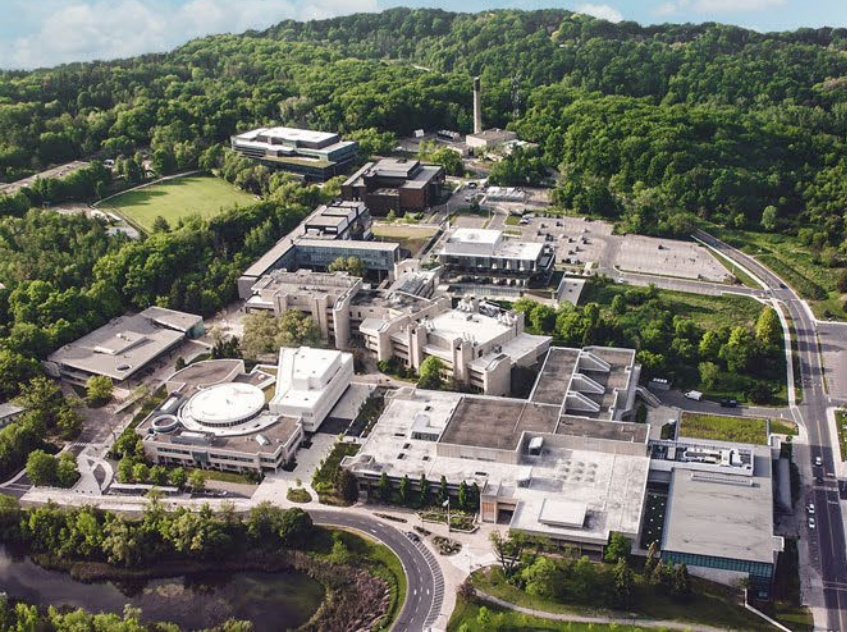


University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP)

Reviews Workshop

April 30, 2025
1:00-2:30 p.m.



Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic
Programs



Welcome

Prof. Nick Rule

Vice-Provost, Academic Programs (VPAP)

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. UTQAP Overview & Review Essentials
3. External Program Reviews: Overview of Curricular Alignment
4. Advice from Colleagues

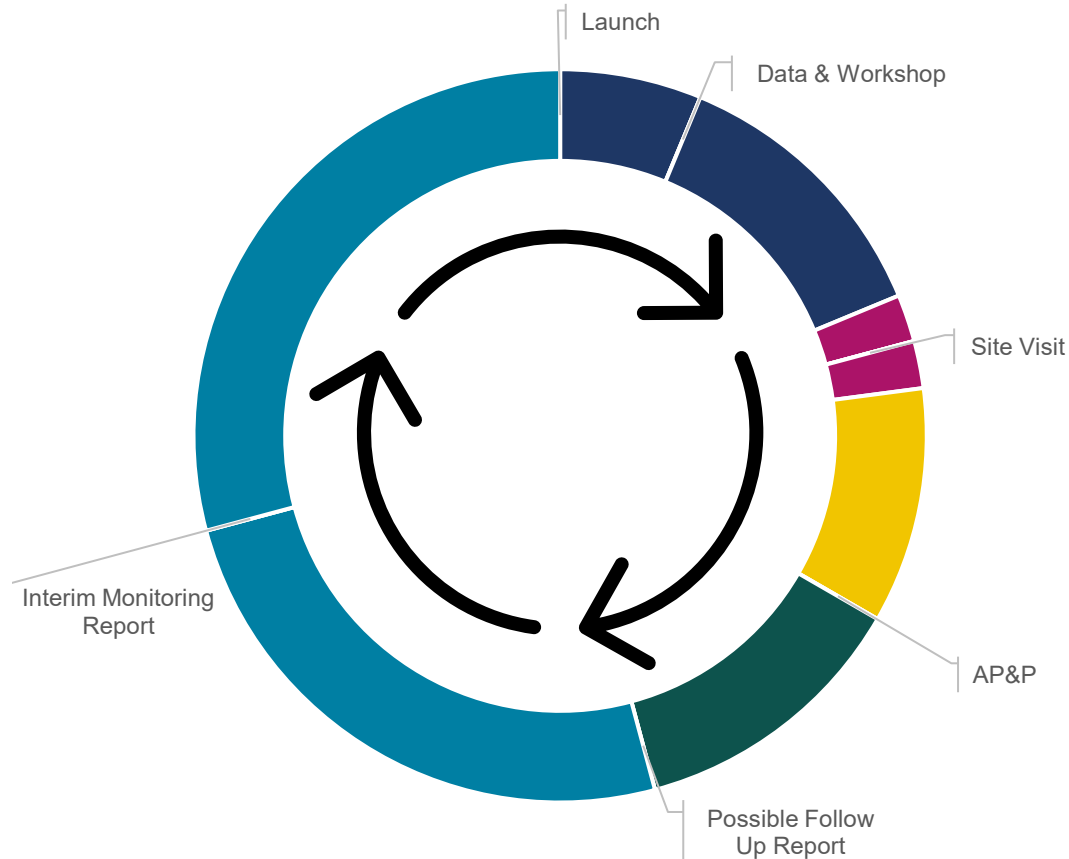
Quality Assurance at the University of Toronto

