

**Report of the
Special Committee
on
Graduate Education**

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Chair, Scott M. Lanyon

Subcommittee Chairs:

Wayne Gladfelter

George Heimpel

Karen Ho

Carissa Schively Slotterback

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Background

Over the course of the 2012-2013 Academic Year, concerns about the status and future of graduate education at the University of Minnesota were brought to the attention of various senate committees, the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC), and the Provost. As a result of these conversations, the FCC and the Provost agreed to jointly charge a special committee to explore the concerns that had been raised. In the meantime, the Graduate School conducted a survey of the faculty, staff, and students at the University of Minnesota regarding graduate education in April 2013. The Provost and the FCC used the results of this survey (Appendix A) and the feedback received over the previous academic year to develop the charge (Appendix B) for a Special Committee on Graduate Education (SCGE).

The charge specified twenty questions to be addressed - questions that represent the primary concerns raised during the 2013 Academic Year. The SCGE was to be comprised of four subcommittees (Graduate Student Financing; Facilitation of the Graduate Student Experience and Ensuring Program Quality; Graduate Program Enrollment Management; and Oversight of, and Advocacy for, the Visibility and Quality of Graduate Education). In addressing these questions, the SCGE was instructed to focus on National Research Council (NRC)-like PhD graduate education.

Names of potential committee members were proposed by the Graduate School, the Faculty Consultative Committee, the Provost, and the SCGE Chair. Committee members (faculty, staff, and graduate students) were selected in an effort to bring together individuals who had, by their expressed interest and demonstrated effort, shown a commitment to graduate education over the course of their careers. A special effort was made to include individuals who had served on previous graduate education committees. Finally, an effort was made to appoint people representing the diversity of graduate education at the University of Minnesota. It is important to note that almost everyone we approached agreed to serve despite the fact that everyone was already feeling over-committed. People agreed to serve because the future of graduate education is vitally important to the future of the University of Minnesota (see Appendix C for the list of members and their affiliations).

The SCGE started work by reviewing the reports of twelve recent committees that were formed to make recommendations regarding graduate education at the University of Minnesota:

- 1992 – Report of the Committee to Review the Graduate School
- 1995 (October 16) – The Graduate School – Adding Value to the University of Minnesota
- 1996 (August) – Ad Hoc Committee for the Redesign of the Functions of the OVPR and Dean of the Graduate School
- 2004 (April) – Evaluation of Value Added by the Graduate School
- 2005 (January 25) – Financing Graduate Education Task Force

- 2006 (February 3) – Final Recommendations of the Task Force on Graduate Reform – Student Support
- 2006 (May 5) – Final Recommendations of the Task Force on Graduate Reform – Discipline Evolution
- 2009 (February 9) – Restructuring the Oversight and Support of Graduate Education
- 2009 (April 24) – Recommendations on the Oversight and Support of Graduate Education
- 2009 (June 26) – Renewing Graduate and Professional Education at the University of Minnesota
- 2010 (April 30) – Final Recommendations on Graduate Education
- 2011 (September 23) – A Vision for Enrollment Management at the University of Minnesota

Timeline

The Chair and subcommittee chairs met for the first time on September 6th to develop a strategy for carrying out the committee’s charge and the subcommittees started meeting on September 16th. On October 17, the Provost sent a message to the university community updating everyone on the work of the SCGE and soliciting additional input. As emails were received they were forwarded to the relevant subcommittees. Subcommittees met separately as needed through the end of October at which time draft reports of the subcommittees were prepared. Although input from the university community had been obtained through the various senate committees in the 2013 academic year and through the Graduate School’s survey, we determined that this input was primarily the identification of specific problems with graduate education today. We were missing the university community’s ideas about the future of graduate education. Therefore, listening sessions were held on the Duluth campus, St. Paul campus, and both East and West bank campuses. Participants were asked to respond to the following two questions:

- 1. What should graduate education at the University of Minnesota look like in the next 5-10 years?**
- 2. What are the opportunities relating to graduate education to which the University of Minnesota is uniquely positioned to respond?**

Following these listening sessions, the SCGE met as a large group to discuss points of disagreement that arose during the subcommittee deliberations and to discuss the two aspirational questions and the responses to those questions by our colleagues.

General Observations

Before presenting the specific recommendations of the SCGE, there are several general observations about graduate education that emerged from our work that are worth mentioning.

Centrality of Graduate Education - The SCGE's most important observation is that graduate education and graduate students are absolutely central to all aspects of the mission of the university. Not only is graduate education itself a critical goal of the institution, but the presence of high achieving graduate students advances other key goals of the university as well. Graduate students play an important role in our ability to deliver great undergraduate education and they have a direct positive impact on the scholarly productivity of faculty. Indeed, we suggest that the most important metrics determining the academic stature of a research university are 1) the scholarly productivity of our faculty (which is itself enhanced by quality graduate students) and 2) the quality of graduate education.

