



# **Academic Program Review Guidelines**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

Program<sup>1</sup> review is a systematic way to assess the quality of the University of Michigan-Dearborn's academic programs. In higher education, program reviews have five general purposes: quality assurance, quality improvement, accountability, identification of strategies for improvement, and information collection and synthesis to facilitate prioritization of resources.<sup>2</sup> The results of this process allow the program, department, college and institution to review findings, develop responses, and make strategic decisions regarding program direction, emerging trends in the field, and future program expansion or contraction. It is intended to be a comprehensive, coherent analysis that charts a path for program improvement. Program review therefore serves the following purposes:

- **Program review is evaluative.** Program review requires academic judgment and evaluation regarding the quality of the program and the adequacy of its resources in teaching students. Essential to that judgment and evaluation is the assessment of program quality and capacity by peers and recognized experts in the discipline or field.
- **Program review is forward-looking.** The focus of program review is on the improvement of the program, not simply the documentation of its current status and faculty activities. High-quality program reviews make specific recommendations for future changes based on the analysis and synthesis of data and then discuss those recommendations in relation to the long-range plans of the department, college and institution.
- **Program review emphasizes academic strength and improvement.** All issues, data and elements should be considered in relation to their impact on the quality of the academic program and improvements that will allow the program to better serve students.
- **Program review emphasizes an objective process.** Faculty are required to evaluate as objectively as possible their own programs in the creation of a self-study. External faculty

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<sup>1</sup> The University of Michigan-Dearborn defines a “program” as any series or sequence of courses that when successfully completed results in the issuance of a degree or diploma from that program by the University Registrar.

<sup>2</sup> Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs: A Policy Statement. 2005. Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

and experts review the self-study, gather additional data and make their own evaluations and recommendations as a part of the external review. Well-analyzed and impartial internal self-studies and external reviews are essential to high-quality program review.

## II. COVERAGE AND FREQUENCY

Beginning in the Fall 2015, all academic programs offered by the University shall be placed into one of two (2) program review tracks. All planned self-studies/external reviews, however, shall be completed before an academic program moves to the new program review cycle. The new program review cycle includes the following tracks:

- [Track One](#) (1) includes programs that offer graduate and undergraduate degrees along with any attached certificates. All such programs will undergo a self-study and external review within a period of **eight academic years**. The program self-study shall be completed and submitted in academic year seven (7) with an external review visit following in academic year eight (8).
- [Track Two](#) (2) includes all programs and degrees that are examined and reviewed by an external accreditation body. These programs shall be exempted from the review cycles stipulated in Track One (1) and will follow the review cycle established by the relevant accreditation agency. However, at the conclusion of that process all documents related to the review shall be submitted for acceptance to either the University Curriculum and Degree Committee (UCDC) or Graduate Subcommittee.

Deans shall have the authority to require any non-degree granting program or other academic service entity within their college to undergo a self-study and/or external review. The Provost has similar authority to require campus-wide non-degree programs to undergo a self-study and/or external review.

Finally, at the end of the initial eight-year review cycle (AY 2023-2024), the University shall conduct a thorough evaluation of the review process and modify the Academic Program Review Guidelines accordingly.

### III. TRACK ONE (1) PROGRAM REVIEW CYCLE

The [Track One \(1\) program review cycle](#) includes all programs – except those that are accredited (see Track Two (2) below) – that offer graduate and undergraduate degrees (programs with graduate and undergraduate degrees must undertake separate program reviews) along with any attached certificates.

The Provost Office worked with the relevant academic college to align each certificate to an existing academic program. The certificate and program alignment is reflected in the [Track One \(1\) calendar](#).

All programs in Track One (1) will undergo a self-study and external review within a period of **eight academic years**. The program self-study shall be completed and submitted in academic year seven (7) with an external review visit following in academic year eight (8). The following outlines the general program-review schedule along with steps academic administrators, program faculty, and others should be mindful of when carrying out a Track One (1) program review:

#### 1. Program Notification

- The Office of the Provost sends correspondence to the program representative/coordinator/director, associate dean, and dean in January of academic year six (6) reminding them that the program will be entering academic year seven (7) of the program review cycle.
- The Office of the Provost makes a formal inquiry to the program director, associate dean and dean in September of academic year seven (7) asking for assurance that the self-study process is underway and that an external review visit is being planned for the following academic year.