“The University of Toronto is committed to excellence in all our academic programs. Thus, quality assurance through assessment of new program proposals and review of academic programs and units in which they reside is a priority for the University.”

Source: [Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units](#)

University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP)

8 Year Cycle

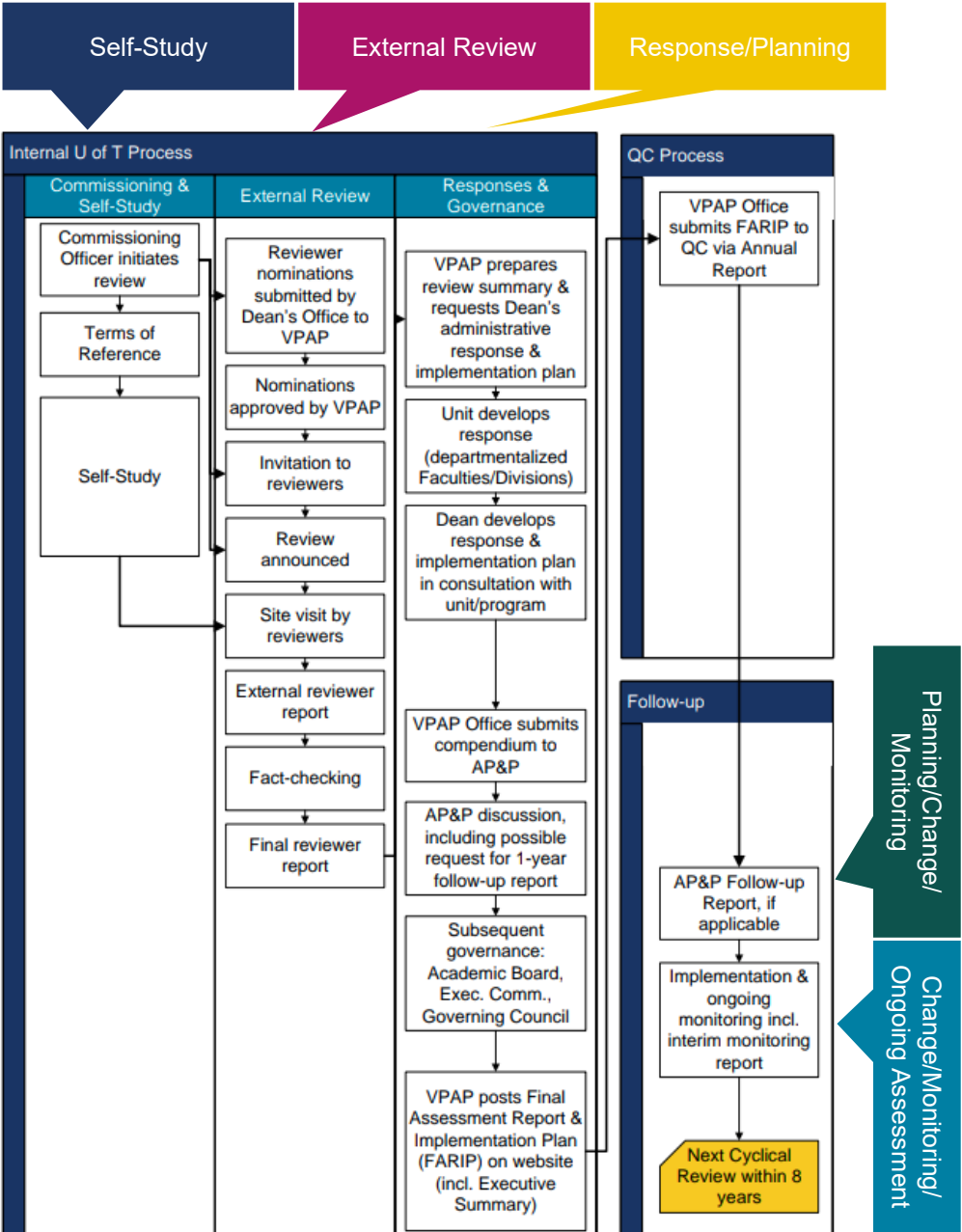


- Ongoing appraisal and quality improvement
- Expert advice from leaders in the field
- Assess performance relative to international peers
- “reflecting on, assessing, and developing plans to change and improve academic programs and units in the context of institutional and divisional commitments and priorities”



