

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor  
for Academic Affairs

Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



November 16, 2010

**Committee for Assessing Doctoral Programs:**

Anne Baranger, Chemistry (Area I)  
May Berenbaum, Entomology (Area IV)  
Carla Cáceres, Animal Biology (Area IV)  
Paul Duncum, Art & Design (Area II)  
Deba Dutta, Graduate College, Chair  
Rayvon Fouché, History (Area II)  
Xuming He, Statistics (Area I)  
Jim Imlay, Microbiology (Area IV)  
Christine Jenkins, Library & Information Science (Area III)  
Sheldon Katz, Mathematics (Area I)  
Joe Mahoney, Business Administration (Area III)  
Anna-Maria Marshall, Sociology (Area III)  
Michael Plewa, Crop Sciences (Area IV)  
Michael Rothberg, English (Area II)  
Tom Schwandt, Educational Psychology (Area III)  
Al Valocchi, Civil and Environmental Engineering (Area I)  
Jeffery Woods, Kinesiology & Community Health (Area III)  
James Yoon, Linguistics (Area II)

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the committee for assessing doctoral programs on this campus. Deba Dutta, Dean of the Graduate College has agreed to chair this committee. Additional support to your committee will be provided by Carol Livingstone (DMI) and Stig Lanesskog (Provost's Office).

This assessment should address fundamental questions about the overall scope of doctoral education at Illinois. In addition to the size, quality, demand and effectiveness of individual doctoral programs, this assessment should take into account measures of success for each program (e.g., time to degree, completion rates, job placements, reputations among peers, etc.). It is also important for this committee to consider the costs of running doctoral programs.

I have discussed the overall process and timeline for this review with Deba. The committee members are grouped into four broad areas—Area I: Engineering & Physical Sciences, Area II: Humanities and Creative Arts, Area III: Behavioral and Social Sciences Area, and Area IV: Biological and Agricultural Sciences. The sub-committees will review doctoral

programs in their respective areas using metrics, indicators and a process agreed upon by the full committee. The committee's report should contain, briefly, the strengths and weaknesses of each program as well as your recommendations.

I ask that this review be completed and the final report submitted to my office by July/August 2011. Based on the results of this review AY 2011-12 will be devoted to the dissemination of best practices for doctoral education on campus and possibly further analysis of some programs.

I realize that this review calls for a significant commitment from you, but I also believe that the importance of this review warrants the effort required. Doctoral education is central to the mission of a research university. Ensuring its quality is critical for attracting the best faculty and students. This assessment will enable us to make sound decisions about the future of doctoral education at Illinois. Thank you once again for agreeing to serve on this committee.

Sincerely,



Richard P. Wheeler  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Interim)

c: Robert Easter  
Deba Dutta  
Carol Livingstone  
Stig Lanesskog