#### 2. Completion of the Self-Study Report

- In September of academic year seven (7), the college dean of the program undergoing review shall appoint an internal review committee (IRC) normally consisting of program faculty but which may include external members. The dean may also designate a

committee chair.

- The IRC, in consultation with the college dean or associate dean, shall identify an individual in the college who will coordinate travel, hospitality and the scheduling of meetings during the external team visit.<sup>3</sup>
- The IRC, in consultation with the college budgeting team, shall plan and confirm the budget allocated for the program review and the process necessary for the use of those funds. Program review and the external visit expenses along with the associated planning are the responsibility of the college.
- In the fall of academic year seven (7), the Office of Institutional Research shall forward the data specified in the Self-Study Template ([Appendix B](#)). Such data is intended to provide the IRC with the necessary information for understanding their program strengths and weaknesses. The IRC may also request additional data from the Office of Institutional Research as needed.
- By the end of the academic year seven (7), the IRC, in collaboration with the college dean or associate dean, shall select and propose dates for the academic year eight (8) external visit, and notify the graduate or undergraduate associate provost, as appropriate, of those dates.
- By the end of the academic year seven (7), the IRC will submit the completed self-study to the department chair who shall have the department executive committee review the report and provide comments to the IRC. The department chair shall notify the appropriate associate dean of the completed self-study.

### **3. Selection of External Reviewers**

- By the end of the academic year seven (7), the IRC shall provide the dean (or dean's designee) with the names and contact information of at least five (5) potential external reviewers. External reviewers are highly qualified faculty or experts who are not affiliated with the campus or the program. Considerations when selecting reviewers should include their history of involvement and success in scholarship, research, and/or

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<sup>3</sup> A budget template for the external review can be found in [Appendix C](#). All program review expenses are paid by the unit.

teaching in the specific field. In fields where technical expertise is required, a representative from industry may be included. Faculty should be mindful that the selection of former faculty members, alumni, or research or scholarly collaborators (typically defined as “arms’ length) is not appropriate.

- In the summer of academic year seven (7), reviewers are contacted, according to each college’s policy, by the IRC, department office, or dean’s office regarding formal<sup>4</sup> invitation and acceptance of this role.
- **For graduate Rackham programs only:** The associate provost for Graduate Studies shall contact the dean of the Rackham School of Graduate Studies to obtain the name of a reviewer who will represent Rackham. The associate provost for Graduate Studies or the Graduate Studies Office shall notify the program under review of the name and contact information of the reviewer representing Rackham.
- Invitation letters to external reviewers shall be accompanied by:
  - The completed self-study report
    - If the self-study is not available at the time the communication is sent, the external reviewers shall be informed of the date by which it will be available. It is the program and college’s responsibility to assure that all external reviewers have the necessary materials in a timely manner so that adequate preparation is possible
  - A tentative schedule and/or dates for the visit
  - Information regarding the arrangement of transportation and hospitality including the name and contact information of a point-person within the unit to assist external reviewers with travel and hospitality arrangements.
  - Identification of the monetary stipend, should one be offered, and conditions regarding its receipt
- At a minimum of eight (8) weeks before the external review visit, the associate dean shall forward the completed self-study to the dean of the program’s college, and the members of the external review team (unless attached to earlier correspondence with external review team members).

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<sup>4</sup>It is sometimes necessary to informally contact external reviewers to determine their willingness or availability to conduct the review during the time period tentatively identified.

#### **4. Campus visit**

- In planning for the external reviewer visit, the program IRC, in consultation with the college dean and the Office of the Provost shall schedule time for the external review committee to meet with individuals and groups relating to the program review. Typical meetings include the following:
  - Internal Review Committee members
  - Program (or related program) faculty members
  - Program administrators (dean, associate dean, and chair, as relevant)
  - Students
  - Chief Assessment Officer and/or Campus Assessment Coordinator
  - Advisory boards (if applicable)

A sample schedule for external review campus visits can be found in [Appendix F](#).

