Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Onsite Review Dates: February 11, 2015
Name of Reviewers
External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Susan B. Spero, Ph.D., Professor Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley CA.

General Opening Remarks
The Interdisciplinary Studies Programs overseen by Graduate School of Texas Tech University require a different approach to external/internal review as these programs are somewhat atypical. Several of the programs are situated within professional research institutes and entities within the University (such as the Texas Tech Museum), which means that staff and faculty serve dual roles. Additionally, the programs require cooperation across several academic units.

This report offers this external reviewer’s comments based on the Self-Study Reports and a one-day onsite visit that involved meeting faculty and students as well as visiting some of the program labs and facilities. I’ve used the review form to offer remarks about each program, though the amount of commentary ranges from minimal comments on Arid Land Studies, to extensive commentary about the Museum Science program, which is the one that directly relates to my expertise. The reviews are presented in alphabetical order.

General recommendations that apply to all programs:

1. Interdisciplinary Academic Degrees hold great promise for creating new scholarship. Creating an academic structure for students to pursue this work is commendable and should be continued.

2. For all of the programs, Texas Tech University needs to continue its work to increase communication amongst academic units so that students who want to pursue interdisciplinary academic paths can do so with little bureaucratic and territorial resistance.

3. The university will need to consider how its budget accounting supports or hinders cross-disciplinary work.

4. As with all programs in all universities, increasing ways to offer student support has value. It is particularly challenging to find scholarships for those students who have no specific departmental home, such as some of those within INDS. The university may want to consider creative fundraising opportunities so that students who pursue this avenue can receive support.

5. For those Programs situated in service and research entities, faculty and staff need to write clear assessment approaches for their work to assure that a balance between their responsibilities for faculty and staff meets needs both the students and the unit.
Program Reviewed: Arid Land Studies

Onsite Review Dates: February 11, 2015

Name of Reviewers

External:

Please include name, title, and Department

Susan B. Spero, Ph.D., Professor Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley CA.

Comments:

As noted in my opening remarks for this External Reviewer Report, I have chosen to do a report on each of the disparate portions of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Department at Texas Tech. For three of the five schools, I ranked and provided evidence about these Programs as there was enough evidence present to pass judgment. My sense of the Arid Land Studies program is more limited. I base my singular recommendation on the report, and Program Director comments heard during the site visit. We did not hear directly from students.

Recommendation:

Given low enrollment and a lack of clarity around the prior international school partnerships my sense is that the Graduate School will need to determine whether to move this particular program into “teach out.” This said, students with an interest in Arid Land studies should have the option to obtain a degree within the ongoing self-designed Interdisciplinary Studies pathway.
Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: Biotechnology

Onsite Review Dates: February 11, 2015

Name of Reviewers

External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Susan B. Spero, Ph.D., Professor Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley CA.

I. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Vision, Mission and Goals
___ Excellent ___X__ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Strategic Plan
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___X__ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The Biotechnology Master’s program at Texas Tech has a clear understanding of its educational mission and vision to prepare students for a career in biotechnology and/or bioinformatics. The program recognizes that there has been a stall in growth and is in process of considering why numbers have shifted downward. This program is a directed unit within the overarching Interdisciplinary Programs of the Graduate School, and by undergoing strategic analysis and planning the program should be in a position to achieve growth and excellence.

II. Program Curriculum

Please evaluate the following:

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
___ Excellent ___X__ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
___ Excellent ___X__ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
Program learning outcomes assessment

__X_ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs  N/A

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The program learning outcomes for the Biotechnology reflect the discipline and as such clearly articulate the goals of the program: the specificity makes clear what students will be able to achieve as a result of graduating from this program. The program should be commended for designing outcomes that align to course design.

The combination of direct foundational coursework the first year of study, combined with potential internships during the second/and or participation in research assistantships provides students with a solid theoretical and experiential education.

