

**NRC Listserv Official Responses**  
**Updated September 15, 2006**

Question	NRC Rep	Date	Response
<i>Assigning programs to fields</i>			
<p>We have a question about the impact of listing different programs in the same field. There is a NRC field called Language, Societies, and Cultures. We happen to have 6 separate degree programs that we could report in this omnibus category. There is no overlap in faculty. We would provide data for each of the 6 programs. How will the NRC treat this data? Will we end up with one overall rating, or would each program remain distinct throughout the process?</p>	Lockhart	7/19/06	<p>Separate programs will remain distinct even if listed in the same field. Data will be reported separately for each program and each program will receive a ranking.</p> <p>If an institution has programs in Italian, Russian and African Languages all of these programs would be classified under "Language, Societies, and Cultures" and all programs would receive their own ranking.</p>
<p>What do we do with departments that span fields and subfields? For example, we have a department of "Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology." Do we report it with our (separate) Classics department under <i>Classics / Classical Archaeology and Art History</i>, or with History of Art under <i>History of Art, Architecture and Archaeology / Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Art and Architecture</i>?</p>	Lockhart	7/20/06	<p>There is no perfect way to assign interdisciplinary programs to fields. Institutional coordinators must choose a field into which to place the interdisciplinary program. If the program spans more than one field within the taxonomy, the program can be listed under additional fields and will appear in the database under those fields with an asterisk (*) that will indicate all fields listed for the program.</p> <p>For the given example, it would probably make the most sense for the "Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology" program to be listed under both "Classics" and "History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology"</p>
<p>To list a secondary field for a program, does the requirement of 5 PhDs also apply to the secondary field?</p>	Kuh	7/26/06	<p>No. The "other field" category is informational. We will not be piecing out "other field" listings and comparing them as separate programs.</p>
<p>Boston College has a Biology program that best matches the NRC's "Biology / Integrated Biology / Integrated Biomedical Sciences" field. The program has strong specialties but none so distinct that they meet the field-status criteria outlined by the NRC. We do, however, understand that we will be able to list the program's specialties as a "research strength." We interpret this to mean that we can list other fields (e.g. Cell and Developmental Biology), but can we also list SUB-fields (e.g. Cancer Biology)?</p>	Kuh	7/26/06	<p>If your institution has a cross-disciplinary biology program and grants a degree in "Biology", you may want to indicate where its specializations, or research strengths, exist. You should choose the biological science fields that you want to be asterisked (e.g. Boston College/cell and developmental biology*, where the * will indicate that the data for this program can be found under Boston College/Biology.) Research specializations (that is, sub-fields) will be listed as part of the Boston College/Biology entry. Unless the sub-field is a stand alone doctoral program, it should not be listed as an "other field".</p>
<p>On the program questionnaire, page 3, B1, B2, and B3: what does 'primary specialization' and 'secondary specialization' refer to? Are these supposed to refer to SUBFIELDS? In other words, is this the same information as on the faculty questionnaires, question 5?</p>	Lockhart	8/3/06	<p>The "specializations" do refer to subfields. We have this question on both the program and faculty questionnaires because we anticipate that the response rate for the faculty questionnaire will be less than 100% and probably closer to 70-80% for most institutions.</p>

<p>On the spreadsheet, does “Other Program Fields” include fields outside the NRC taxonomy?</p>	<p>Kuh</p>	<p>8/4/06</p>	<p>Other program fields will have a space for fields to be entered that are not in the taxonomy. But, please remember, that this "other" category is designed for multidisciplinary fields that are listed in the taxonomy as either primary fields or emerging fields. For example, a program in Law and Economics could be listed under Economics, but it would have to be an established program that has produced more than 5 PhDs in the past 5 years. For such a program, you could list Other: Law as another program field. The main problem with choosing to list it is that it will be treated as an economics program but it won't really be comparable to most other economics programs that other institutions will list.</p>
<p>I am having difficulty figuring out where to place our Engineering Doctorate. We have one degree - in Engineering, but multiple specializations under it all of which define their own faculty, curriculum and graduate students - but "technically" - it is a single engineering degree. Hence, it doesn't really fit in any one of the engineering taxonomies, and it really isn't an interdisciplinary degree. Should I enter it separately under each engineering field or is there another alternative?</p>	<p>Kuh</p>	<p>8/7/06</p>	<p>I recommend that you list the specializations as "programs". On the program questionnaire, if the engineering fields, we will have a question that asks if this program is part of unified Engineering program.</p>