UTQAP Reviews: Key Elements

Protocol for Cyclical Reviews



[Click here for a PDF of the full diagram](#)

External Reviewers

The review processes must address the quality of programs, and how the programs and the units in which they reside compare to the best in their field among international peer institutions.

[Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units](#)

The commitments articulated in the University's [Statement on Equity, Diversity and Excellence](#) should inform the nomination and selection of reviewers.

[UTQAP](#)



Associate or full professors



Active and respected in their field



Program management experience



From peer institutions offering high quality programs in the field under review*
*often U15, AAU, equivalent



“Arm’s length”

Self-Study: Evidence

- [Data packages](#)
- Library report
- Previous review report(s) and administrative response(s)
- Course descriptions
- CVs*
- [Student services statement](#)

Supplement all of the above with other data & documents relevant to your programs

Resources:

[Creating an Effective Self-Study](#) (QC)

*Optional: use [DiscoverResearch](#) to auto-generate CVs

Self-Study: Evidence

UTQAP GUIDANCE

Guide to concepts and terminology in UTQAP and related templates



VP Academic Programs

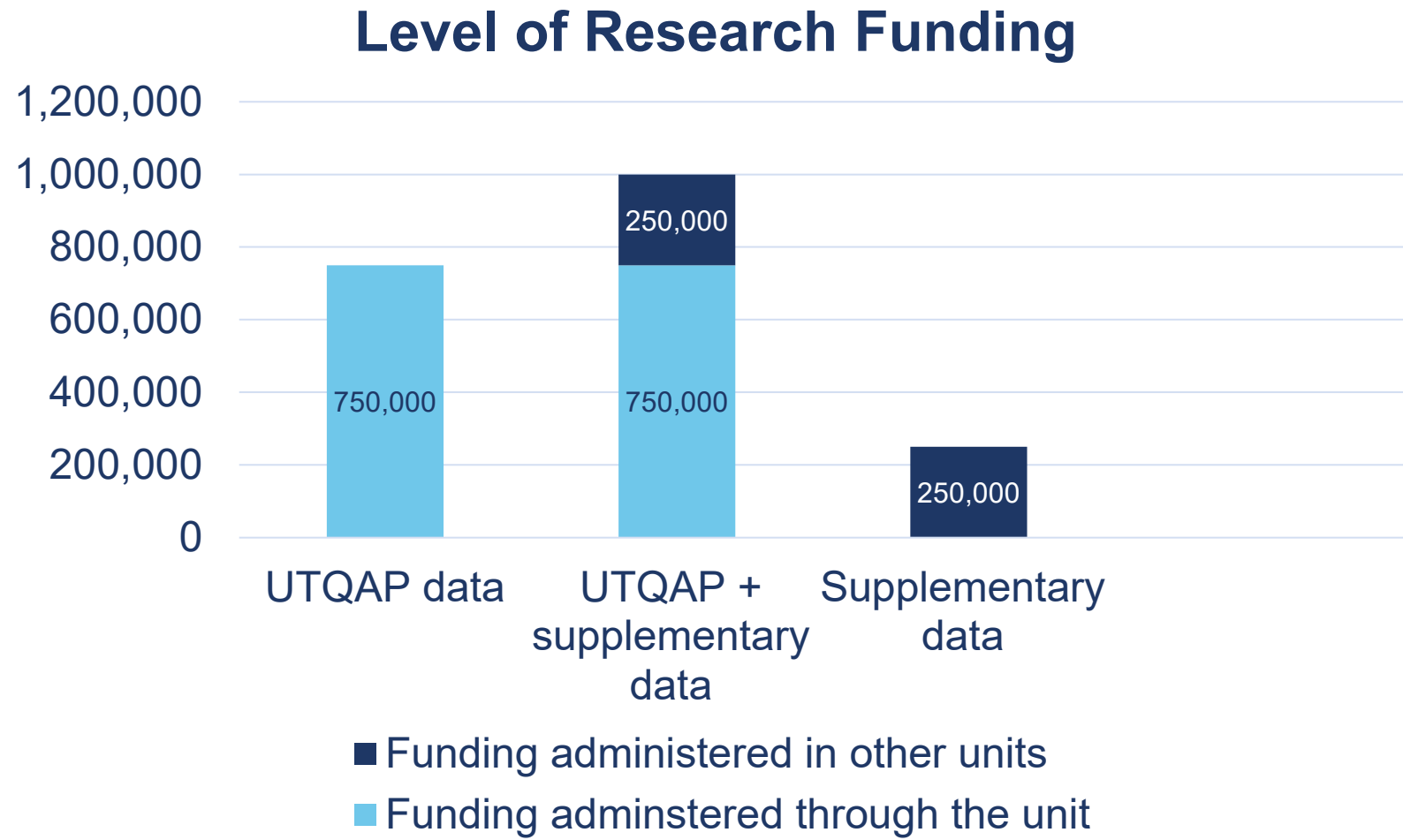
Link: [UTQAP Guidance](#)

