since last review.
- Append program guidelines and any additional policies (this may be a link to a website)

The following standard language explaining graduate program governance should be included in the report:

The authority for the [PROGRAM NAME] graduate program rests with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Subject to General Faculties Council (GFC) approval, GPS determines the programs of study for graduate programs and sets minimum standards on all aspects of graduate education, for all Faculties on campus, including minimum admission standards, time limits for the completion of program milestones, supervision and thesis defence, examination, and residency requirements.

The following standard language pertaining to the admission process should be included in the report:

GPS confirms the formal eligibility of the application and forwards it to the program. The department then sends the Official Letter of Acceptance to the student, outlining the promised funding as well as any conditions associated with the funding.

The following standard language is provided regarding required Ethics and Academic Citizenship courses developed by FGPS:

Masters students are required to complete INT D 710: Ethics and Academic Citizenship course (https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/ethics/int-d-710.html).

[1] *Where learning outcomes for the program have not been articulated to date, outline the process to be undertaken to develop program learning outcomes and their assessment.*

PhD students are required to complete INT D 710: Ethics and Academic Citizenship (if not already completed) and INT D 720: Advanced Ethics and Academic Citizenship (https://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-studies/professional-development/ethics/int-d-720.html).

Comparative Analysis

- Provide a comparative analysis of the programs under review with 3 programs from the same discipline/specialty that are of high reputation, to identify the current state of the discipline and potentially inform changes and improvements in the programs. One international comparator may be used if appropriate.
- Consideration may include program structure, course requirements, opportunities to individualize through specializations or concentrations, admission requirements, program length, strategies to attract a diverse student population, etc.
- Explain your rationale for the selection of comparator programs. Indicate why programs were deemed to be comparable, illustrate the similarities and differences, and highlight the key strengths and unique aspects of your program and indicate future program changes you may consider as a result of your analysis.
- The analysis should include a brief overview of each comparator, including relative strengths and unique aspects identified. Following this, opportunities for improvement in the program under review identified as a result of the comparative analysis should be discussed.
- Detailed information gathered to inform the comparative analysis may be presented in table format and appended.

Learning Environment

- Describe courses taught through the program and reliance on courses from other units, as well as enrollment trends in courses including teaching students from other units (Program Measures included - Courses taught by target faculty to students from all other faculties and all courses, from all faculties, attended by students from target faculty; link to the course offerings in the University Calendar).
- Describe discipline-specific aspects of the learning environment, highlighting relationships to internal and external partner institutes, centres, or networks that contribute to the learning environment.
- Describe opportunities to gain experience presenting and feedback on research or creative works (eg. presentations; attend symposia; interact with external visitors).
- Describe opportunities to network and collaborate (eg. connect to peers; work in teams; mentor others; mobility to other institutions or outside organizations).
- Describe opportunities to participate in multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary training and research opportunities;
- Describe opportunities to participate in outreach, service, experiential learning, and community engagement.

- If the program requires clinical or work experience, describe administration of the placements including institutional and student role, and how quality and satisfaction are measured from both the student and employer perspective.
- Where blended or distance learning is involved in delivery of the program, discuss how students are informed of the competencies, self-discipline and equipment they require, how students and faculty are supported with evolving technology, how risks inherent to online delivery are mitigated, and how a team/collaborative/networked learning environment is achieved. Explain how distance students obtain mentoring from faculty and peer interactions.
- Explain how diverse learners are accommodated by the program.

Indigenization, Decolonization, Responding to the TRC Calls to Action

The University of Alberta has committed to responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, as outlined in the University of Alberta's Indigenous Strategic Plan: Braiding Past, Present and Future: University of Alberta Indigenous Strategic Plan. These commitments include that we view all of our programs with a critical eye to the University of Alberta's responsibility as a post secondary education institution in relation to Canada's Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. **Describe your department or faculty's progress and plans** toward responding to these commitments, including:

- Are students provided the opportunity to learn about Indigenous and reconciliation content related to the discipline and Indigenous ways of knowing about the discipline;
- How accessible are the programs for Indigenous students;
- Do Indigenous faculty members and staff have a presence, and are there spaces that welcome Indigenous faculty, staff, students and community members;
- Are there partnerships and involvement with Indigenous communities?

Access, Community and Belonging

The University of Alberta is committed to creating a university where we ensure access for a diversity of learners, foster connections, and remove barriers to success, as outlined in Changing the Story: An Integrated Action Plan for Transforming Our Vibrant and Interconnected University Community.

