

Review of Designated Emphases (DEs)

Approved October 19, 2000

Revised – February 27, 2002

Revised – March 4, 2011

Revised – April 19, 2018

REVIEW & EVALUATION PROCESS

DEs will be evaluated by the Program Review Committee (PRC) via a single ad-hoc faculty reviewer, but without an automatically required on-site review. An optional one hour meeting with the DE Chair can be requested at the discretion of the reviewer. DE reviews will be based primarily on three sources:

1. Graduate Studies-provided 10-year summary data report that includes trend enrollment, graduation data, and the home PhD programs of students in the DE;
2. The DE self-review (described below); and
3. The confidential online student and faculty surveys.

The key questions for the review of the DE are whether or not it provides “added value” for the enrolled students and for UCD in general, and if there are weaknesses that need to be addressed.

THE DE SELF-REVIEW

The DE self-review documentation should be 2-4 pages in length, not including appendices, with a greater length allowed for larger DEs. It should be submitted electronically as a single PDF, and should include the following information:

- I. General Information on the DE
 - A. Name of DE and its original approval date
 - B. Contact information for the chair and staff for the DE
 - C. The website for the DE
 - D. The goal of the DE
 - E. A list of the affiliated graduate programs with the affiliated faculty from those programs noted
- II. Quality of the Program
 - A. What is the need for graduates from this DE on a local and global basis?
 - B. The DE completion rate is the percentage of students who graduate with the DE, among the students who enroll in the DE and complete a PhD. If the DE completion rate is below 90%, please explain which DE requirements the students do not fulfill.
 - C. How has the training (e.g. coursework and mentoring) in the DE assisted students in formulating and/or conducting their research?
 - D. Does the DE have the faculty expertise necessary to provide adequate training in the DE?
 - E. If the end-product of students’ research is a publication, are students publishing in well-respected journals?
 - F. Do you have any information from alumni regarding the quality and usefulness of the DE?
 - G. Are alumni in the program actively engaged or employed in work associated with their training in the DE?
 - H. In those fields where extramural support is available through training grants, are these available to support students in the DE? If yes, give details.
- III. Summary
 - A. Summarize the overall strengths of the DE and how you plan to maintain them.
 - B. Summarize the overall weaknesses of the DE and how you plan to correct them.
 - C. What are the DEs strategies for addressing challenges and opportunities over the

next 7 years?

IV. Appendices

- A. Insert the Graduate Studies-provided data report as Appendix A
- B. Insert the Graduate Council-approved degree requirements for the DE as Appendix B
- C. Insert the Graduate Council-approved bylaws for the DE as Appendix C
- D. Documents from the previous review
 - Graduate Council transmittal letter, with the PRC report attached.
 - The response(s) from the relevant parties (DE Chair, programs, department, deans, etc.)
 - Graduate Council PRC Closure letter, with the Program Review Closure Committee recommendation attached.
 - Other documentation pertinent to the designated emphasis being reviewed (admission suspensions, etc.); only as needed.
 - For DE's being reviewed for the first time, include the approved DE proposal.

TIMELINE OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

Sunset Clause Notices and Initiation letters of DE reviews will be sent by the Graduate Council typically during Fall quarter prior to "Year 1" of the review.

Sunset Clause Notice¹

- A letter notifying the DE Chair of the Sunset Clause will be sent one year prior to "Year 1" of the review. The DE Chair will be required to respond to Graduate Council indicating that they wish to continue with the review or opt to Sunset the DE at this time. If the DE Chair requests to continue with the review, an initiation letter will be issued, and the process will continue as outlined below.

"Year 1" of the review:

- February: Per the [Policy Regulating Programmatic Changes](#), the deadline for submission of any changes to the degree requirements and bylaws will be the last Day in February prior to the programs self-review submission deadline. Changes to degree requirements and bylaws cannot be approved during the "review phase".
- March: Faculty and student email information submitted for the confidential questionnaire process.
- March: Data reports provided by Graduate Studies distributed to the DE
- April: The confidential questionnaire process is initiated.
- July: the DE submits their self-review. Failure to submit a self-review by the deadline may result in Graduate Council suspending or closing admissions to the DE, or invoking the "sunset clause"¹ for the DE.

"Year 2" of the review:

- Fall Quarter: reviews are conducted by the ad-hoc reviewer
- Fall/Winter Quarter: ad hoc reviewer submits their letter of findings, and recommendations to the PRC.
- Winter Quarter: the results of the DE reviews and the recommendations of the PRC will be presented to Graduate Council for action.

REVIEW OUTCOMES

After its evaluation of the ad hoc reviewers' findings, PRC will make one of the following recommendations to Graduate Council:

- a. "Excellent Review" with a recommendation to re-review the DE in 7 years;
- b. "Good Review" with a recommendation to re-review the DE in 4 years;

or

- c. “Unsatisfactory Review” with a recommendation for either i) a more intensive one-day on-site review with a single ad-hoc reviewer immediately, or (ii) closure of admissions to the DE.

Graduate Council reserves the right to close admissions to the DE and invoke the DE “sunset clause” on the basis of lack of participation of graduate programs and/or students in the DE, as measured by enrollment and completion data.

¹ Designated Emphasis Policy and Proposal Guidelines

Approval of new DE programs includes a 7-year “sunset clause.” That is, admissions to the DE will end automatically after 7 years unless continuation is requested in the self-review documents created by the DE as part of the program review process. The rationale for the sunset clause is that DE programs should reflect current needs and changing trends in education, and thus they may be short-lived.

<https://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/sites/default/files/upload/files/grad-council/gc1988-02-de-policy-and-procedures.pdf>