Example: Research funding data

The quality of the scholarship of the faculty, and the degree to which that scholarship is brought to bear in teaching are the foundations of academic excellence.

Policy for Approval and Review of Academic Programs and Units

Example: Research funding data



Self-Study: Evidence

Funded research

- Faculty with budgetary appointments in the program, who administer research grants in the unit under review
- **UTQAP data package:** Research \$ administered through the unit offering the program

Funded research

- Faculty with budgetary appointments elsewhere, who administer research grants elsewhere
- **Supplementary data:** Research \$ administered through other units and/or outside U of T

Other evidence (as appropriate within the discipline)

- **Various sources:** e.g., summarized information from the CV volume; publication / citation information, etc.

Faculty with ongoing role in the program:
evidence of the quality of the scholarship of the faculty

Self-Study: Additional Questions from Participants

Question:

Is there specific guidance for articulating and discussing “program objectives”

Answer:

The [UTQAP Guidance](#) page has a section on “Program Objectives” as well as the “Interdependency of Program Objectives and Program-Level Outcomes”. This information is adapted from a variety of sources.

Question:

How should graduate chairs be involved in reviews?

Answer:

[Recommended Practices for Reviewing Programs Offered Across Units and/or Divisions](#) applies to tri-campus graduate programs, and explains how involvement should unfold throughout the review process (incl. but not limited to the self-study). MOAs for tri-campus graduate units may include (but do not require) provisions for graduate chair engagement in undergraduate reviews.



Overview of Curricular Alignment in the Self-Study

Jessie Richards

Curriculum Development Specialist,
Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education

The self-study is an opportunity to... consider critical questions about the program

How current is the program?
What is being emphasized?
Are we preparing graduates
for traditional and/or
emerging roles?

How can we make the
program more innovative?

What aspects of the program
are problematic for students
and how do we resolve
them?

How are
Indigenous/Black/other
marginalized perspectives
being incorporated into the
program in terms of
pedagogies and/or
content?

Are there any new or emerging
priorities or initiatives that we
should examine?

(E.g., mental health and wellness,
GenAI, integrating educational
technology, experiential learning
opportunities, etc.)

The self-study is an opportunity to... explore questions about the curriculum

Do we have the right prerequisites for upper-level courses? The right core courses?

Why do students struggle with x in fourth year?

Are we building students' capacity to do x in each year, or teaching them the same thing over and over?

Where does it makes sense to incorporate x new skill in the program?

How can we add more experiential learning opportunities?

The self-study is an opportunity to... highlight educational innovation

Significant innovation or
creativity in the content
and/or delivery of the
program

Opportunities for learning
beyond the classroom

Initiatives to foster
professional development

Initiatives to enhance the
quality of the program and
the learning and teaching
environment