<p>Where in the taxonomy are you placing your Vision Science/Physiological Optics program?</p>	<p>Kuh</p>	<p>8/7/06</p>	<p>There are many fields that are not in the NRC taxonomy. This is one of them. Don't include it on your list.</p>
<p>I want to make sure I have it right on “additional fields.” If a program spans more than one field it nevertheless must be listed primarily in one field. Additional fields can be identified with asterisks so the program can be seen as offering training in those fields. However, there still seems to be some ambiguity about how this information will be used. Will a (*) program be assessed within the additional field (i.e., empirically compared to others)? If not, how exactly will the information about additional fields be displayed? Ultimately, will there be a link to the program entry in its primary field?</p>	<p>Kuh</p>	<p>8/11/06</p>	<p>For multidisciplinary programs, we want to be sure that users of our data know the fields covered by the program. Practically, we only want to send out one questionnaire to a program. When it comes to listing a multidisciplinary program, we will list all the associated fields and link each field to the program data. Choosing a "primary field" is a matter of convenience. It is not consequential, given our plans for cross-listing. When it comes to assessment, and we have not ironed out all these issues as yet, we want to focus on the program, because that is what a student applies to. We do not want to disaggregate programs into their component fields, but we do want to indicate the field coverage of multidisciplinary programs.</p>
<p>One university asked how the additional fields would be used and whether a program would be ranked in each of the fields to which it was mapped. Charlotte responded that they would be used "to inform users of the fields covered by multi-disciplinary fields. That's it. There is no decision that the Committee needs to make about this use. Will we use "other fields" in the rating/ranking process? I don't think so. That would make the process hugely complex. In the ranking process, we want to list the faculty of real, not virtual, programs." For those of us who deal less well with uncertainty, it would be helpful to clarify whether "I don't think so" means "No" or "Probably not, but the Committee has to decide and I'll let you know for sure."</p>	<p>Kuh</p>	<p>8/15/06</p>	<p>Let me add here that NIH and NSF, our federal sponsors, are very interested in measuring multidisciplinary. If it turns out that, say, IGERT programs only list one field, there will be considerable consternation. If programs are multidisciplinary, we really need to know.</p>

<i>Program eligibility for study</i>			
In determining eligibility for inclusion for a particular discipline with respect to the 5 <i>Ph.D.s in the past five years</i> rule, what degree awarding date should be used? More specifically, is it a graduation date of 2000 or 2001?	Lockhart	7/21/06	In order to be eligible for the study, a program must have granted 5 Ph.D.s in the past five <i>academic</i> years (2001-2002 to 2005-2006).
<i>Institutional Questionnaire</i>			
Did NRC intentionally drop the definition of "Candidacy" from the Institutional Questionnaire?	Kuh	8/4/06	Yes, because we're putting together different programs with quite possibly different definitions. For the use of this question, the numbers are most important to us and, given that the numbers are likely to be small for most of the groups, details, like the definition of candidacy, aren't important, since we won't separate out individual programs.
<i>Sending and submitting questionnaires</i>			
If the institutional coordinator will manage the submission of the program questionnaire data for all data, can/should we just leave the program respondent information for each program blank?	Voytuk	7/24/06	There are two reasons to complete the information. First, we would want to know whether it was left blank because it came from an IC or they just did not fill in the information. Also, since this is going into a database we would need to identify the IC respondents and populate the database from another file. Since this is an Excel file, you can fill in the information for the first program and drag the information to the programs below.
The Timeline indicates that the Faculty Qs may be distributed through the IC's--but I have been hearing rumors that this may no longer be the case. If NRC contractor sends out the Faculty Qs, will faculty be instructed to COPY their IC's when they return their Faculty Q so that we can monitor response rate?	Kuh	7/27/06	Because of confidentiality requirements, MPR must send the faculty questionnaires, pre-populated or not, directly to the faculty and receive the completed questionnaires. We will monitor the response rate and let you know it. After a given time has elapsed, we will also send you the names of non-respondents and encourage you to encourage them to respond.