III. Faculty Productivity/ Not Applicable per Report

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Qualifications

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Publications

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Load

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

External Grants

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Evaluations

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Professional Service

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Community Service

___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.
IV. Students and Graduates

*Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time to degree</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Retention</strong></td>
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<td><em>X</em></td>
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<td><strong>Graduate rates</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Enrollment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Number of degrees conferred annually</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Support Services</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Job Placement</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Student/ Faculty Ratio – Unclear from the report.</strong></td>
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</table>

*Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement*

The review committee spoke with research staff and faculty who clearly support students and the lab. It was clear from the onsite visit that the Center for Biotechnology and Genomics recognizes its educational mission to support graduate students through their degrees.

The students, while told to attend the session, on the whole were extremely quiet about their experiences. This said, it is clear from some voices heard during the visit that the student group has become a cohort—the students appear supportive of one another, which in turn is a key
characteristic of a quality educational experience. The visit suggests that the center is building an effective community of practice.

V.  Facilities and Resources

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Facilities
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Facility Support Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Financial Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Staff Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

As an external reviewer with no official background in this discipline, I am unable to comment on the “state of the lab,” however, what was clear as an educator is that there appeared to be a strong community of practice within the lab, with researchers and students working side-by-side to pursue their scholarship. We were shown newly acquired equipment, and were able to walk through the lab during a class.

The Self-Study report, however, does not offer any clear indicators in regard the financial status of the Center and the Academic Program’s relationship to it. Student enrollment is down, and the support staff is aware and appears to be analyzing the reasons for this shift.

VI.  Overall Ranking

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.

The site visit showcased the clear dedication and desire for the biotechnology program to continue to be successful within Texas Tech. The report is very incomplete as many sections had little information—such as a conclusion and overarching concerns from the Program’s perspective.
Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.

1. The biotechnology program needs to clearly articulate its needs for the future and in turn, craft a strategic plan to meet these needs. From their perspective answer both curricular and administrative questions such as:
   
   **Curricular:**
   Consider how the research (current and future) within the Center will influence future curriculum demands? And how can this influence potential research partnerships and potential internship opportunities?
   
   **Administrative:**
   What is desired scale of the program? What size will work best? If the program aims to become larger, clarify what additional student and staff support would be needed to sustain this size.

2. Analyze the curriculum structure to assess whether the sequence can attain some flexibility. This is in response to student request that the first year have more flexibility. Students wondered if some of the lecture courses could be converted into online teaching options.

3. Continue measuring and assessing the performance using the Program Learning Outcomes and make adjustments within the curriculum as appropriate.

4. Conduct more student feedback surveys to understand how the program is or is not working for them; and if at all possible, follow-up with your alumni to discover how the program has or has not served them. It is fully understood that this is likely beyond staff resources available. But gathering this data will help improve the program assuring what is working and offer ways it might improve.

5. Continue to create a supportive cohort atmosphere for the students, as it assists with student retention.
Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: Interdisciplinary Studies, Self-Designed

Onsite Review Dates: February 11, 2015

Name of Reviewers

External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Susan B. Spero, Ph.D., Professor Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley CA.

VII. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Vision, Mission and Goals
__X_ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Strategic Plan
___ Excellent __X_ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The IDNS (self study) program recognizes the changing educational landscape, wherein students desire more flexibility with their course of study. In asking students to take coursework in three areas of concentration, the INDS Program assures a cross-disciplinary experience for the students.

While there is no specific Strategic Plan for this specific graduate program, the IDNS vision appears to be in line with the overall graduate school program strategic plan that aims for growth. This growth should be achieved as long as student demand for academic flexibility continues, and (most importantly) the INDS Graduate Program can attain flexibility for INDS students with their course registration within other academically specialized programs. Critical to student success is their ability to get the right advice, then to register and complete their desired coursework and other program demands—from internship, to portfolio or possible thesis work. Student support depends upon the flexibility of various the faculty and administrative response within the INDS students’ disciplinary choices. The graduate school administration will need to negotiate with other academic programs to assure that they are fully on board in committing resources to this independent degree option.

