NRC Assessment of Doctoral Programs

What to expect and how we are preparing
Third assessment in a series to help universities improve the quality of their doctoral programs

New assessment will:

- have expanded number of disciplines (>60)
- include data for more than 5,000 programs
- include data relating to student financing, teaching, other resources
- be quantitative rather than reputational
- include a database tool
What are the goals of the NRC Assessment

- Contribute to a fuller understanding of doctoral education in America
- Provide ranges of ratings and rankings, by program and by components within programs, of doctoral programs
What are the goals of the NRC assessment?

- Provide data for doctoral programs to:
  - compare themselves to other similar programs
  - use to improve their current practices
- Provide accessible data about program characteristics for prospective doctoral students
How have we done so far?

- **Program completion rates:**
  - Illinois – 100 %
  - National – 89 %

- **Faculty completion rates:**
  - Illinois – 83 %
  - National – 73 %

- **Student completion rates:**
  - Illinois – 71 %
  - National – 53 %
Methodology report released July ‘09

- Ratings based on THREE components:
  1. Research Impact
  2. Student Support and Outcomes
  3. Diversity of Academic Environment

- Reporting of Ratings and Rankings
  - Range of ratings and rankings for each program
  - Programs arranged alphabetically
  - Ranges will overlap for many programs
How will the ratings and ranges be calculated?

- **Explicit** - What do faculty value?
  - from Faculty Questionnaire

- **Implicit** - What correlates with perceived quality?
  - results of the rating questionnaire for a sample of programs/field administered to faculty (stratified by respondent rank, program size, and region of the country)

- Ranges developed from variance among 500 raters, within each category
When should the results be released?

**Anticipated dates:**

- **✓ Summer 2009:** Methodology Guide
- **❓ Late 2009:** Release of Report and Database
  - Participants will see ratings for their programs no more than 72 hours before public release
- **❓ Spring 2010 - Conference on Uses and Analyses of the Data**
Data categories

- MEASURES THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE WHEN THE STUDY IS RELEASED
- **Dimensional Measures**
- **Additional Variables Used in the Overall Ranking**
- **Additional Variables of Interest**
Data Categories

- **Dimensional Measures-1**
- Research Activity
- Publications per Allocated Faculty, 2001-2006 (Non-Humanities)
- Published Books and Articles per Allocated Faculty (Humanities) 1996-2006
- Average Citations per Publication (Non-Humanities), 1986-2006
- Percent of Faculty with Grants, 2006
- Awards per Allocated Faculty, 1976-2006
Data Categories

- Dimensional Measures-2
- Student Support and Outcomes
- Percent Students Receiving Full Support in the First Year (Fall 2005)
- Average Percent Completing (8-Year Completion Percentage for Humanities Fields, 6 Years for Other Fields)
- Median Time to Degree (for Full- and Part-Time Graduates)
- Percent Ph.D.’s with Definite Plans for an Academic Position or PostDoc, 2001-2005
- Program Collects Outcomes Data
Data Categories

- **Dimensional Measures-3**
- **Diversity of the Academic Environment**
- Percent Non-Asian Minority Faculty of Core and New Faculty, 2005
- Percent Female Faculty of Core and New Faculty, 2005
- Percent Non-Asian Minority Students, 2005
- Percent Female Students, 2005
- Percent International Students, 2005
Data Categories

- **Additional Variables Used in the Overall Ranking**
- Average Annual Ph.D.'s Graduated 2002-2006
- Percent of Faculty Interdisciplinary, 2005
- Average GRE, 2004-2006 (Verbal Measure for the Humanities, Quantitative Measure for All Other Fields)
- Percent First-Year Students with External Funding, (Fall 2005)
- Student Work Space
- Health Insurance
- Student Activities

Note: the measures that were eventually significant in determining the rankings varied from discipline to discipline, but the initial model included all of the above.
Data Categories

- Additional Variables of Interest
- Number of Total Faculty, 2005
- Percent Assistant Professors, 2005
- Percent of Total Faculty with Tenure, 2005
- Percent of Faculty Core or New, 2005
- Total Enrollment, 2005
- First-Year Enrollment, 2005
- Percent of Students with RA's, 2005
- Percent of Students with TA's, 2005
What to look for in the final report?

- **Comparison of programs**
  - Look at range of rankings for all measures in your programs field

- **Understand the Range of Rankings**
  - What are the most important variables in each field?
  - Where a program stand on those variables compared to others in the field?

- **Data Beyond the 20 variables**
  - On-line database will contain additional data on student financing, teaching and research training and student resources
What programs can expect to receive

1. Complete set of analyses on their doctoral program
   - last US News & World Report Ranking
   - third quartile ranking of program among variables within each field
   - data specific to doctoral programs within their own College?

2. Opportunities for individual follow-up
For example, in fictitious Illinois program ranked 5-7, out of 136 programs

Ranking, by 3rd quartile, of most heavily weighted categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average publications per faculty</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average PhDs per year (2002-2006)</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% faculty with grants</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards per faculty</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average citations per publication</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And so on, down to lesser weighted categories...