One university has asked whether names of non-respondent faculty will be released to the Institutional Coordinator only or will be sent to the program chairs as well. That institution's preference is that they be sent only to the IC.	Kuh	8/15/06	We would like to work primarily with the IC. When we start following up on non-respondents, we will send the list to the IC and ask that they distribute it to their contacts in the relevant programs.
Several institutions are concerned that faculty members listed in multiple programs will receive multiple questionnaires. Charlotte responded that they can't sort for duplicates and that she is concerned that ICs are already too burdened to add identification of such faculty to their workload. Listserv participants have suggested that an ID number be added to facilitate the sort or that e-mail addresses, which are unique, could be used.	Kuh	8/15/06	I have consulted with Mathematica on this issue and it will be possible to sort for duplicates and possible duplicates. The ID number will be assigned after that reconciliation process by Mathematica.

<i>Faculty lists</i>			
Should emeritus faculty be included in the study?	NRC FAQ list	7/13/06	Only emeritus faculty who have, within the last three years, either chaired a dissertation committee (i.e. been the PhD supervisor) or served as the primary instructor for a doctoral course listed in the catalog for credit should be included in the study.
We have a group of faculty who are not tenure track, but who take graduate students and are thesis directors. We categorize them a "Faculty Fellows". These are promotable positions and faculty fellows are reviewed for promotion in the same way that tenure-track faculty are. The progression is faculty fellow, senior faculty fellow, distinguished faculty fellow. Since they are full participants in doctoral programs, I intend to list them as faculty in the survey. I assume that this is acceptable. Right? <b>Follow-up Question:</b> A follow-up question...these types of folks still need to qualify for inclusion by either being an advisor of record (major or associate) for a doctoral student in the 5-year time frame or being new to the university in the last two years (or being part of the graduate admission committee). Correct?	Kuh	7/24/06	Yes, you should list them as core faculty program in whatever program they are associated with. When it comes to rank, you should answer "Other". Tenure status is "NA".  <b>Follow-up response:</b> Right.
In our biomedical sciences doctoral programs we have a number of individuals who have served on committees and are employed by the University, but who are not members of the regular faculty. Rather they are either research or clinical staff; e.g., we have two -- Chair of Medicine and Chief of Nephrology -- who have served on Pharmacology dissertation committees but do not hold Ph.D.'s (are MD's only) and are not part of the faculty in any graduate program. I think they should be counted as "affiliated" faculty, but the Chair of the grad program doesn't think they should be counted at all. What is your advice?	Kuh	7/24/06	If they are actively involved in supervising the dissertations, include them as "associated" faculty. If not, omit them.
In designating faculty members who have SERVED ON COMMITTEES, should we include those who, for example, served on a committee through the oral preliminary exam, but left the committee and were replaced by another faculty member for the conduct of the final defense? Should we include all faculty members who served on a student's committee at any point in time? Only at the time of the final defense? Other?	Kuh	7/26/06	I think the final defense committee would be the best choice.
Is anyone who chaired or served on a dissertation committee for a program outside the one primarily associated with his or her field still to be on the associated faculty list for that field?	Kuh	7/26/06	Yes! We use this information to indicate program interdisciplinarity, not just to allocate productivity (if we use it at all).
Apparently, the faculty lists you will be requesting come from the Program Questionnaires, and not from any other form?	Kuh	7/27/06	This is not correct. After institutions have listed their programs, Mathematica will make available a faculty spreadsheet for each program. The request for faculty will only appear on the program questionnaires IF the faculty spreadsheet has not been handed in for a program.

An obvious problem since reporting faculty as members of all the programs to which they belong will cause significant "over reporting." Alternatively, arbitrarily assigning a faculty member to one program will seriously undervalue the program(s) that s/he has been excluded from.	Kuh	8/1/06	You may list faculty members in more than one program. Or, you may have an "Integrated Biomedical Science" program for which you will name "other fields", which will appear with an asterisk in the database. You should look at the definition of a program and of faculty and decide how yours fit. If faculty are integrally involved in doctoral instruction in more than one program, you will have to allocate their scholarly productivity among them. We can count fractions of a faculty member, but you mustn't clone them.