How faculty research
supports the research and
learning of students

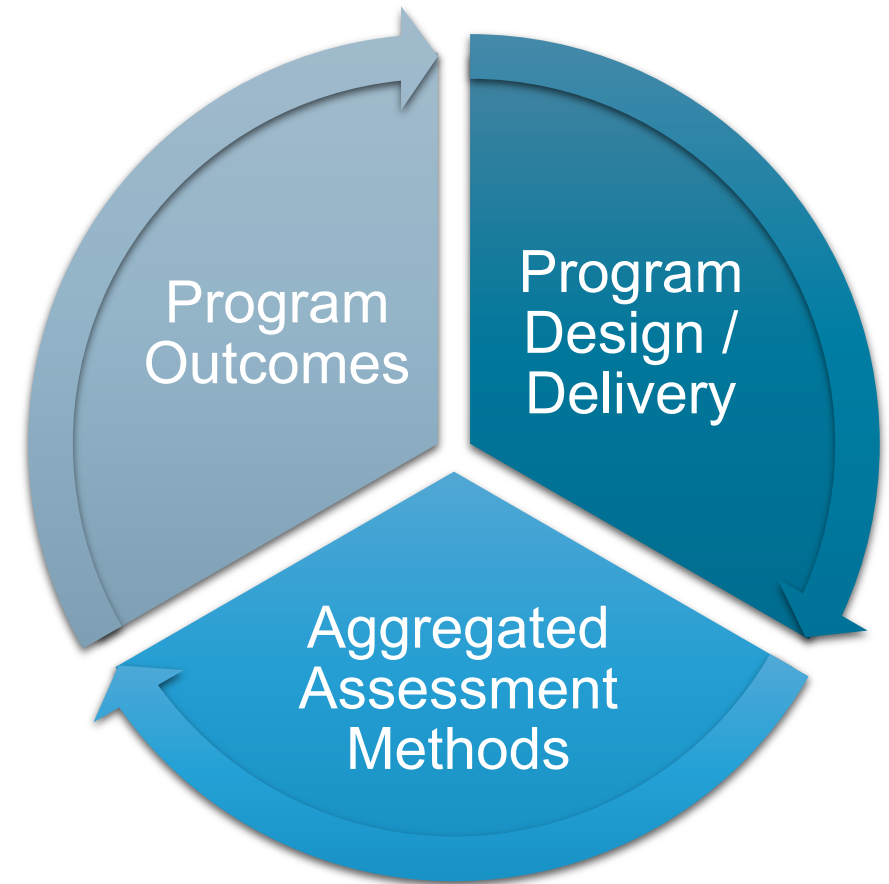
The self-study asks you to tell the story of your curriculum by answering the following:

1. Following successful completion of the program, what would you expect graduates to take away from the program? What concepts, bodies of knowledge, skills, and values are they supposed to learn?
2. How is the program designed to help them learn those things?
3. How do you know they've learned those things?

...framed differently...

Explain the alignment between:

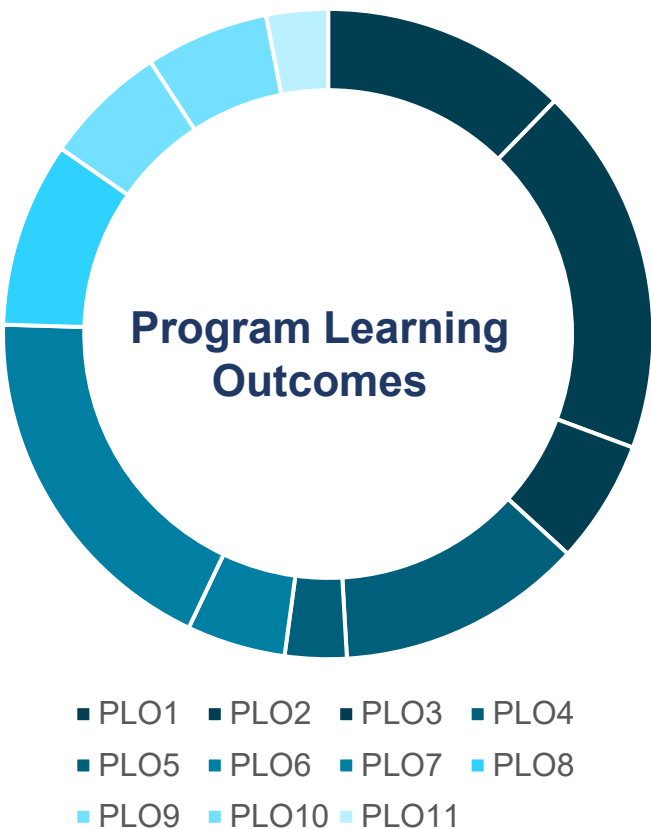
1. Program learning outcomes
2. Program design & curriculum delivery
3. Assessment methods



Degree Level Expectations (DLEs) provide the categories of learning and corresponding levels of achievement an academic program must address