VIII. Program Curriculum

Please evaluate the following:
Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
___ Excellent     _X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Program learning outcomes assessment
___ Excellent     __X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs
___ Excellent     _X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

Simultaneously both the strength and the weakness of this program is that, “each program is developed according to the student’s interests and background.” Whether any student is successful depends on the student’s abilities under guidance from faculty within the varied discipline areas. Consequently, necessary and appropriately available support must be the core foundation of this program for the students to produce the required portfolios, internships, and thesis work.

This program allows for new, creative scholarship, and when done well, will produce successful, independent thinkers. One challenge for the administration will be to find the right mechanisms to guide student progress. One option would be to prototype and test a student Handbook that outlines sample graduate pathways as models for those pursuing the degree.

IX. Faculty Productivity: NOT APPLICABLE

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Qualifications
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Publications
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Load
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

External Grants
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Evaluations
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Professional Service**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Community Service**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

*Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.*

N/A as there are no faculty directly associated with this program (per report).

X. **Students and Graduates**

*Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:*

**Time to degree**
___ Excellent     X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Retention**
___ Excellent     X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Graduate rates**
___ Excellent     X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Enrollment**
___ Excellent     X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Demographics**
___ Excellent     X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Number of degrees conferred annually**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     X_ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Support Services**
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     X_ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Job Placement**
___ Excellent     X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

**Student/ Faculty Ratio**  N/A
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

10
Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

The time to degree seems appropriate given the number of students who are also working part time. As we were told during the onsite visit, support services are in transition as the administration puts more effort into tracking and communicating with the individual students in the program. With the administrative changes the program can expect continued improvement with graduate and enrollment numbers in the years ahead. As already mentioned, I strongly encourage the administration to create a student handbook that details the program requirements so that students have an accurate guide. I also encourage the INDS (self-study) program to find other ways to help these individual students come together as a type of cohort so that they understand that they are not the only students following this independent degree. During our time meeting with INDS students several voiced surprise and interest that they were meeting others who were also pursuing an INDS (Self Study) degree. Interdisciplinary minds would no doubt enjoy learning from one another as they go through their program. Simple once or twice a year meet-and-greets could help to decrease the sense of isolation some of the students implied.

XI. Facilities and Resources – N/A

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Facilities
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
Facility Support Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement
Financial Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___X_ Good ___ Needs Improvement
Staff Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___X_ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

There appears to be little scholarship money for students who choose this pathway, and as the program grows, this might need to be reconsidered. The two staff/administration are extremely thoughtful and dedicated to this program, and like all programs, with growth, more guidance resources will be necessary.

XII. Overall Ranking

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.
The INDS program leadership indicated that the INDS program has recently gone through administrative changes to strengthen communication with enrolled students. Assuming this pattern holds, and systems get into place for tracking and guiding individual student pathways, this program is positioned to grow. A larger challenge is how the overall university accounting structure (be it number of students or credit hours) impacts the willingness of the various academic departments to serve students who are not official “majors.” The INDS program should be poised to grow if INDS students can get the coursework they desire, and the academic support necessary for solid scholarship.

Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.

1. Continue to strengthen support for and communications with the graduate students enrolled in INDS.
2. Create an INDS student handbook that includes sample student pathways and details milestones for getting through the degree (including PLOs and criteria to achieve them).
3. Create a social mechanism so that students in the program can become a cohort that will, in turn, help them additionally support one another.
4. Assure intra-university understanding about the course enrollment status of INDS students so that students are welcomed into various disciplinary areas. This could mean, in some cases, that INDS students gain access to courses not currently available to them because they are not “majors.”
5. Increase communication to various academic programs to raise their understanding of the INDS program so that students can get appropriate support for the academic demands of their degree. Of particular focus is to discuss and understand what it means to serve on a student’s academic committee for an INDS degree and the implications of this within an academic program.
6. The administration would be well served to monitor the reception of interdisciplinary students within various academic areas and if issues arise, determine ways to assure that INDS students in good-standing can proceed academically with their non-standard degrees in regard to course enrollment, internship work, portfolio production and or thesis production.
7. More staff/faculty resources will be necessary if the scale of this program increases drastically. While the best students in an independently designed degree are more independent as students, quality, thoughtful and fairly frequent communication is still necessary along the way and takes human resources to do well.
Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: Museum Studies