The New Faculty table on the program questionnaire asks for number of committees in last five years. Given that, by definition, they haven't been at our institution that long, are they supposed to answer based on possible dissertation service at a prior university? If they've served on committees for us, wouldn't they be listed as core?	Kuh	8/1/06	Thanks for noticing this. We'll remove the dissertation committee columns for new faculty.
The new timeline for providing faculty information is also a problem for us. To provide accurate information about current employment for Fall 2006, we must wait until after the Fall Semester begins and faculty data is completed in the main faculty record system. It is already difficult for us to get everyone into the system by September 15 and would be impossible by mid-August.	Kuh	8/2/06	Discuss this concern with Mathematica. There is some flexibility here.
From the faculty definitions, it appears that a faculty member who has been here for only 2 years but who has served on a dissertation committee or on the graduate admissions committee during that time can be considered CORE and not NEW. Is that correct?	Kuh	8/2/06	Right. We added the "new" category to be sure that younger faculty showed up on the faculty lists.
Where will subfields be included in the questionnaire(s) or lists?	Kuh	8/2/06	On the faculty lists, we ask for area of research specialization. That's where you can enter sub-fields.
I have just briefly reviewed the program questionnaires and was surprised to see that part b includes detailed demographic data on each faculty member. As we have discussed, at MIT this type of demographic data (gender, ethnicity, citizenship etc.) can only be submitted with the explicit permission of the individual since the individual is identifiable.	Kuh	8/4/06	If you cannot submit this information for individuals, you will be asked for aggregated data.
May faculty who are not employed by the university be considered program faculty?	NRC FAQ webpage	8/4/06	Faculty who are not employed by the university may still be considered associated faculty for a program as long as they hold some type of university appointment. For example, a faculty member with an adjunct appointment who works in industry or at a national lab may be considered associated faculty if she has served on a dissertation committee in the past 5 years. Adjunct faculty may not be classified as core faculty.
Can a regular faculty member who left our university to go to a new university be included as associated faculty if she still has an adjunct appointment and continues to serve on dissertation committees?	Kuh	8/7/06	No. If they've left your university, they will be on their current employer's faculty lists. They really aren't part of your faculty any more.

Can a regular faculty member who left our university to go to a new university be included as associated faculty if she still has an adjunct appointment and continues to serve on dissertation committees?	Kuh	8/7/06	No. If they've left your university, they will be on their current employer's faculty lists. They really aren't part of your faculty any more.
Occasionally we hire a senior faculty member who has had extensive experience with PhD programs at her or his previous institution(s), but has not yet been appointed to any committees here. As I read the instructions, he or she should be included as a 'New' faculty member with no current or former doctoral students. Is this correct?	Kuh	8/8/06	That's right.
Do you plan to send a faculty questionnaire to "associated" faculty of a program or only to "core" and "new" faculty?	Kuh	8/9/06	Only to core faculty. Presumably associated are core elsewhere.
Clinical (and therefore only associated) faculty are an important part of our Biomedical faculty. Will they be counted? Will their publications and grants figure in if they are not surveyed?	Kuh	8/9/06	We can obtain publications and citations for faculty regardless of whether they are core or not. We will need to know what share of these publications and citations can be attributed to the program. We are only sending faculty questionnaires to core and new faculty because we don't want them to receive more than one questionnaire. If a faculty member is not core or new faculty in a submitted program, he/she will not receive a questionnaire. The reason to collect the names of associated faculty is to be able to convey a sense of the interdisciplinarity of the program.
The data you would have on faculty who are only "associated" (i.e., not "core" in any program) would be limited to the basic data from the program questionnaire (primary and secondary specialization, rank, tenure status, highest degree, number of dissertation committees served on in past 5 years, etc.). Is this correct?	Kuh	8/9/06	That's right.