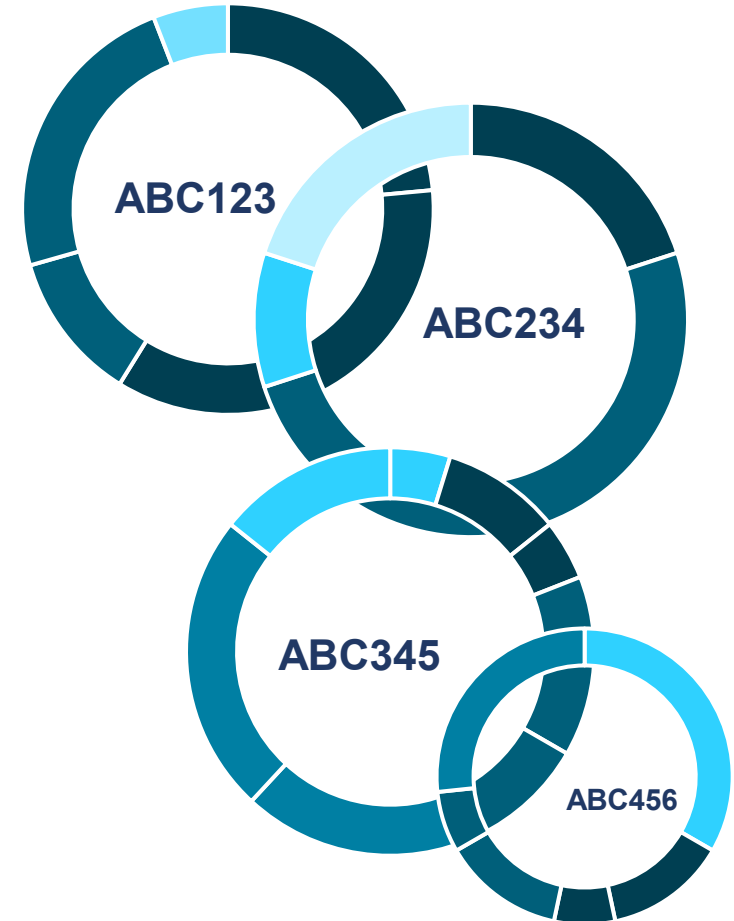
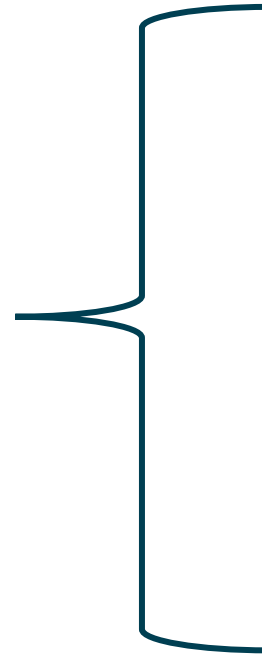
Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) articulate the explicit learning expectations within an academic program, contextualizing how the program aligns with the DLEs



Courses make granular contributions to students' development toward the PLOs, demonstrating how the program design supports the PLOs



