

Annual Report of the Graduate School 2016-2017

Examples of the Graduate School's Advancement of the University's Strategic Plan

1. Enhance the success of our students through educational innovation

Thesis and Dissertation Support Services: TDSS offered 19 workshops serving 239 students. We also provided five online, on-demand workshops that were used by almost 180 students. In addition to workshops, we also held two Thesis and Dissertation Institutes (“boot camps”) with 22 participants in December and 18 in May.

Professional Development: The Graduate School developed programming that included several new professional development workshops and events, such as Developing Your Personal Brand; CV, Résumé, and Cover Letter Writing; and Network for Success. Seven professional development sessions were offered in spring 2017, attended by 193 graduate students and postdocs. We also initiated a mentor program to identify industry, nonprofit, and government professionals willing to serve as mentors for students and postdocs.

Teaching and Communication Programs: A new Teaching and Communication certificate was created along with a new two-part “how to” workshop modeled on the Think and Do campaign. Sixty-six participants attended in-person teaching workshops and 63 completed online modules. Preparing the Professoriate, which continues to serve those who are pursuing traditional academic careers, is now open to postdocs.

Science Communication: The Graduate School organized and sponsored the second annual 3-Minute Thesis® competition and helped to sponsor Triangle ComSciCon workshop, a two-day event aimed at helping students and postdocs communicate their research effectively.

Office of Postdoctoral Affairs: OPA and a postdoc-led planning committee hosted the 6th annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium with approximately 120 attendees. Postdocs also had the opportunity to connect with 10 local industry partners.

Recruitment: The Graduate School managed interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary fellowships, traineeships, and award programs (~\$6.1 million). A total of 190 top applicants were recruited using fellowships funded by the Office of the Provost and administered by the Graduate School. We also partnered with graduate programs to fund 37 department-level recruiting initiatives through competitive recruiting proposals.

External Reviews of Academic Programs: We managed undergraduate and graduate external reviews of Nuclear Engineering; Sociology and Anthropology; Poultry Science; Youth, Family, and Community Sciences; History and Public History; Mathematics; and Biomathematics. There were post-review meetings for Operations Research; Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management; Nuclear Engineering; Sociology and Anthropology; and Poultry Science.

Graduate Student Research Symposium: The Graduate School planned and managed the 12th annual symposium, which featured 208 posters from 70 graduate programs in 9 colleges.

Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CIRTL): The Graduate School planned and organized the NC State CIRTL program designed to “enhance undergraduate education through the development of a national faculty committed to implementing and advancing effective teaching practices.”

Brown-Bag Lunches for Fellows: The Graduate School developed a brown-bag lunch series for NSF Graduate Research Fellows, Provost’s Fellows, and the Southern Regional Education Board Doctoral Scholars (SREB), designed to build community among fellows and scholars from diverse disciplines.

Outstanding Graduate Faculty Mentor Awards: These awards encourage excellence in mentoring graduate students. To date, six graduate faculty have been selected for awards.

4. *Enhance organizational excellence by creating a culture of constant improvement*

Improvements in Graduate School Processes:

- Created a Project Request Form to make certain all data requests are documented, assigned to the proper person, and tracked to ensure completion in a timely manner.
- Created a policy manual for the office to assure the Graduate School makes key decisions on allocations of personnel, budget, and space that are transparent and data driven.
- Hired a new employee with Graduate Student Support Plan (GSSP) experience to back up and support the existing GSSP manager and the manager of the Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships.
- Acted on the changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act resulting in more employees being subject to timekeeping and overtime compensation. The Graduate School partnered with other units to make sure we were fully prepared to manage the impact of this rule.
- Made significant progress in developing Gradpath, software that will eventually replace the Graduate Student Online Academic Reporting System.
- Automated the withdrawal process so that students can complete the process online.
- Simplified the graduate faculty appointment process by eliminating the full and associate graduate faculty standing so that there is one level of graduate faculty.
- Purchased a new admissions system, Slate, and hired an Enrollment Management Specialist to work with departments to create communication plans in it.

Program Development: The Graduate School assisted faculty and departments with the planning of new programs and revision of existing ones. It also coordinated responses with the Provost's

office to UNC GA and SACSCOC on proposed new degrees for NC State and coordinated responses to the UNC GA Graduate Council on proposed new degrees at other UNC universities.

Administrative Board of the Graduate School: The Board reviewed 29 actions for graduate degree programs and implemented 158 course actions.

Communicating with Audiences Inside and Outside the University: The Graduate School sends a monthly e-newsletter to about 9,000 graduate students to keep them informed, with an open rate of 65-70 percent and a click rate of 8-12 percent.

5. Enhance local and global engagement through focused strategic partnerships

Agreements with Other Universities: The Graduate School worked with the Office of International Services to develop academic partnerships, implementing new memoranda of agreement with Campbell University, Nanjing Normal University, and Zhejiang University.

Major initiative

Response to Enrollment Crisis: The Graduate School collaborated with the Office of the Provost to develop a multipronged approach to address NC State's enrollment challenges at the graduate level. This involved numerous approaches as outlined below:

- Enhancing on-campus enrollment strategies by (1) presenting a campus-wide workshop on effective strategies for recruiting, (2) providing estimates to programs of enrollment targets, (3) holding monthly meetings with program directors to stress the importance of monitoring processes, (4) making the daily SAS Reports available to critical parties, (5) developing a new way to estimate continuing students by program, and (6) partnering with the OIS to streamline communication with international students
- Engaging applicants through marketing NC State by (1) reworking existing correspondence to be more welcoming; (2) creating new email messages for students who had not completed

their applications; (3) developing country-specific landing pages for international students; (4) producing short videos to make international students feel welcome; (5) creating a new set of emails sent to encourage them to enroll at NC State.