Universities are unclear as to how the associated faculty lists will be used. Associated faculty will not be sent faculty questionnaires. This will not be an issue for associated faculty who are core in other disciplines included in the study, but that is not the case for all associated faculty. Charlotte notes that "The reason to collect the names of associated faculty is to be able to convey a sense of the interdisciplinarity of the program."	Kuh	8/15/06	Note: faculty may be core in more than one program if they have a regular appointment in more than program. If this is the case, we will ask the IC whether the identical names are the same person so that we will only send the questionnaire out once.
The statement that adjunct faculty such as those in federal labs could not be core elicited dismay from several institutions. I didn't see a resolution of this issue.	Kuh	8/15/06	If faculty from federal labs serve on and chair dissertation committees and are considered to hold regular appointments in the program, they may be counted as core faculty.
Another awkward question: An active researcher in one of our best graduate biomedical programs died unexpectedly earlier this year. We want to include him in the list of that program's faculty, since his research activities were an important part of the program's overall scholarly contributions to the field. But we also want to save the NRC the embarrassment of trying to send him a faculty survey, and we want to make sure that his contributions to the program are not deleted because he doesn't submit one. Surely this is a problem that other schools are facing as well. What do you advise us to do?	Kuh	8/16/06	Do not include dead faculty on your faculty list. They have no chance of advising dissertation or being part of the program when the data are released in 16 months.

When counting the number of committees on which a faculty member has served, are we to count only the dissertation committees of students who have graduated during the period 0102-0506, or the committees of all students in the program, including both those still enrolled and those who have left the program? I would assume the latter, but want to make sure.	Kuh	8/16/06	Please count all dissertation committees of students in the program in the period 2001/2 to 2005/6, both those who have completed and those who have yet to complete.
Should faculty members hired for the 2006-2007 academic year be included on Faculty Lists?	Kuh	8/21/06	Updated definition of <b>New program faculty</b> : Current (2006-2007) faculty members who do not meet the criteria specified for core faculty members, but have been hired in tenured or tenure-track positions in the past 4 academic years (2003-2004 through 2006 -200 7 ), and who are expected to become involved in the graduate program.
Can a program count a faculty member who is on a leave of absence?	Kuh	8/29/06	If he/she is currently a faculty member at your university and hasn't resigned, then yes.
How will faculty productivity be determined?	Kuh	8/29/06	Faculty productivity (citations and publications) will be allocated by the following formulae:  a. For faculty members who are core in a program(s) that falls within the NRC taxonomy: $A_i = (5P_i + n_i + 5d) / \sum_i (5P_i + n_i + 5d)$ Where $A_i$ is the share of publications and citations allocated to the faculty member in program $i$ ; $P_i$ is the number of committees in program $i$ for which the faculty member serves as chair or principal adviser; $n_i$ is the number of committees in program $i$ on which the faculty member serves in a capacity other than chair or principal adviser; $d$ is a variable that takes on the value 1 if the faculty member is a core faculty member in program $i$ and is 0 otherwise.  b. For faculty members who are core in a program in a non-included field but are listed as associate faculty in an included one: $A_i = (5P_i + n_i) / \sum_i (5P_i + n_i + 5)$  c. New faculty members will have all their publications and citations allocated to their core program(s) since they will not yet have a record of dissertation committee service.
<i>Program Questionnaires</i>			
Program Questionnaire, C13. During the 10 years between 1996 and 2005, did your program distinguish between students seeking a master's and those seeking a doctorate? Is this asking about admissions or for degree completion (e.g., number of credits required to graduate for phd with and without a master's)? Or something else, such as amount of stipend for an assistantship? Or what courses are open to them?	Kuh	8/1/06	I think we should say "applicants" rather than "students". This is a question about admissions options.