Onsite Review Dates: February 11, 2015

Name of Reviewers

External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Susan B. Spero, Ph.D.  Professor, Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley CA

XIII.  Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Vision, Mission and Goals

_X_ Excellent  ___ Very Good  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Strategic Plan

_X_ Excellent  ___ Very Good  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The Museum Science program situates its vision, mission and goals within the functions and obligations of a University Museum. The mission, vision, and goals are appropriately ambitious for such a long-standing program that has a proven record of graduate training and contributions to research and the museum field. It is worth noting that the goals written within the Self-Study Program Review were pulled from the larger 2008 Strategic Plan of the Museum of Tech University that outlines overall objectives for the Museum itself. This document is currently being revised this year. As they currently stand the goals and objectives demonstrate the strong ties between the Museum Science program and the University Museum. An overarching goal stated is, “Becoming a global leader in educating Museum professionals.”

The Museum Science Program’s stated goals and accompanying strategies offers a plan of action to improve the program viability. For instance, one of the stated goals is to increase enrollment to 35-40 students per year. The Self-Study goal to offer an undergraduate class within the larger university could help prospective students realize that Museum Science is an academic option. Implementing another self-study stated goal to consistently perform “reviews” of the program, will help faculty become aware of new challenges and help to assess ongoing actions for improvement. Instituting student questionnaires will provide insight into student satisfaction,
attitudes about the program, and offer a sense of their self-perceived agency within the Museum Science Program. For instance, the student comments gathered for this self-study gives the department a chance to analyze which student suggestions are appropriate to consider and heed going forward.

One other stated goal within the Museum Science Program Self-Study report is to address the use of technology in learning initiatives—particularly expressed as developing distance-learning and short courses. The Museum Science Program will need to consider carefully its expertise and how distance learning can or cannot support object-based learning and ideas. Please note that this reviewer thinks distance learning is possible, but there are genuine challenges because Museum Science disciplinary thinking is often grounded in material practices. Consequently, a blended approach with online and on-site may provide the best of all possibilities. While distance learning can be accomplished, the program will need to reflect on how establishing a distance-learning program will impact the existing residential program. The Texas Tech Museum Science Program stakes a part of its identity on being one that offers instruction within the context of a working museum. Shifting to an online program will change that claim.

XIV. Program Curriculum

Please evaluate the following:

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Program learning outcomes assessment
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The Museum Science program is structured so that students decide to either write a thesis (per the report, 6% of students) or acquire a paid internship. Given that the internship is thus a key component for awarding the Museum Science Master’s Degree the Museum Science faculty may want to review their policy requiring that this internship be a paid one, over a lengthy period of time. This reviewer understands the desire for students to be paid—given costs of education and debt levels accrued, payment in exchange for internship work indicates that the institution is serious and values the student’s contribution while in residence. This said, there are other opportunities, many not paid, that students may well want to experience during their internships. The payment requirement appears to be limiting for students to experience opportunities outside
of the Lubbock area, and beyond the University Museum. For better or worse, non-paid internship opportunities are the field-wide norm. The faculty may want to describe those situations wherein the student could be allowed and benefit from a non-paid internship opportunity.

As with many peer institutions in Museum Science and Museum Studies, the Texas Tech program relies on a combination of Core Faculty and Adjunct faculty to fulfill course-teaching demands. By design for the Texas Tech Museum Science program, the faculty has deep ties to the University Museum. One drawback from this structured choice is that the students are exposed to faculty connected to one institution. Fortunately, the institution does encourage student to engage with other working professionals through conferences and other professional venues.

XV. Faculty Productivity

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Qualifications
___ Excellent       _X_ Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

Publications
___X Excellent       ___ Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Load
___X_ Excellent       ___ Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

External Grants
___X Excellent       ___ Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Evaluations
___ Excellent       ___X Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

Professional Service
___X_ Excellent       ___ Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

Community Service
___X_ Excellent       ___ Very Good       ___ Good       ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The faculty and museum staff are one in the same within this program, all appear to be academically productive, and engaged with the field in a variety of ways typical of museum
science (studies) faculty throughout the country. The faculty and staff reveal sufficiently diverse perspectives and experience levels.

