

## **Annual Report of the Graduate School 2018-2019**

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

#### *1. Enhance the success of our students through educational innovation*

Graduate Writing Services: During the 2018-2019 fiscal year, writing programs offered by the Director of Graduate Writing served 743 students through 20 workshops and webinars, 2 week-long Camp Completion dissertation writing retreats, 3 extended workshop development series, 2 semester-long online accountability groups, and several one-on-one writing consultations. In Spring 2019, we launched two new workshop series, Writing for Journal Article Publication and Grant Writing, designed to support graduate students and postdocs across the disciplines. In May 2019, we launched a new Writing Certificate program that has nearly 50 graduate students enrolled in its first semester.

Engineering Writing Support: Since it began in September 2018, this new initiative for graduate students in the College of Engineering served 368 students in AY 18-19 through workshops, online writing groups, and individual consultations: 263 engineering writers attended a workshop or workshop series, while 65 writers met one-to-one for feedback on specific academic or professional projects. Approximately 40 writers participated in an online writing group during spring or summer. Programmatic highlights include "Engineering Cafe" workshops, a workshop series geared towards international multilingual writers, and relevant events with engineering departments.

Office of Postdoctoral Affairs: OPA and a postdoc-led planning committee hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium with 130 attendees and 76 poster presenters from all five academic institutions with postdocs in the region (NCSU, UNC, Duke, NIEHS, & NCCU). For

the first time, monetary awards totaling \$850 were given to the top four audience voted posters at the Research Symposium – all were from NC State.

Working with the NC State Postdoctoral Association, a postdoc benefits survey was administered in January 2019. In response to this survey and buy-in from Graduate School leadership and UNC institutional partners, we will offer full vision insurance to NC State postdocs starting July 1, 2019.

Private Sector Professional Development: *Accelerate to Industry (A2i)* is now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

This program has been so successful that it has been trademarked and is expanding its reach beyond NC State, with a program launched at the University of Florida and others planned at the Universities of Arkansas, Georgia, and Texas. This year we welcomed Florida International University, UNC Charlotte, North Carolina Central University and North Carolina A&T University as additional partners. In June we hosted our inaugural A2i Train-the-Trainer event with representatives from 20 institutions attending a 2-day training on how to launch A2i on their campus.

Academic Packways: *Gearing Up for Faculty* is an initiative to prepare graduate students and postdocs to succeed in the highly competitive academic job market. In its second year, the two-day program included 28 postdocs and late-stage graduate students from seven different colleges at NC State and 49 faculty and staff from NC State as well as other colleges and universities.

Teaching and Communication Programs: The Teaching and Communication Certificate) is designed for a broad audience of students seeking employment in and outside the academy. Here, teaching is understood as effective communication for various audiences. Earning this certificate requires 100 hours of approved activities and a professional portfolio. There are currently 170 students and postdocs enrolled, and 44 others have successfully completed this program since it

was launched in Fall 2017. Preparing the Professoriate, a year-long mentoring and workshop series designed to prepare graduate students and postdocs for long-term career success in the academy, continues to contribute to participants' success on the academic job market. Finally, the full-day New Teaching Assistant Workshop offered by the Graduate School in the fall attracted more than 350 students, providing the skills that TAs need to be more effective teachers.

Recruitment: The Graduate School managed interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary fellowships, traineeships, and award programs (~\$6.2 million). A total of 194 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 46 department-level recruiting initiatives through competitive recruiting proposals. Five Innovation Recruiting Grants were awarded to programs to promote a comprehensive overhaul of recruiting processes to increase the quality of students applying and enrolling at NC State.

External Reviews of Academic Programs: We managed undergraduate and graduate external reviews of Biomedical Engineering, Environmental Assessment, Financial Mathematics, Microbiology, Microbial Biotechnology, and Soil Science. There were post-review meetings for Forestry and Environmental Resources, Animal Science, Genetics, Computer Science, Entomology, Horticultural Science, and Economics.

Graduate Student Research Symposium: The Graduate School planned and managed the 14<sup>th</sup> annual symposium, which featured 213 posters from 70 graduate programs in all 10 colleges.

Outstanding Graduate Faculty Mentor Awards: The awards for this year were in two areas, Mathematical Sciences, Physical Sciences & Engineering and Humanities and Design. To date, ten graduate faculty have been selected for awards.