Describe your department's or faculty's progress and plans *towards ensuring the program(s) under review are equitable, accessible, and inclusive to all persons. The following prompts are aligned with the Access, Community and Belonging Considerations for Programs and Certificates Guide for Programs and Certificates prepared by the Office of Access, Community and Belonging.*

In your response, consider the following:

- Do admission requirements impose barriers to students from equity-denied or underserved populations?
- What efforts are being made to ensure recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and instructors from all backgrounds and experiences?

- How are instructors and staff being informed about strategies for inclusive teaching, advising or mentoring to foster safety and belonging in the program and program delivery?
- How flexible is the program and program delivery to facilitate access for all students (full-time, part-time, online, evening, etc).
- Is work-integrated learning and experiential learning accessible to all interested students, and are there diverse range of opportunities and experiences available with external partners?
- Are supports available for students experiencing barriers/ implementation of accommodations?
- How are diverse perspectives incorporated into or supplemented by the curriculum?

Program Measures

Enrollment and Outcomes

Using the data provided by Institutional Data and Analytics (IDA) and additional data relevant to your program, provide a narrative analysis discussing the context and projections for your graduate programs in the following areas:

Note: Where possible, the use of visual data representations (graphs, charts etc.) is recommended to support the narrative of your self-study

Comment on:

- Student demand (Measures included - Applicants; Applicants Admitted; Applicants Registered)
- Trends in applicant qualifications, admission GPA, recruitment strategies
- Enrolment (Measures included - Full-Time Student Headcount; Part-Time Student Headcount,)
- Retention (Measures included - Student Cohort Headcount; Graduated Headcount; Returned to Same Faculty Headcount; Returned to Different Faculty Headcount; Withdraw Headcount)
- Completion (Measures included - Student "Completer" Headcount; Average Time To Completion (years), Degrees completed by year)
- Contextualize extent and impact of publications and other scholarly products by students for thesis-based programs
- Barriers to student success from faculty and student perspective
- Internal funding policies for students

APPEND:

- Standard tables provided by IDA:
  - Applicants; Applicants Admitted; Applicants Registered
  - Full-Time Student Headcount; Part-Time Student Headcount
  - Student Cohort Headcount; Graduated Headcount; Returned to Same Faculty Headcount; Returned to Different Faculty Headcount; Withdraw Headcount)
  - Student "Completer" Headcount; Average Time To Completion (years)
  - Degrees completed by year
  - Enrolment with demographics,
  - Time to Completion,

- Tables of Graduate Financial Support (Measures included - Internal; Federal; Provincial; Other Scholarships; GTA; GRA; Other Employment Income; Proportion of students receiving support; average total support,Tri-Council)

- Data not provided by IDA
  - Average Admission GPA by year (will be provided in future years)
  - For thesis-based programs, summary table of publications and/or scholarly products per student as appropriate for discipline (e.g. Books, Journal Publications, Conference Presentations, Policy Recommendations, Creative Works)

Student Satisfaction

Describe student satisfaction with the program (courses, supervision, general learning environment), explain how student input was gathered such as Town Hall, Survey, or Student-led self-study. Where numbers permit, data from the *Canadian Graduate and Professional Survey (CGPSS)* and the *Government of Alberta - Graduate Outcomes Survey* is available from IDA.

Professional Development and Career Training

- Comment on employment outcomes post-graduation (data from the *Government of Alberta - Graduate Outcomes Survey* is available through IDA upon request)
- Describe student career pathways in terms of type of employment, further education, or the impact of the credential on career progression and leadership.
- Describe how traditional and nontraditional career development activities are incorporated into the program, such as mentoring for scholarship applications, teaching opportunities, training in education, and outside-networking, and support for creating individual development plan.
- Describe how students fulfill PD requirements (applicable for cohorts starting 2016).

The following suggested standard language is provided for inclusion in the self study regarding Professional Development and Career Training

The University of Alberta Professional Development Requirement has two components that must be submitted to the program's graduate coordinator prior to convocation:

1. An individualized career plan document called an Individual Development Plan (IDP); and
2. The completion of eight hours of professional development activities inspired by the career plan.

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a crucial part of a graduate student's professional development, and is a tool to assist students in self-assessment of their skills and competencies and career planning. The IDP offers students an opportunity to think about how they will complement the disciplinary knowledge they develop through their program with skills, competencies, and experiences academic and non-academic employers are looking for. The IDP is an opportunity to set students on a path to achieving their professional goals.

Faculty and Supervision

Comment on the profile of the faculty members affiliated with the program and practices for mentoring of graduate students. Include faculty members who supervise students who are not part of the department or outside the university.