Issues surrounding faculty are put more directly in the Self-Study in that the dual nature of faculty responsibilities to both the Academic Program and Students as well as to the demands of a working museum no doubt can cause conflict with staff time. The faculty will need to be diligent in accessing how the balance between the two potentially competing and to be also positive about this system, often overlapping work demands—as when faculty work on a project side-by-side with students on a class museum project and or through internship experiences. The point stressed here is the constant awareness of the dual roles and important open discussion of ways the dual obligations do and do not work, with adjustments made accordingly. This will become especially important if the size of the academic program increases significantly.

That so many of the faculty serve as adjuncts is typical to most museum science/studies programs throughout the country which means it is a field wide challenge with faculty turn-over as stipends for adjuncts are typically low. This puts pressure on full-time faculty to find specialized faculty expertise then adequately support and oversee the work of new teaching recruits. This can be a specifically challenging problem when the expertise needed for a particular course is not widespread within available contacts (such as technological skills). The self-report suggests that the administration might want to look at faculty retention and expertise to see if there are potential issues that might be approached in some new creative way.

XVI. Students and Graduates

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

**Time to degree**

- X Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Needs Improvement

**Retention**

- X Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Needs Improvement

**Graduate rates**

- X Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Needs Improvement

**Enrollment**

- Excellent
- X Very Good
- Good
- Needs Improvement

**Demographics**

- Excellent
- X Very Good
- Good
- Needs Improvement

**Number of degrees conferred annually**

- Excellent
- X Very Good
- Good
- Needs Improvement
Support Services
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     __X_ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Job Placement
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     __X_ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Student/ Faculty Ratio
___ Excellent     __X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

Looking at the various charts the numbers of students and graduates within the Museum Studies Program appear to have a downward trend. The Museum Studies program acknowledges this trend, and raises solid concerns about marketing the program, and finding additional support funds for students to attend the program.

With the goal of wanting to be a global or national leader the program will want to track job placements outside of the immediate Texas and southwest region (as indicated in the report) and in turn, take advantage of those connections to open possibilities for current students.

In the curriculum section above, I suggested that the Museum Science program reconsider their current confines for internship placement. Opening up the internship options for students will also help the Program with future job placements.

While this reviewer cannot describe in detail the existing support structure for students in the Museum Science program, from student comments both in this report and while on site gives the impression that students believe they need more financial and academic support from the Program. Issues of being able to get faculty outside of the Museum Science program to serve on student academic committees seems to be an area that the full faculty might want to discuss and consider—particularly building relationships with other academic units at Texas Tech. While the details were not clear, the students noted that one faculty member is burdened with being on many committees, though the faculty member is willing to do so. It would seem better if students had more outside faculty available to support their academic work. Given all of the faculty resource and expertise within Texas Tech and natural disciplinary affinity with scholarship connected to museum science, the program can help build relationships with faculty outside of the immediate museum science program.

XVII. Facilities and Resources
Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Facilities
___ Excellent     __X_ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Facility Support Resources
Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

The Texas Tech Museum is a large University Museum that is accredited by the American Association of Museums. Students enrolled in the program get direct experience in a research driven museum.

Some student support appears to be directly tied to the museum’s budget, and student wages for their 20 hours of museum work experience appear to not be in line with funding received from other similar graduate programs within Texas Tech. While this needs to be confirmed, the review committee was told that for working in the museum graduate students receive a $7.25 hourly wage. Undoubtedly this low figure is tied to the budget of the museum. The end result is that the museum gets work from interested, motivated graduate students at minimum wage. A study should be done to compare work responsibilities within the museum to other graduate level work experiences within other university settings. This museum work opportunity provides valuable experience for those Museum Science students with minimal prior experience in museums. At the same time these extremely low wages offered students raise concern if the museum is dependent upon this assumed high-level student labor—as they are graduate students in the program—to achieve its mission of the museum for the community. During the site review, students were notably frustrated that in order to financially survive they not only need to work at the museum (part of the learning environment they chose for their degree) but they also have to work a second job to make ends meet. With this, the university and the Museum Studies Program may want to consider thinking creatively to set up an endowment or other income stream to more fully support graduate student work in the museum. A graduate student in a museum position is not the same as an undergraduate work-study student—the graduate student’s level of contribution needs to be both recognized and compensated.