I have a problem with the completions data re cell sizes. I'm concerned with small N's. So, if we could roll it up, it would be better for us and probably other schools who are concerned with small cell sizes.	Kuh	8/4/06	Our thought was that if cell sizes are less than 5, we (the NRC) would aggregate them in any published material (and we say that in the front matter that our IRB required). We would prefer it if you left the aggregation to us, since each program is likely to have a different time pattern of enrollment/completion. We will not show any cell in our database where N is less than 5. We would like to receive the raw data because we would like to determine what aggregation will best achieve that outcome, rather than have each institution choose a (possibly) different and non-comparable aggregation
In the completion template we are asked to report the number of students still enrolled after 10 years. Is there a reason that 10 years is the threshold? We have a couple of programs where median time to degree is between 8 and 9 years. It would be helpful if we could show the number of students who receive a degree after 10 years. Otherwise it understates the number of students who receive the PhD.	Kuh	8/4/06	We know that a number of humanities fields have very long times to degree. We will stress (in the interpretive materials) that a positive entry in the "ten or over" cell does not mean that these students never complete, just that it takes a long time. That is valuable information for potential students. Operationally, we couldn't expand the matrix further to accommodate a few small fields when the vast majority of doctoral students in most fields complete in ten years or less.
Universities offering joint professional/PhD programs are concerned about reporting time to degree. Listserv participants have suggested three alternatives: subtract the professional program years from the TTD, provide separate TTD calculations for joint program graduates, or exclude joint program graduates from the calculation entirely. If the NRC has provided a resolution, I missed it - which is entirely possible given the volume of listserv correspondence! I suspect that a number of institutions would encounter the small cell size problem with providing separate calculations for joint program graduates. If the decision is made to exclude them from the TTD calculation, institutions will want to include them in the other data, since they are often among the very best students.	Kuh	8/15/06	Please list these programs separately and calculate TTD from admission to the joint program. Yes, the time will be longer, but that's true. Do not include joint degree people in the PhD alone program.
Institutions are unclear about when to begin counting for time to degree for students who earn a master's on the way. Several listserv participants have suggested that TTD should start from the beginning of the master's program. Charlotte has noted that there are clarifying questions about program policies regarding requirement of a master's before admission to the program, which will be used in the analysis of TTD data. Again, I may have missed this or it may need to wait until after the August meeting, but I did not see a "ruling" from the NRC on when to begin counting.	Kuh	8/15/06	Begin counting from the date that the student is admitted to the doctoral program. When we do the analysis, we will examine (master's+PhD) programs separately from PhD alone. PhD alone programs include those programs that award a master's along the way if the student wishes one. We ask whether a master's is required prior to admission to the doctoral program because we want to know whether this requirement shortens TTD. There are, however, some programs that admit all students initially to a master's program and then choose doctoral candidates from among those who complete the master's. We want to know which programs these are. TTD, however, will be calculated from the date of admission to the PhD program.
Question A2 asks programs to identify the fields which a program encompasses if it is interdisciplinary. The IC is also asked to provide secondary/other fields when they submit our lists of programs to MPR with the primary and secondary fields. Should the secondary fields submitted in these two places match?	Lockhart	8/31/06	While the fields listed on the program spreadsheet and on question A2 will likely be similar, there is no requirement that the lists be identical.
Can you provide clarification as to whether question E2 is referring to the average financial support of all funded students, or the average	Lockhart	8/31/06	Question E2 on the program questionnaire is referring to the average funding for all students, whether they are funded or not.

financial support of all students, funded or not?			
<i>Special Programs</i>			
What do we do for doctoral programs that span two universities? Rice University and MD Anderson Cancer Center have a joint Ph.D. program in Biostatistics. Courses are taken at both institutions and faculty at both institutions train/educate doctoral students. I assume that we are to include MD Anderson faculty data in the Rice responses. Right? The issue is that to provide Rice-only data would describe only a part of the graduate program. Graduate students in this program receive fellowship stipends from MD Anderson and tuition waivers from Rice. How do you suggest we handle this in responding to the surveys?	Lockhart	7/28/06	For programs administered jointly by two institutions: - If the degree received from the joint program is always conferred by only one of the two institutions, please list the program under the institution that confers the degree. The program will then appear asterisked with a notation that it is a joint program between the two institutions.  - If degrees are conferred jointly by both institutions or if degrees may be conferred by either institution, then a new entity will be created consisting of the names of both institutions (University X-University Y).
<i>Postdocs</i>			
Do we have a determination yet on time frame for postdocs?	Lockhart	7/21/06	Data will be collected for postdoctoral scholars who were associated with the program in the fall of 2005.