- Review areas of excellence and impact of research of the supervisors and instructors in relation to training in the field using discipline appropriate metrics of impact to support claims (public profile, awards, H-index, patents, spin-off companies, editorial roles, expertise sought by industry/public sector/press, etc.). (Data not provided by IDA, the Library may be of assistance)
    - The University of Alberta Research Impact Services team in the library will work with programs to prepare a research/scholarly impact statement and report and benchmark their research output with comparable universities. Programs are asked to meet with Research Impact within 2-4 weeks of the initiation meeting to discuss the report for the programs and measures are provided by October/November, unless otherwise noted. *Email:* researchimpact@ualberta.ca
- Assess the relationship of faculty composition to the program in terms of: rank; retirement/renewal; specializations; and areas of research focus and supervisory capacity. (Measures provided by IDA - Staff Headcount & FTE (including average age); Faculty, Headcount by Rank;)
- Comment on distribution of teaching in graduate courses and sustainability
- Highlight significant teaching and mentoring awards.
- Describe oversight of supervision, distribution of students supervised by faculty, tools and training to support best practices in supervision including supervision of course-based master's capping exercise.
- Indicate how issues with supervisors and students are resolved and mechanisms for communication of issues with the Chair to whom the supervisor reports.

APPEND:

- **Measures as supplied by IDA**
- **List of faculty who supervise graduate students**
- **Faculty CVs.** CVs are required for all faculty members with supervisory privileges for the program. All CVs should be in a standardized format and include the previous five years: graduate students supervised, teaching, service activity, funding and publications.

The following suggested standard language is provided for inclusion in the self-study regarding Faculty and Supervision

There are three Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (GPS) supervision initiatives to promote good supervision, including:

1. the thesis-based student Progress Report;
2. the Adjunct Academic Appointment and Graduate Student Supervision Policy & Graduate Student Supervision Development Procedure and;

3. the Student-Supervisor Guidelines.

The GPS Supervision Policy requires that all new faculty members complete the supervisory development program within the first two years of their tenure in order to retain their adjunct academic appointment in GPS and be able to supervise graduate students.

Resources

- Explain resources available, how they are allocated, and how they are applied to the educational mandate. Resources include, but are not limited to: a) funding for student support (TA/RA, scholarships, grants); b) laboratory equipment, computers, collections, databases etc.; c) library resources; d) space: offices for students, teaching space, social space, rehearsal space, study space, etc.; e) facilities and equipment shared with other units, departments, faculties, and universities; f) technical and other staff support; g) large infrastructure grants.
- Identify challenges and opportunities for infrastructure and resources.

Disciplinary-Specific Components

In this optional section, include or expand on areas relevant to the discipline and defined by the program as essential for the quality of the educational experience. Wherever possible, use concrete examples and criteria for excellence.

Synthesis and Future Considerations

- Summarize the current position of the programs, the vision for future development and plans to achieve them.
- Summarize strengths and areas for improvement and gaps identified through the self-study.
- Analyse goals and plans for program improvement for the next five years placed in the context of the external environment.
- Indicate how success will be measured.
- As appropriate, explain alignment of goals with strategic plans of Department, Faculty and University.

Appendices

This list is not exhaustive. Include additional appendices as necessary.

Past Excerpted Report

Program Structure, Curriculum and Outcomes

- Program Guidelines and any additional policies (this may be a link to a website)
- Program Learning Outcomes table

Comparator Institutions

- Table outlining the comparison of the programs

Faculty CV Collection

- List of Faculty who supervise graduate students
- CVs are required for all faculty members with supervisory privileges for the program.
- All CVs should be in a standardized format and include the previous five years: graduate students supervised, teaching, service activity, funding and publications.

Unit Organizational Chart

Include roles of senior administrators, student services staff and others as appropriate to your program.

Data Tables from IDA

- IDA will provide data for the measures listed in this self-study. Please include the data in an appendix unless they have been integrated throughout the self-study or in a different format.

Additional Information

Institutional Plans

The following institutional plans are provided for units preparing their self-study report as they may provide valuable information/context

- SHAPE: A Strategic Plan of Impact
- Changing the Story: An Integrated Action Plan 2025
- A Culture of Care: University of Alberta's Safety Action Plan 2023 - 2025
- Forward with Purpose: A Strategic Plan for Research and Innovation 2023 - 2028
- Igniting Purpose: Student Experience Action Plan 2023 - 2026
- Forward Together: The University of Alberta People Strategy 2024 - 2034

Quality Assurance Guidelines

Quality Assurance Suite of Activities: Guidelines for Reviews