XVIII. Overall Ranking

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.

In general, the program provides a high quality Museum Science Degree, particularly for those who may have little to know direct-hands on experience prior to coming to graduate school. The program offers solid opportunities for those with more experience, allowing them to take on higher-level museum work responsibilities than they may be able to in other Museum Studies programs elsewhere. Students get a broad-based introduction to the field through coursework and
through the most-chosen option of internship experiences. Faculty are engaged with the field, their subject matter, and as their substantial resumes suggest, are passionate about museum work.

The content of the University Museum Strategic Plan suggests that the Texas Tech Museum invests considerable resources and interest towards Collections research, care and preservation. Faculty publications and research showcase this effort. Within the Museum Science program itself, over four of the required nine classes within Museums Science are specifically collections related (and arguably more). The Heritage classes appear to include more of a public dimension, but that program includes fewer students. Given a collections focused interest from the Museum might lead the program to consider whether marketing the collections research thrust of the institution gives the program a recruitment edge. And, the museum may also analyze whether it is within this arena of collections research, care and preservation that the Museum Science Program wants to be recognized as a global leader amongst a rising number of Museum Studies programs currently existing, and increasing world-wide.

Paradoxically, The Texas Tech Museum Science program’s strength and challenge is that it is housed within the University Museum. This strength here is that students get the best blend of theory and practice within a functioning and collections rich institution. The challenge at the same time is that the needs of the institution and the needs of students may or may not be always aligned. Consequently, the faculty and institution will always need to be vigilant and assess whether museum needs and student needs are simultaneously met.

As noted in the submitted Museum Science Self-Study report, many of the Museum Science faculty, particularly adjuncts, are often foremost museum employees whose main responsibility is to the institution in their museum role. Teaching and guiding students may or may not be their foremost concern. To help assure balance, the University Museum and Academic Unit of the Museum Science Program should be sure to give staff/faculty clear guidelines and resources to those responsible for supporting and administering to the particular needs of students and faculty in the Museum Science Program. Someone within the administrative structure needs to hold clear responsibility for supporting student and faculty success.

Much of the program is centered on the Texas Tech University Museum needs, which means that program coursework, projects, and potential internships can be readily achieved. The downside is that the student’s perspective about museum work can become insular and limited. This singular museum perspective is partially countered through student experiences within professional organizations, such as trips to AAM and the Texas Museum Association, but the Museum Program may want to actively pursue strategies for bringing in professional viewpoints to the campus beyond the expertise of the current faculty and staff. Options could be a speaker series, short term visiting faculty appointments, or devise some other platform that could offer expanded perspectives on museum work.

As with many of the Interdisciplinary Programs with Texas Tech, the Museum Science graduate classes intertwine within a productive research and service unit within the University. This means that as goes the Texas Tech Museum, so goes the Museum Science Graduate program; as the
mission of the museum changes, so will the experience of the students associated with the academic program. At present, the Academic Program and Museum do quality Museum Science work.

*Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.*

**General**

1. Continue to conduct faculty and student surveys to acquire information and then set goals and actions to address concerns and problems within the field. Identifying patterns will be useful as faculty and students reflect on the quality of the program and make decisions for new directions. In the current Self-Study the faculty and staff survey results suggests ideas such as a) faculty collaborating together on coursework, b) rethinking how collections technology is presented, and c) developing clear advising/communication pathways between faculty and students.