- Further improving enrollment activities by (1) developing a new dashboard to streamline admissions and enrollment data, (2) acquiring new application software, (3) hiring an Enrollment Management Specialist to develop program-level communication plans.

Diversity: Initiatives and Progress

- Established the Black Graduate Student Association in association with the College of Education. The Graduate School provides funding and staff support to this organization.
- Partnered with faculty to propose funding to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups.
- Strengthened partnerships with the Meyerhoff Scholars Program and McNair Programs through regional and national conferences, hosting visits from individual McNair programs, and holding a multi-institutional visitation day in the spring targeting Scholars.
- Provided funding to support college-level initiatives to recruit underrepresented doctoral applicants, including women, by paying for their campus visits.
- Held “Visit NC State” program for potential students from underrepresented groups, attracting 22 students representing 20 institutions from 13 states, including Puerto Rico.
- Participated in approximately 18 recruiting fairs, primarily for increasing diversity in STEM.
- Strengthened or established partnerships with universities in Puerto Rico to enhance efforts to recruit Hispanic students.
- Initiated the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program at NC State in collaboration with the provost’s office.

- Re-inaugurated Graduate Student “Crosstalk” Program, a peer mentoring initiative originally funded through NSF-AGEP (1999-2013).

Fundraising: Private Fundraising Successes

During fiscal year 2016-2017, \$23,737 were designated to the Graduate School from 71 households, 40 of which are located in North Carolina. With the addition of a full-time development associate, advancement activity increased to include 120 face-to-face meetings. The chief advancement officer met with alumni in California, Minnesota, New York, Virginia, Georgia, in addition to a full slate of meetings in North Carolina. A Graduate School event in San Francisco drew a group of major gift planned prospects and “new generation” prospects. To build a stronger identity with graduate education at NC State among graduate alumni, the Graduate School launched THINK magazine with fall and summer issues. The distribution of the second issue was 58,000.

Administration: Changes and Achievements

Changes: New hires for this academic year are Vanessa Anderson, Teaching and Communication Manager; Jason Carabelli, ETD Reviewer; Jason Cramer, Professional Development Manager; Nicole Ditillo, Postdoctoral Program Manager; Annabelle Fernandez, Enrollment Management Specialist; and Karissa Wojcik, Thesis and Dissertation Coordinator.

Selected Achievements:

- Dean Maureen Grasso gave presentations at the Council of Graduate Schools Summer Workshop, the Korean Textile Association in Seoul, the National Science Foundation, and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. In addition, she gave a paper at the Third International Conference on Developments in Doctoral Education and Training in the U.K. and an invited presentation at the University of Nottingham. She also

served as President of the North Carolina Council of Graduate Schools and organized and chaired that group's annual conference at NC State.

- Senior Associate Dean Peter Harries served on the Executive Board of the Conference of Southern Graduate School, continued as chair of the Grants in Aid of Research Committee of Sigma Xi, and served as Treasurer of the Paleontological Society. He published a scientific paper, co-authored an abstract for the CSGS Annual Meeting as well as two abstracts at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Denver, CO.
- Assistant Dean David Shafer made various invited presentations, including a meeting of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Committee on Revitalizing Graduate STEM Education for the 21st Century. He also gave talks at NC State and served as a panelist for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program.
- Associate Dean Mike Carter gave a research paper at the Third International Conference on Developments in Doctoral Education and Training in the U.K. and at the University of Nottingham and workshops to new faculty and doctoral students.
- Assistant Dean Mike Walker continued to represent the university on the Self-Assessment of Internal Controls Committee (UNC GA), assisting in updating this year's self-assessment.
- Assistant Dean Lian Lynch is active in the Association for Graduate Enrollment Management, presenting a paper at the annual conference and serving on the Research Committee.

Concerns for the Future

The greatest challenges for us are those that can have a significant impact on graduate education at NC State but that we have little or no control over. This is a list of the more important ones.

- Applications from out-of-state domestic students. These applications for fall 2017 were down substantially from 2016 and we believe that a primary cause was the bad publicity North Carolina endured due to HB2. Even though a compromise bill eliminating some of the provisions of the law was passed, we suspect that the negative perceptions of the state will continue to have an effect on domestic applications and enrollment.
- Impact of political environment on international students. Applications from international students are also much lower, largely a result of the new administration's actions signaling that people from certain foreign countries are not welcome in the U.S. Of special concern are significant drops in applications from China and India, the two countries from which we enroll the largest number of students. The Graduate School has taken extraordinary measures to boost enrollment despite the drop in applications and, as a result, international enrollment climbed for fall 2017. However, further losses in applications could reduce the pool of students and therefore lower selectivity and decrease our competitive advantage.
- Changes in federal tax policies. Though most citizens would welcome sensible tax reform on the federal level, some reforms that have been proposed previously could have a negative effect on graduate students if approved. Of chief concern are (1) repeal of the Lifetime Learning Credit, which allows students to take a tax credit on tuition and expenses; (2) elimination of the Student Loan Interest Deduction, which allows for deductions for interest paid on student loans; (3) reduction or loss of employer-provided tax-exempt educational assistance; (4) termination of 529 savings plans, which offer low- and moderate-income people special tax benefits for saving for college. Such actions could add to already expensive education options and affect decisions in investing in graduate education.