#### **5. Final Reports**

- The external reviewers shall be required to produce and submit to the IRC a single written report after the on-site visit using the template provided in [Appendix E](#) that identifies program strengths and weaknesses along with recommending actions that could improve the program's performance.
- By the end of January of academic year eight (8), the IRC shall write a response to the external reviewers' report noting what steps (if any) are being planned to improve the overall state of the program. The IRC shall submit its response, the report of the external reviewers, and the self-study (even if previously submitted) to the department chair.
- Disciplines should include an Action Plan with their response to the external reviewers' report. Please see Appendix F for a Discipline Response and Action Plan template
- By the end of February of academic year eight (8), the department chair shall convene the executive committee to review and endorse program review documents. The department chair shall forward the documents and notice of department approval to the college executive committee via the dean's office.
- By the end of March of academic year eight (8), the college executive committee shall meet to review and endorse the program review documents.

- By the end of May of academic year eight (8), the dean of the college, and when appropriate the provost, shall provide feedback to the program faculty and department chair based on the findings of the external reviewers and the IRC's response along with any comments that the department and college executive committees have made.
- After the dean's response has been written, the college shall submit a completed program review package to the University Curriculum and Degree Committee or the Graduate Subcommittee. The final package submitted shall include:
  - Self-study (even if previously submitted)
  - External Review report
  - IRC's formal response to the External Review
  - DEC comments and approval
  - CEC comments and approval
  - Dean's response
  - Provost's response (if applicable)

Members of UCDC or Graduate Subcommittee, as appropriate and acting as repositories, will accept the completed review packet.

## **IV. TRACK TWO (2) ACCREDITED PROGRAM REVIEW CYCLE**

A graduate or undergraduate academic program that is accredited will use its accreditation requirements and review cycle in place of the University of Michigan-Dearborn's Track One (1) program review process. However, at the conclusion of the Track Two (2) process all documents related to the review shall be submitted for acceptance to either the University Curriculum and Degree Committee (UCDC) or Graduate Subcommittee.

Each accredited program is responsible for staying informed about its accreditor's program review requirements and schedule. Program faculty should also notify the Provost Office when there has been a change to their accredited program's review cycle so the [Track Two \(2\) calendar](#) can be updated.

Finally, if an accrediting body does not require an external review visit as part of its accreditation process, then at least every other accreditation review cycle, the program shall bring in external reviewers who will write an external review report to which the program will write a response and

submit these documents to the college and either the University Curriculum and Degree Committee or Graduate Subcommittee.

## Appendix A –Track One Eight-Year Schedule

Academic Year	Semester or Month	Responsible Party	Task
Academic Year 1	Fall		The Eight-Year Program Review Cycle begins.
Academic Years 1-5	Fall-Winter	Program faculty	Implement program changes agreed to from the previous program self-study and external review.
Academic Year 6	January	Office of the Provost	Remind dean, associate dean, and program representative that program is entering academic year seven (7).
Academic Year 7	September	College Dean	Appoint Internal Review Committee (IRC) and chair (if desired).
		Office of the Provost	Formally request assurance that the program self-study is underway.
	Fall – mid-winter	IRC	Assess program and write Self-Study report.
			Plan and confirm the budget allocated for the program review.
	Mid-Fall	Office of Institutional Research	Identify and secure individual responsible for coordinating travel and other arrangements for the external visit.
			Deliver to IRC the program data stipulated in the Self-Study Template (see <a href="#">Appendix C</a> ).
	End of academic year	IRC	Select proposed dates for the external visit and notify the graduate or undergraduate associate provost of those dates.
			Provide the dean (or dean’s designee) with the names and contact information of at least five (5) potential external reviewers.
		Dean’s office	<u>For graduate Rackham programs only:</u> The associate provost for Graduate Studies will contact the dean of the Rackham School of Graduate Studies to obtain the name of a reviewer who will represent Rackham.
		IRC, Department Chair, and Department Executive Committee (DEC)	The IRC will submit the completed self-study to the department chair who shall have the department executive committee review the report and provide comments to the IRC. The department chair shall notify the appropriate associate dean of the completed self-study.