2. If the aspiration to be a global leader in Museum Science remains, the faculty should agree to the characteristics of excellence and in what areas of the museum field excellence should be achieved. Once decided, conduct an analysis to determine what the future research and practice trends are for that area of excellence so that the Museum and the students remain in the lead. This will likely involve two aspects that are not as fully apparent in the current curriculum such as consideration of emergent technological trends (such as Digitization, and electronic access) and new approaches to the public/community facing side of museum work (such as access and audience engagement strategies). Taking time to identify future field trends could be included in either of two forthcoming required museum and faculty wide efforts—the rework of the Texas Tech Museum’s Strategic Plan (indicated as 2015 work) and/or the upcoming application to be reaccredited by the American Alliance of Museums.

**Curriculum and Faculty**

3. In discussions regarding the development of online learning options, consider how an online program will fit within and impact the existing on-site Museum Science Program.

4. Continue to review and incorporate appropriate emergent technological trends into the curriculum, and support faculty to become proficient users of the technology.

5. Reconsider the requirement whether required Museum Science Internship requires that students be paid in order to open up options and opportunities for the students to fulfill this portion of their academic work.

6. Assign a person or persons with authority from the museum administration or on faculty to be responsible for managing faculty and staff concerns with the Academic Program. Keep the ratio of student to support faculty staff at workable levels so that students/program communication flows better.

7. Continue to use and refine Museum Science program learning outcomes to assess student the effectiveness of the curriculum to indicate student Museum Science knowledge, skills and understanding.
8. Continue to reflect on how the Heritage Management and Museum Science curriculums compliment one another and build student professional capacity.

9. Continue with the faculties’ commendable research and writing and other professional development activities.

10. As the University Museum is the main museum institution within the Lubbock Community, the Museum Science Program might consider inviting guest faculty, establishing an endowed speaker series, or establish some venue wherein voices from outside the region interact with both students and faculty to assure exposure to other viewpoints in the field.

**Student Recruitment and Marketing**

11. For prospective students market how the program offers on-site museum experience with a diverse faculty.

12. While not stressed in the narrative above, work with internal Texas Tech website staff to upgrade the site so that the Museum Science Program’s online presence parallels the quality of the program.

13. Connect with and build the extensive Texas Tech Museum Science Program alumni network so that it becomes an ongoing asset for current students and museum community. Please note that information offered during the site visit suggests this is in progress.

14. If the Museum Science Program strives for and achieves excellence in collections research and publications, the program should test whether marketing the collections research emphasis of the institution will give the program a student recruitment edge.

**Funding Concerns**

15. Imagine and pursue funding opportunities for the Museum Science Graduates so that the student work wages (as told to be $7.25 per hour) are more in line with other graduate stipends throughout the University. Increased support will attract more students to the program.

16. Continue providing students with financial support —that most get some scholarship money, albeit small, is commendable.

17. Consider asking for student support in all grant and other fundraising efforts conducted by the University Museum. This is likely already being done with grant projects.
Graduate Program Review
Texas Tech University

Program Reviewed: Wind Science Engineering

Onsite Review Dates: February 11, 2015

Name of Reviewers

External:
Please include name, title, and Department
Susan B. Spero, Ph.D., Professor Museum Studies, John F. Kennedy University, Berkeley CA.

XIX. Academic Unit Description and Strategic Plan
Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Vision, Mission and Goals
  ___X_ Excellent   ___ Very Good   ___ Good   ___ Needs Improvement

Strategic Plan
  ___ Excellent   ___ Very Good   ___ Good   ___X_ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The National Wind Institute has been, and is positioned to be a center for multiple interests surrounding wind research. Within the Self-Study report there is no evidence of a strategic plan to address the fluctuating internal and external interests in Wind Research. While this reviewer is not an expert, it seems that the university needs to decide whether or not it wants to find qualified leadership and invest the necessary resources in the Academic doctoral program for it to stabilize. There are no tenured faculty, but numbers of affiliated faculty. Does the program need a core to develop a strategic approach for its continuation of awarding a specific degree, and to grow? Given the high number of undergraduates enrolled (as we were told during the visit) clearly this is an area with great potential.