However, it is the committee's perception that the central importance of graduate students in advancing the entire mission of the University of Minnesota is not well understood. This is perhaps most apparent when we examine the finances of graduate education. We are very good at calculating the cost of graduate students but we rarely calculate the value they return to the institution in terms of research, teaching, and outreach. Without strong graduate education, the quality and quantity of our undergraduate education and our research, and our outreach would decline significantly. As goes graduate education, so goes the institution.

Consequently, increasing the number of programs at the university that are considered to be among the best in the nation, and helping programs to remain among the best, should be a high priority. Increasing the quality of the graduate students we matriculate and graduate should be an equivalently high priority.

Diversity of Graduate Education - The SCGE was asked to focus on NRC-like PhD programs. The quality of these graduate programs is strongly correlated with the academic stature of the University of Minnesota nationally and internationally. However, throughout our discussions we struggled with how to talk about graduate education. There is a tendency for faculty, staff, and students to assume that their personal knowledge of their primary graduate program affiliation is indicative of graduate programs generally. It is clear from the deliberations of the SCGE that attempts to extrapolate from personal knowledge of one program to UofM graduate education rarely provide useful insights. The diversity of graduate programs at this institution is enormous. Statements that begin, "the typical graduate student is ..." are meaningless. The diversity of our graduate programs creates administrative complexity, but ensures that we are offering programs that meet the widely varied interests of students and are aligned with the range of societal challenges we strive to address.

Definitions in Post-Baccalaureate Education – The SCGE is concerned that the tradition of dividing programs into Graduate Education or Professional Education obscures the similarities across all of post-baccalaureate education and obscures the dramatic diversity that exists between programs within these two ambiguous categories. Furthermore, since this is a somewhat artificial dichotomy imposed on a continuum of educational programs, there will always be programs that don't fit well into either category. However, given the University's budget model, we are concerned that any recommendations that the SCGE might make regarding changes to these definitions would only weaken graduate education and, therefore, the University. The University's budget model offers a basic, though sometimes imperfect, mechanism for organizing and managing graduate and professional education programs. Regardless of the budget model being used, we must identify ways to strengthen PhD graduate education in ways that do not undermine the broader contributions of post-baccalaureate education to our institution.

Putting Quality First – The SCGE conversations were, not surprisingly, dominated by financial considerations. Obviously, as an institution we need to have sufficient funds to pay the full costs of graduate education. However, we wish to emphasize that our graduate education goals shouldn't be **established** by financial considerations. Rather, our choice of goals should be **influenced** by financial considerations, and our financial systems and priorities should be established by our choice of academic goals. For example, the dominant factor at present in determining graduate program enrollment size is the availability of money for graduate student support. Yet it is unclear to what extent quality and institutional goals for graduate education determine the distribution of money for graduate student support.

Interdisciplinary vs. Intercollegiate Scholarship – Almost nothing gets people energized more quickly at this institution than a discussion about interdisciplinary scholarship. Nearly everyone is in favor of it, but as soon as we talk about devoting resources to interdisciplinary initiatives, nearly everyone expresses concern about declining support for disciplinary scholarship – without disciplinary strength you can't have interdisciplinary strength. Because the majority of funds for graduate education are controlled by colleges, it is intercollegiate scholarship that is disadvantaged at this institution. In recent years, the situation has been confused with the formal designation of a small set of intercollegiate programs as "interdisciplinary". Given that nearly every graduate program can correctly claim to be doing interdisciplinary work, the designation of a small subset as interdisciplinary is inaccurate and counter-productive as it obscures the intent of dealing with the unique problems of intercollegiate programs. We applaud the Graduate School's recent decision to change this designation from interdisciplinary to intercollegiate.

Considering What is Best for Students – One of the strongest themes to emerge from the listening sessions and from the SCGE conversations, was the idea that we have been short-sighted in our management of graduate education. Decisions are often made based on available funding, the needs of the faculty, and/or the needs of the department. While these are clearly important perspectives, it is vitally important that we take into account what is best for our students. No doubt, some programs already make decisions on what is best for students, but for other programs this would represent a shift in culture. We feel

strongly that considering what is best for students when making decisions is an important component of improving the quality and national ranking of programs.