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Semester or Month</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Task</b>
Academic Year 8	Minimum 8 weeks prior to external	Associate Dean responsible for program review	Forward approved Self-Study report to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dean</li> <li>• Members of the external review committee</li> </ul>
	Early to mid-fall	External reviewers	Campus visit and assessment.
	Mid to late-fall		Submit to the IRC a single written report (External Review) using <a href="#">Appendix E</a> .
	Winter	IRC	Formally respond to External Review- Including action plan
	January (end of)		Submit to program's department chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self Study</li> <li>• External Review</li> <li>• IRC's formal response to the External</li> </ul>
	February (end of)	DEC	Review the program's documents for comment and endorse.
			Forward program's documents and notice of departmental endorsement to College Executive Committee.
	March (end of)	College Executive Committee (CEC)	Review the program's documents for comment and endorse.
	May (end of)	Dean Provost (when appropriate)	Formally provide feedback to the program faculty and the department chair based on the findings of the external review and self-study.
	May	Dean	Submit the completed program review package to UCDC or the Graduate Subcommittee, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Study report</li> <li>• External Review</li> <li>• IRC's formal response to the External</li> <li>• DEC comments and endorse</li> <li>• CEC comments and endorse</li> <li>• Dean's response</li> <li>• Provost's response (if applicable)</li> </ul>
May	UCDC or Graduate Subcommittee	Accept completed program review package and store in institutional repository	

## Appendix B – Track One Self-Study Template

### 1) Program Information

- a) Program history/description, structure, and mission
  - i) Mission and vision statements, Program Learning Goals
  - ii) Program tracks, emphasis areas, minor/major fields, and certificates offered
  - iii) Faculty and staff listings
  - iv) Facilities
- b) Curriculum
  - i) Degree requirements, course offerings, 3 year schedule
  - ii) Online/distance offerings, methods, and delivery of courses
  - iii) Advising of students, program advising structure/process, advising sheets (if relevant)
- c) Student and Faculty Activities
  - i) Community Engagement and Professional Development
  - ii) Faculty Research and Student Research

### 2) Assessment of Student Learning and Program Evaluation

- a) Program Assessment
  - i) Overview of assessment program: learning goals, curriculum matrix
  - ii) Summary and reflection of assessment activities since last review (can include Dearborn Discovery Core course assessments) and overall trends in student learning data
  - iii) Program changes made as a result of student learning data (changes could include curricular, pedagogical, structural, etc.)
  - iv) Continuous Improvement: Discuss which learning goals and topics the program would like to explore through assessment activities in the future (attach an [assessment plan](#) in the appendices)
- b) Program Evaluation
  - i) Enrollment data and dashboards [data provided by Institutional Research]
    - (1) Headcount/Student Profiles [over last 10 fall terms]
    - (2) Graduation/Retention and Degrees Awarded [over last 5 fiscal years]
    - (3) Credit Hours (with instructor ranks, number of sections, and instructional mode) [over last 5 years]

- (4) Grade Distributions [over last 5 years]
- ii) Alumni Engagement and Survey
  - (1) Summarize alumni outreach and engagement
  - (2) Analyze and summarize alumni survey (attach alumni survey instrument in appendices) [alumni contact data provided by Alumni Relations]
- iii) Evaluation and Reflection
  - (1) Utilize all components discussed above to analyze and discuss the program's strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and areas of opportunities
    - (a) Things to consider:
      - (i) Where does your program excel and how does it contribute to the department, college, and overall institution?
      - (ii) Where are the gaps: Alumni engagement? Administrative? Persistence or enrollment? Curriculum or Instruction?
      - (iii) How quickly and at what level of proficiency are students exiting the program? How does this compare to expectations and peer institutions?

### 3) **Certificate Program Review**

(Only applicable to degree programs that have a paired certificate for program review purposes. You need only to include information and discussion for components for the review where the certificate program differs from the degree program. For example, list of faculty, facilities, and course offerings may be the same for both the degree program and the certificate, but the mission and vision, requirements, learning goals, etc. would be different for the certificate than the full degree programs.)