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

##### Improvements in Graduate School Processes:

- For the sake of efficiency and lowering costs, the Graduate School moved its *Think Magazine* from hard-copy to internet distribution and from outside- to in-house production.
- The Graduate School, in partnership with EMAS and DASA as well as with financial support from the Provost's Office, has acquired new modules within the Leapfrog system that currently houses CIM (Course inventory management system). For greater transparency, we determined an improved catalog would be necessary; therefore, we plan to implement the CAT module (online catalog) and CIM Programs module (online program approval process).
- Working with EAS, the Graduate School is in the process of creating a new graduate plan of work. We are leveraging some of the technology used to create the undergraduate degree audit to create a plan of work that will be a living document as opposed to the current plan of work, which is often completed late in the student's career.
- Graduate certificate students will also have a plan of work, something that previously was only available to degree-seeking students. This will help the graduate certificate programs more accurately track their students' progress and ease their degree clearance process.
- In an effort to keep students on track to completion, we have analyzed critical degree milestones and are working with EAS to alert students of those milestones within the MyPack portal. For example, if a student has not scheduled a preliminary exam by a specific time we will add an alert in their portal at an appropriate time.
- We are altering the patent agreement process. Currently the patent agreement is tied to the graduate plan of work. We are separating those processes to increase efficiency and prevent students from needing to reapprove their patent when their program changes.

- The Graduate School has continued to address salary inequities that had grown over previous years and had created concerns for some employees. This has included increasing the salaries of multiple employees who were below the Market Minimum.
- After purchasing Turnitin for the university community last year, we are in the process of renewing the application. We believe it has the potential to create efficiencies for faculty who will have a streamlined process for promoting academic integrity so that they can address issues revolving around plagiarism with students.
- The Graduate School has expanded its analytic reporting for student statistics as well as reconceptualized report fundamentals based on evaluating campus use and our institutional strategic initiatives. We have added more modalities for interacting with reports and began creating some student financial reports, particularly in the areas of graduate appointments and the Graduate Student Support Plan.

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

Administrative Board of the Graduate School: The Board reviewed 32 actions for graduate degree programs and approved 191 course actions.

Communicating with Audiences Inside and Outside the University: In fall 2018, the Graduate School launched a digital magazine that reached more than 60,000 graduate alumni around the world. Using the digital format rather than a print magazine allows us to reach both domestic and international alumni. The Graduate School sent a monthly e-newsletter to more than 9,000 graduate students to keep them informed. The newsletter has an open rate of 65-75 percent and a

click rate of 7-12 percent. In an effort to enhance communications with other campus audiences, including faculty, we began implementing a new strategic university communications plan. It included a dean's letter to faculty each semester and a new website that is a one-stop-shop for Graduate Services Coordinators.

#### *5. Enhance local and global engagement through focused strategic partnerships*

Agreements with Other Universities: The Graduate School worked to develop academic partnerships, implementing new memoranda of agreements with U.S. institutions, Tuskegee University, and 3+x programs in collaboration with the Office of Global Engagement with Zhejiang Science and Technical University, Chongqing University of Post and Telecommunications, Soochow University, Qingdao University, University of Michigan-Shanghai Jiao Tong University Joint Institute, and Huazhong University of Science and Technology.

#### **Major initiatives**

Country-Specific Recruitment Strategies: Starting with the Trump administration's anti-immigrant stance, U.S. universities have faced headwinds in attracting international students. Recent concerns regarding the possibility of stolen intellectual property by Chinese students have led to discussions of no longer accepting students from that country, which could lead to a sharp downturn in applications. To address these issues, the Graduate School plans to diversify NC State's international application pool, starting first with country-specific recruiting plans initially focused on Canada and Mexico. We anticipate this proactive approach will enable us to help mitigate against potential application and enrollment declines associated with international students.

Slate: This application system, designed to simplify and improve the student application process, was instrumental in increasing applications and enrollment in its first recruiting season. We will continue to build out Slate to take greater advantage of the event modules and communication plans for program directors to interact with applicants.