Strong Graduate School – Changes in the structure of graduate education at the University of Minnesota has placed more of the management decisions regarding graduate programs in the colleges. While there is some logic in doing this, we note that in most cases this additional management responsibility was added to the already full portfolios of staff members in collegiate offices. Prior to the structural change there were individuals in the graduate school whose fulltime job was graduate education. Now, there are many colleges in which no individual is dedicated full-time to the oversight of graduate education. One consequence is that the roles of the various units (graduate program, college, Graduate School, Graduate Student Services and Progress, and Academic Support Resources) involved in graduate education remains unclear to many people. Strong central leadership on behalf of graduate education is vitally important at this critical time. While the Graduate School's administrative structures have evolved in recent years, its role in developing and advocating for an institutional vision for graduate education should be accentuated. Strong leadership and advocacy on behalf of all graduate education is vitally important at this critical time.

Opportunity not Challenge - Institutions of higher education across the United States are struggling with how to support and manage graduate education. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. Those institutions that come up with solutions, and that make graduate education one of their highest institutional priorities, will be the academic leaders in the coming decades. This challenge represents a significant opportunity for the University of Minnesota.

Recommendations

The reports of the four subcommittees (included below in their entirety) are written and organized as responses to the questions that were posed in the SCGE charge. Each report includes recommendations that address the concerns represented in each of these questions. To facilitate implementation of these recommendations, in the following section we've organized the recommendations by the office that we think is most appropriately charged with their implementation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION
SORTED BY IMPLEMENTING OFFICE**

(Specific explanations can be found in the subcommittee reports)

PROVOST

1. Develop a means of reducing the charged cost of graduate research assistantships below the cost of postdoctoral fellows
2. Make the improvement of graduate education a top priority of the Provost's Office
 - a. Make the assessment of progress in advancing graduate program excellence a critical component of annual assessment of VP and Dean performance
 - b. Report annually to FCC on progress toward raising the quality of graduate education

PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

1. Increase investments in Graduate Education
2. Enlist the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) in developing a marketing campaign promoting the importance of post-baccalaureate education

UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

1. Make the creation of endowments in the Graduate School and for graduate education in colleges a priority in the next capital campaign.
2. Assign a development officer to work with the Graduate School to build endowments for graduate education initiatives (see recommendations items #4, #6 under Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School below.
3. Consider offering the opportunity to name the Graduate School

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

1. Appoint a University Relations staff person to focus on raising awareness and understanding of post-baccalaureate education
2. Help colleges and programs develop promotional materials for key audiences
3. Highlight national stature of post-baccalaureate programs

COLLEGIATE DEANS

1. Make the development of graduate scholarships and endowment a priority
2. Make strengthening and protecting collegiate funding for graduate students a priority
3. Emphasize success in graduate education in annual and promotion reviews
4. Give graduate students priority over undergraduate students when filling teaching assistantships

GRADUATE DGS AND STAFF

1. Offer letters to applicants should clearly state the fees for which the student will be responsible

VICE PROVOST AND DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

1. Coordinate Graduate Education Processes
 - a. Enforce University policy requirements
 - b. Continue to coordinate with Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) and Academic Support Resources (ASR) on business processes
 - c. Partner with GSSP/ASR and programs/colleges to audit and analyze graduate student business processes university-wide and develop a strategy for streamlining communications and administrative processes (forms, etc.) at all levels to provide a seamless experience for graduate students.
 - d. Clarify and make transparent the roles and responsibilities of programs, colleges, and the Graduate School
 - e. Establish a central “placement tracking system” that houses data on graduate student placement, generates reports, and is accessible to faculty and staff in programs and colleges
2. Develop Training Programs
 - a. For new Associate Deans of Graduate Education, Directors of Graduate Studies and their assistants
 - b. For Faculty
 - i. Encourage students to apply for external fellowships and grants
 - ii. How to write effective letters of recommendation
 - iii. Mentoring/Advising Best Practices
 - iv. How to offer Professional Development/Proposal Writing courses for graduate students
3. Oversee Program Evaluation
 - a. Guide programs on the establishment of quality metrics and targets which should include:
 - i. Discipline specific indicators of national stature
 - ii. Capacity of the program to support students financially and in terms of mentorship
 - iii. Employment success of graduates
 - iv. Quality of applicants
 - v. Quality of graduate research
 - vi. Critical mass of students
 - vii. Graduate student diversity
 - viii. Quality of advising of graduate students
 - b. Regularly evaluate program progress towards achieving their targets
4. Develop a University policy and procedure for transitioning graduate programs that are too small, not competitive in the discipline....
 - a. Appoint a committee (faculty and staff) charged with developing a University policy to close/merge graduate academic programs specifying criteria for closure/merger (quality, size, rankings, need/demand, etc...) and responsibilities at all levels (program, dept., college, Graduate School)
 - b. Appoint a standing committee (faculty and staff) charged with implementing the policy and procedure developed in 4.a
 - c. Establish procedures that protect current students in programs that are closed/merged.