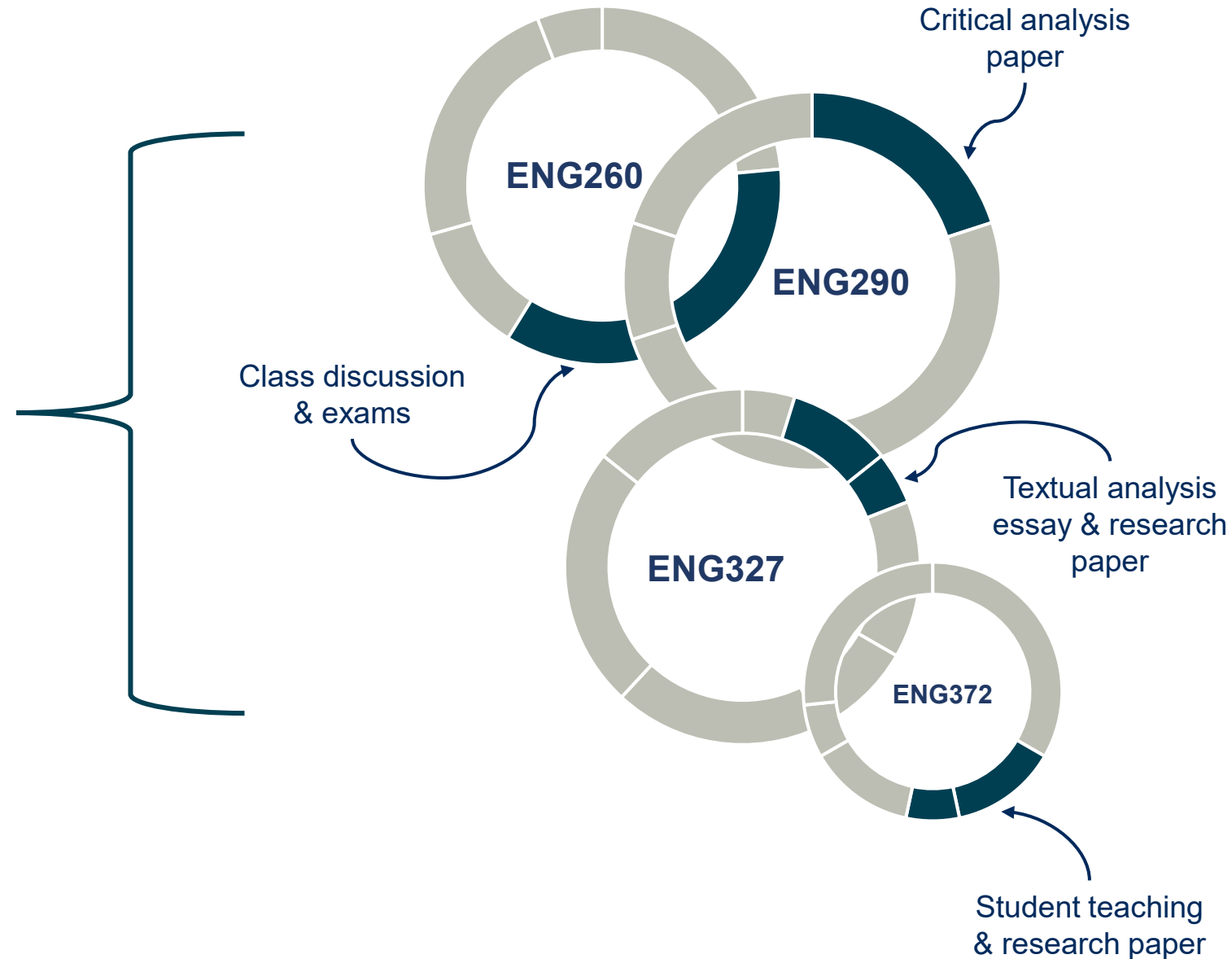
■ PLO1 ■ PLO2 ■ PLO3 ■ PLO4
■ PLO5 ■ PLO6 ■ PLO7 ■ PLO8
■ PLO9 ■ PLO10 ■ PLO11



Example of course contributions to a program learning outcome from an undergraduate English program



PLO2: Identify major genres, literary forms, and rhetorical techniques



Using Data to Support Curriculum Narrative

National Survey of
Student Engagement

Course evaluations

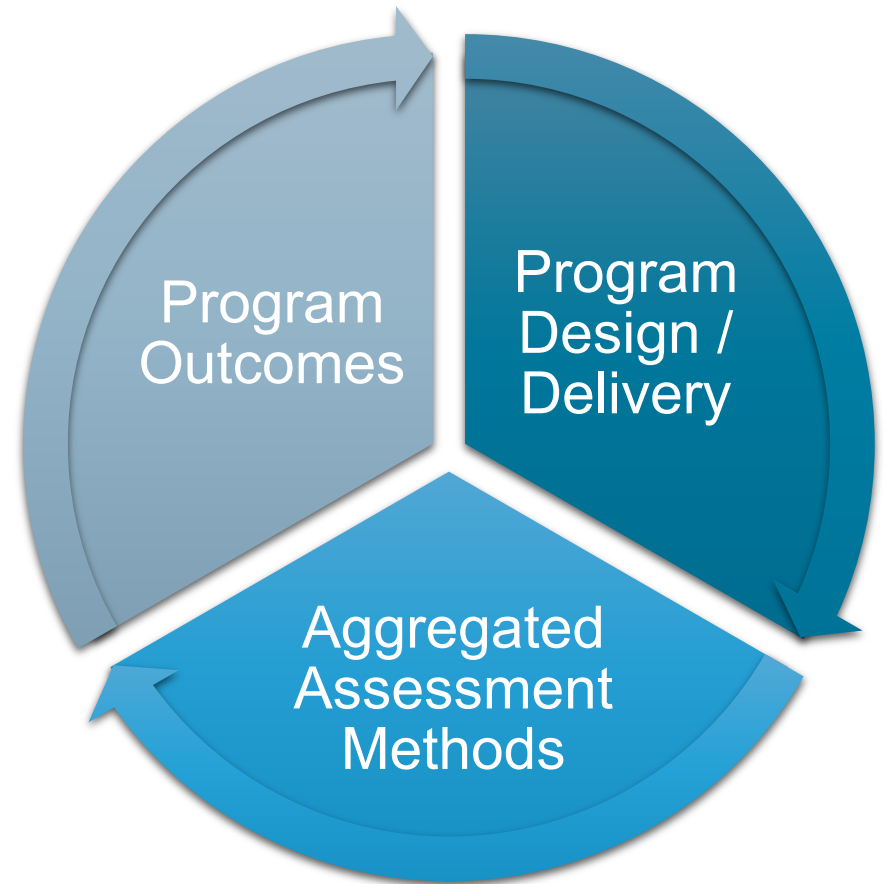
Student and alumni
surveys and focus
groups