**Diversity: Initiatives and Progress**

- Through the Meyerhoff Scholars Program, the Graduate School participated in the “campus connections fair” at UMBC on October 22, 2018. They hold this fair four times in the fall semester, and representation is limited to about 10 institutions at each fair.
- The Visit NC State Program is unlike many of the departmental visitations in that the majority of participants are from underrepresented groups and are those who have not applied and/or have been admitted to NC State. NC State hosted 34 students representing 24 universities.
- The Graduate School manages fellowships designed specifically for recruiting minority students. These fellowships include the Diversity Recruiting Fellowships and the SREB Doctoral Scholars Program.
- SREB Doctoral Scholars Lunches are informal networking lunches for Scholars and a way to keep tabs on their progress. This year there are 15 SREB Doctoral Scholars, and next year there will be 20 Scholars.
- The Graduate School hosted a series of graduate student “Crosstalks” designed to promote diversity in graduate education and to build a stronger community by giving students the opportunity to network with other graduate students from diverse backgrounds.

- Presentations in Puerto Rico provide the opportunity to speak to participants (~100) in the UPR-Cayey RISE Program, UPR-Rio Piedras RISE Program, MARC Program, LSAMP Program, and the Universidad del Este RISE program.

### **Administration: Changes and Achievements**

Changes: New hires in existing positions for this academic year are Joe Aldinger, A2i Program Manager; Kayla Anima, Administrative Support Specialist; Richard Corley, Graduate Appointments and Fellowships; Shannon Madden, Director, Graduate Writing; Chris Smith, Postdoc Program Manager. We also developed new positions, largely funded through reallocation from sunset positions, to accommodate the needs of graduate students. These consist of: Katie Homar, Director of International Engineering Writing Support (in partnership with the College of Engineering) and Courtney Hughes, Graduate Fellowship Specialist.

### Selected Achievements:

- Interim Dean Peter Harries served on the Executive Board of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) and continued as chair of the Grants in Aid of Research Committee of Sigma Xi. He also chairs CSGS's Master's Thesis Awards committee. He published a scientific paper in Meteoritics and Planetary Sciences (in fact, the research was featured on the cover), presented on A2i at the CGS Annual Meeting, and was a co-author on abstracts at the Geological Society of America Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, IN and at the 4th International Conference on Developments in Doctoral Education & Training in Dublin, Ireland (with Mike Carter).
- Assistant Dean David Shafer has given many presentations: Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Annual Meeting, Saint Augustine's College, Florida International University, University of Puerto Rico at Cayey, University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras,

Universidad del Este, 25th Annual SAEOPP McNair/SSS Scholars Research Conference (Luncheon Panelist). He is president of the NC State University Chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, sits on the Southern Regional Education Board Doctoral Scholars Advisory Committee, and recently started serving on the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Membership Committee.

- Associate Dean Mike Carter presented a paper at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Developments in Doctoral and Training in Dublin, Ireland (with Peter Harries).
- Assistant Dean Laura Demarse hosted the inaugural A2i Train-the-Trainer in June with over 20 participants from institutions across North America. Presented at the following meetings: UIDP annual conference at the Marriott State View, The National Postdoctoral Association Annual Meeting in Orlando, the summer workshop at Virginia Tech, Graduate Career Consortium (GCC) and submitted a proposal to the NSF to support the future expansion of the A2i program. Attendance at the Council of Graduate Schools Annual meeting and regional meetings.
- Assistant Dean Mike Walker continued to represent the colleges on the Self-Assessment of Internal Controls Committee (for the State Office), assisting in updating this year's self-assessment. He also participated on the University's Business Operations Group 2019 Steering Committee for the Office Finance & Administration, agreeing to co-chair this committee in FY 2020. In addition, he was on the committee to hire both the University's Associate Vice-Chancellor for HR Strategy and the Associate Vice-Chancellor for Operations.

- Assistant Dean Lian Lynch is active in the Association for Graduate Enrollment Management, serving on its Research Committee. The Research Committee received the NAGAP Promotion of Excellence Award at the annual conference in April.

### **Concerns for the Future**

Mental Health of Graduate Students: Several studies published recently have shown that graduate students suffer mental health problems at a rate significantly higher than the general population. We understand that this is an ongoing problem with no easy solution. Therefore, the Graduate School will continue its partnership with our graduate Mental Health Ambassador and the Counseling Center to provide mental health workshops for Graduate Services Coordinators and Directors of Graduate Studies so that they become more familiar with such problems. And once again we will address the issue at the fall 2019 New Student Orientation and are collaborate on graduate-specific programming to be associated with Wellness Week during the 2019-20 academic year.