- a) Certificate history/description, structure, and mission/vision
- b) Curriculum- Discuss certificate requirements
- c) Assessment- learning goals, course matrix, summary of assessment activities in certificate assessment
- d) Enrollment data- headcount/student profiles, certificates awarded

### 4) **Conclusion, Reflection, and Strategic Planning**

- a) Reflection on self-study and program's current standing
- b) New and emerging strategic goals: Discuss goals the program will focus on during the period before the next program review

(You will have the chance to revisit and expand on these goals when you develop an

[Action Plan](#) after the review process has completed)

Appendices, examples of which include but are not limited to:

- Faculty CVs (required)
- Alumni survey (required)
- Program assessment plan (required)
- Course matrix (required)
- Program assessment reports (optional)
- Program annual reports (optional)
- Program strategic plan (Required and included in Discipline's Response to External Review)
- Program course syllabi (optional)
- Publicity materials (optional)

## Appendix C – Budget Template for External Program Reviews

Possible Review Expenses	Budgetary Costs	Notes
<b>Pre-Review Preparation</b>		
Hosting (breakfast or lunch for up to 8 attendees)	\$50 - \$200	Breakfast, lunch \$25 per person, up to 8 staff/faculty members
Other Pre-Review Expenses	TBD	Consult with the College's Associate Dean regarding program specific needs
<b>On-Site Review with External Reviewers</b>		
Consultant stipend <sup>5</sup>	\$750 - \$1000	Program faculty must consult and receive approval from dean's office before making a stipend offer
Housing (1 night)	\$100 - \$130	
Ground transportation	\$60	
Coach Airfare/Mileage in Lieu of Airfare	\$350 - \$800	14 Day Advance Purchase; ask if mileage is requested in lieu of airfare
Per Diem for reviewer (L,D,B combo) and/or hosting (L,D or B) for up to 7 faculty + reviewer	\$135 - \$520	Breakfast, lunch \$25 pp, Dinner \$55 pp including tip; depends on arrival and/or number of attendees (up to 8)
<b>Post-Review Planning and Wrap-up</b>		
Hosting (breakfast or lunch) for up to 8 attendees	\$50 - \$200	Breakfast, lunch \$25 pp up to 8 staff/faculty members
Distribution of Review Materials	\$250	Final report copies, scan & distribution of documents
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$1,995 to \$3,410</b>	Excludes other possible pre-view expenditures

<sup>5</sup> Stipend payments to reviewers are contingent upon receipt of a **FINAL** program review report to the review chair.

## Appendix D – External Reviewer Campus Visit

### Sample Schedule

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Program representative/director/coordinator
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Review of Curriculum Materials
11:00 – Noon	Meeting with program students
Noon – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch with program faculty
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Meeting with Department Chair
2:00 – 2:45 p.m.	Meeting with Dean
2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Reviewers Preparing Report
3:45 – 4:30 p.m.	Exit meeting with program representative/director/coordinator

# Appendix E – External Review Report Template

## EXTERNAL REVIEW OF

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### REVIEWERS (NAMES AND AFFILIATIONS)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Thank you for agreeing to serve as program external reviewers. This template was developed to help you prepare an external review report of the program based on the information in the self-study and your campus visit. You may also use this template to list questions and concerns that may need to be clarified when you meet with the program representative/chair, dean, faculty and students. Please note that there are no page restrictions for the final reports.

Once again, we wish to express our appreciation for your effort in helping us to maintain and enhance the quality of our programs.

### I. Overall Evaluation of Program

1. Strengths and weaknesses with program structure and personnel
2. Adequacy of resources to support the program
3. Near-term demand for continuation of the program

### II. Curriculum

1. Quality of assessment program
2. Degree requirements (appropriateness of core and elective courses)
3. Breadth and depth of course offerings
4. Availability of core and elective courses
5. Comments on any proposed curriculum changes
6. Review of changes made in response to recommendations from the previous review
7. Enrollment trends

### III. Summary and Recommendations

1. Overall assessment of program
2. Potential challenges and opportunities program faculty face within the next five years
3. Recommendations for moving the program forward (program structure and personnel; course offerings; marketing; etc.)