Retention and
graduation rates

Key Takeaway

The program section of the self-study cascades from the program learning outcomes, and the curriculum design narrative should explain the alignment between program learning outcomes, program design, delivery methodologies, and assessment methods

For further help with the curricular elements of the self-study, please feel free to contact the Curriculum Development Specialist in the Office of the Vice-Provost, Innovations in Undergraduate Education at:
jessie.richards@utoronto.ca



External Review: Site Visit

Reviewers meet with:

- faculty, students, administrative staff and senior program administrators
- members of relevant cognate units as determined by the commissioning officer
- professional programs: employers and professional associations

External Review: Site Visit

Question:

During the site visit, what is the recommended structure for faculty meetings? Should the Chair be included?

Answer:

The head of the unit under review has an opportunity to meet with the reviewers at the beginning and end of the site visit.

Reviewers normally meet with faculty in groups (e.g. tenure/pretenure/sessional), without the unit head present.

Every effort should be made to enable a wide range of members of the unit to share their thoughts freely with the external reviewers.

External Review: Site Visit

Site Visit Format:

- Cyclical program reviews involving a research master's program or a doctoral program **must incorporate an on-site visit**
- For reviews involving only undergraduate and/or professional master's programs, the Dean may request that the Vice Provost, Academic Programs grant approval for a virtual site visit, if the external reviewers are satisfied that the off-site option is acceptable
- Requests must provide a clear justification for holding a virtual site visit

Responses & Governance: Developing the Administrative Response

Request Prompt <i>verbatim from the request</i>	Rec. #	Recommendations from Review Report <i>verbatim from the review report</i>	Unit Response	Dean's Response
The reviewers recommended that the department explore the development of a Specialist program.	1	"We recommend that the Department further explores the development of a Specialist program."	Plans to introduce a Specialist program have already been initiated. The necessary major modification proposal is also in development; it has been submitted to the Dean's Office as part of the 2021-22 curriculum cycle, and we anticipate that students will be able to begin enrolling in the program in Fall 2022.	Short to medium term [6 months to 1 year]: Introduce a new Specialist program



Advice from Colleagues

Markus Bussmann, Chair, Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, FASE
Jacob Gallagher-Ross, Chair, Department of English and Drama, UTM

Questions

- How did you engage faculty/students/staff in the review?
- How did you use standardized (or supplementary) data?
- What was the most helpful outcome of the review?
- What was the most difficult aspect of the review process?
- Tips/advice you wish you'd had when you started the process?

Further Information

- **VPAP Website:**
 - [Reviews Home](#)
 - [Review Templates and Other Resources](#)
- **Decanal Reviews of Units/Programs in Multi-Department Faculties:**
 - Your Dean's Office is your primary point of contact for any questions regarding UTQAP Review processes, templates, and requirements
- **VPAP Contacts for Provostial Reviews of Faculties:**
 - Emma del Junco, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist
 - David Lock, Academic Reviews & Planning Specialist
 - Stephanie Machado Fernandes, Administrator, Academic Programs

Top Five Workshop Takeaways

Help is available

- **Decanal Reviews:**
Dean's Office
- **Provostial Reviews:**
VPAP Office

Reviews: cycle of continuous improvement

- Reviews take place in the context of steps taken since the last review (e.g., program/unit changes made, academic priorities set or initiatives undertaken)...
- ...to inform plans for actions that will happen between the present review and the next one

Your self-study is...

- ...an analysis of what your programs/units are and aspire to be
- ...not starting from scratch: use the last self-study, plans, program or unit change proposals approved since the last review
- ...based on standardized and supplementary data.
- ...developed in conversation with colleagues, students, etc.

Peer review is at the heart of the process.

- Choose the best possible reviewers to give expert advice.
- Give reviewers everything they need to provide informed advice.
- Assessment of programs/units is relative to international peers.

The report must address all programs, all terms.

- Requirement: UTQAP, QAF, Ministry
- Quality Council plays close attention to details.
- Ensure Terms of Reference are explicitly covered.

Thank You!



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