XX. Program Curriculum – N/A
Please evaluate the following:

Alignment of program with stated program and institutional goals and purposes
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Curriculum development coordination and delivery
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Program learning outcomes assessment
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Program curriculum compared to peer programs
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

N/A The quality and range of courses offered needs to be assessed by the expert external reviewer brought in to judge this program.

XXI. Faculty Productivity - N/A for this reviewer to rate
Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Qualifications
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Publications
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Load
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

External Grants
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Teaching Evaluations
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Professional Service
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement

Community Service
___ Excellent     ___ Very Good     ___ Good     ___ Needs Improvement
Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement.

The Self Study Report data charts reveal the varied cycles of faculty output that likely indicated research funded and non-funded years. The success of the institute is probably dependent upon research-funded partnerships. Student enrollment is currently tied to research funding. The university needs to consider if this direct relationship of grants to funding is the best way to support this academic area.

XXII. Students and Graduates

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Time to degree
___ Excellent  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement  ___ X_ Very Good

Retention
___ Excellent  ___ X_ Very Good  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Graduate rates
___ Excellent  ___ Very Good  ___ X_ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Enrollment
___ Excellent  ___ Very Good  ___ Good  ___ X_ Needs Improvement

Demographics
___ Excellent  ___ X Very Good  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Number of degrees conferred annually
___ Excellent  ___ Very Good  ___ Good  ___ X_ Needs Improvement

Support Services
___ Excellent  ___ Very Good  ___ X_ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Job Placement
___ Excellent  ___ X Very Good  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Student/Faculty Ratio
___ Excellent  ___ X Very Good  ___ Good  ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

The number of students within the Wind Science Engineering graduate program is minimal, no doubt because of lack of funds available to support doctoral students. Less than 25 percent of applicants have been accepted so there is potential for growth. At present, the Institute has three
endowed scholarships accounting for some students. They have also been able to apply internal funds for TA support.

XXIII. Facilities and Resources – Not appropriate for this reviewer to rate individual criteria.

Please evaluate the following by marking an X in one of the blanks for each item:

Facilities
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Facility Support Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Financial Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Staff Resources
___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Needs Improvement

Please comment on the positive components and suggested areas of improvement

These are longstanding labs dedicated to Wind Research Please defer to the expert on the external committee for his assessment of the appropriateness and quality of these resources.

XXIV. Overall Ranking

Please provide summative conclusions based on the overall review.

The WSE Ph.D. program has great potential, a conclusion I discern from what undoubtedly is increasing national awareness of destructive wind events and an increased interest in “Wind” as an energy resource. Texas Tech claims to be one of the first to craft such a program in the country and is therefore a leader in this field

This said, the current state of the academic program seems to be in flux, as though it is waiting for another big research resource push and leadership to make it happen (it is now under an interim program director). The report notes high points such as an increase of affiliated faculty and a strong investment in research facilities. One the one hand the Wind Science Engineering has been a self-sustaining program,—to its credit—yet on the other, this also means that there is program instability if there are not research funds to support graduate
work. If the university wants to produce doctoral level Wind Science Engineers, it will need to commit resources to this newly emerging field (started in 2007) during times of flux.

Please provide summative recommendations based on the overall review.

1. Commitment: The program is a relatively new one (2007) and has yet to fully establish itself. The university needs to determine its commitment to Wind Science Engineering and whether it wants to invest more resources in the doctoral program. The report notes that there is no direct support—meaning direct staff support—for its doctoral students. Direct support translates into increased student satisfaction.

2. Strategic Vision: Texas Tech University and the Wind Science Institute need to envision a strategic approach to the fluctuations of the research funding cycle, and decide the proper level of commitment to the Ph.D. program in off years. Steady resource allocation helps to build a stronger program. It would seem that this is an opportunity to seek endowment funds to support more students.

3. Cross Department Cooperation for enrolled students: As with other programs within this review, the challenges of working with other academic units to support interdisciplinary focused students remains an issue. If the program is to thrive as one that is truly interdisciplinary, the university will need to work with those partnering units so that they fully support the non-major students.