## Appendix F – Discipline Response & Action Plan template

In the Fall of the second year in the Program Review, external reviewers are invited to assess and provide a peer evaluation of your program's self-study during a campus visit. The reviewers are asked to consider the following (*from the External Review Report Template, appendix E*):

### I. Overall Evaluation of Program

- a. Strengths and weaknesses with program structure and personnel
- b. Adequacy of resources to support the program
- c. Near-term demand for continuation of the program

### II. Curriculum

- d. Quality of assessment program
- e. Degree requirements (appropriateness of core and elective courses)
- f. Breadth and depth of course offerings
- g. Availability of core and elective courses
- h. Comments on any proposed curriculum changes
- i. Review of changes made in response to recommendations from the preview review
- j. Enrollment trends

### III. Summary and Recommendations

- k. Overall assessment of program
- l. Potential challenges and opportunities program faculty face within the next five years
- m. Recommendations for moving the program forward (program structure and personnel; course offerings; marketing; etc.)

**In a few paragraphs, please reflect on the external reviewer's report in regards to the points outlined above. In addition to responding, please feel free to correct any factual or interpretation errors you feel reviewers made in their report.**

For next section, the action plan, please consider your next steps or goals you envision for the next 6-8 years (*see example action plan in Appendix G*).

This portion of the review can be a helpful document to chart your intended progress between the end of this review and your next scheduled program review. The Dean will consider and comment on your action plan in their response letter at the end of this review period.

Your action plan should include:

1. Overall Goal
2. Action Item (objective under the overall goal)
3. Timeline (when will you be working on this goal/ when will it be completed)
4. Measure (what does a successful outcome look like for this goal or item, ie. 40% increase of attendance in student organization)
5. Map to University strategic goals (how do your program goals help to support the overall Mission & Vision statement for the institution)
6. Lead (faculty member responsible for or acting as liaison for action item)

7. Status (column to denote progress, i.e red, yellow, greens or completed, in progress, not yet)

Below is a template you may use to organize your program’s action plan:

**Current Program Review Completion Date:**

**Next Program Review Date:**

<b>Goal:</b>				
<b>Action Item:</b>	<b>Timeline:</b>	<b>Measure:</b>	<b>Lead:</b>	<b>Status:</b>
<b>Goal:</b>				
<b>Action Item:</b>	<b>Timeline:</b>	<b>Measure:</b>	<b>Lead:</b>	<b>Status:</b>
<b>Goal:</b>				
<b>Action Item:</b>	<b>Timeline:</b>	<b>Measure:</b>	<b>Lead:</b>	<b>Status:</b>
<b>Goal:</b>				
<b>Action Item:</b>	<b>Timeline:</b>	<b>Measure:</b>	<b>Lead:</b>	<b>Status:</b>

## Appendix G – Example of Action Plan

**Program Name:** Basket Weaving

**Last Completed Program Review Date:** 2014-2016

**Next Program Review Date:** 2022-2024

### Action Plan:

Goal: Revamp Curriculum					
Action Item:	Timeline:	Measure:	Lead:	Map to Institutional Goal:	Status:
Revise Program Goals	F16	Hold 2 half day faculty retreats to develop or edit 3-4 program goals	Weave, Strand	Deepen Academic Excellence	In progress
Increase UG research opportunities	F19	Work with CASL Director of UG and GR Research to develop initiative	Bill	Deepen Academic Excellence, Student Engagement & Success	Future
Create & Implement Capstone course	By F21	Develop capstone course that allows students to take part in service & community learning	Wicker	Student Engagement & Success, Metro Impact	Future

Goal: Build community & program identity					
Action Item:	Timeline:	Measure:	Lead:	Map to Institutional Goal:	Status:
Increase prospective & FY student outreach	S17	Hold info tables at 3 summer orientation sessions	Plait	Enrollment & Funding	Future
Increase social media outreach	F16	Work with University marketing & communications to develop marketing plan to promote program	Bill	Enrollment & Funding	Completed
Alumni Speaker Series	By F19	Bring at least one alumni speaker a semester to meet with student club and UM-D community	Weave	Student Engagement & Success, Metro Impact	In progress