VICE PROVOST AND DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL (continued)

5. Actively Promote Graduate Program Excellence
 - a. Develop Awards to recognize and reward outstanding mentors/advisors
 - b. Establish multi-year recruiting fellowships to attract outstanding PhD applicants being recruited by the top programs nationally and internationally
 - c. Build endowments to support these and other Graduate School efforts to promote graduate program excellence
6. Promote Innovation in Graduate Education
 - a. Develop procedures for experimenting with ideas for new graduate program emphases
 - b. Advocate for, and facilitate formation of, new graduate program tracks to respond to faculty initiatives, student interests, and/or societal needs
7. Support Interdisciplinary and Intercollegiate Graduate Research and Teaching
 - a. Evaluate and minimize barriers to intercollegiate scholarship
 - i. Increase support for Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship Program
 - ii. Monitor success of programs whose faculty members come from multiple colleges but which are administered by a single college
8. Enhance the Visibility of Graduate Education
 - a. Develop talking points conveying the central role that graduate education plays in advancing the University's mission
 - b. Address media and public misconceptions
 - i. Highlight the careers that our graduates develop thanks to their advanced degrees
 - ii. Highlight the contributions of research and outreach conducted by graduate students
 - iii. Provide data regarding all the disciplines in which a high percentage of our graduates are successful at obtaining employment that uses their degree
 - iv. Provide data regarding the disciplines in which a high percentage of our graduates are not able to obtain employment using their training and highlight strategies to address this problem
9. Develop Recommendations Regarding Definitions/Categories within Post-Baccalaureate Education
 - a. Definitions/Categories should:
 - i. Communicate the similarities that exist across all forms of post-baccalaureate education at the University of Minnesota
 - ii. Establish meaningful divisions that make academic sense
 - iii. Communicate the profound differences that exist between these divisions
 - b. Implementation of Recommendations regarding Definitions/Categories should:
 - i. Not weaken graduate education financially
 - ii. Not reduce national visibility/stature of individual programs

GRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES AND PROGRESS (GSSP) AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT RESOURCES (ASR)

1. Continue to archive official student records
2. Continue to develop online workflows and business processes for improved services to students
3. Partners with the Graduate School and programs/colleges to analyze and develop strategies to streamline graduate student business processes

OFFICE OF EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

1. Increase funding for the Diversity of Views and Experiences (DOVE) program to further incentivize program admission of students from underrepresented groups
2. Collaborate with colleges and programs to generate funding and identify diversity recruitment priorities that are specific to each unit

UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION AT ALL LEVELS

1. Use the talking points developed by the Graduate School regarding the central role that graduate education plays in advancing the mission of the University of Minnesota

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

1. Establish two standing subcommittees:
 - a. SCEP Subcommittee for Undergraduate Education
 - b. SCEP Subcommittee for Graduate Education

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

1. Consider full range of Graduate Education when recruiting SCEP members

**Special Committee on Graduate Education
Subcommittee on Graduate Financing Report**

Prepared by Karen Ho, faculty in Anthropology/CLA, on behalf of the Subcommittee on Graduate Financing

INTRODUCTION

The SCGE Subcommittee, through a series of meetings and individual conversations both internally as well as within our respective departments, units, colleges, we are pleased to offer the following ideas and recommendations.

First, a brief note on methodology is in order. Given the timeframe and the particular charge of this subcommittee, we understand our mission as not so much cataloging the problems of the Graduate School reorganization, but as delving into the experiences, perspectives, and strategies of faculty who are engaging directly with graduate student financing. While we are certainly empirically driven and made sure to assess and request data that had been and continues to be gathered from diverse contexts, we recognize that our primary charge – instead of being paralyzed by the dream for “complete” data – was to offer on-the-ground input and recommendations for strengthening graduate financing in the future given our roles in their training and livelihoods.

It is also important to underscore that the composition of this Subcommittee is quite diverse (from Engineering to CEHD, from Business to CLA). Thus, it is not only striking but also a demonstration of the clarity and self-evidence of purpose that we were in complete agreement that as a university, we need to strengthen our commitment to graduate students and their financing, for graduate research is foundational for a world-class research university rests. We collectively recognized that our investments in graduate student support needs improvement (with stipends barely keeping up with increased tuition, fringe, and cost of living) and that our peers have been offering competitive or even better offers.

Overall Comment and Recommendation:

If we are going to continue to be a world-renowned, land-grant research university, we need a paradigm shift that reframes the discourse of the “cost” of graduate education to one that fully recognizes that the investment in and support of graduate research leads to an expanded research portfolio and the training of the next generation of scholars and leaders. Such an alignment of mission and practice is central to the fulfillment of the former.

To this end, the Subcommittee on Graduate Financing recommends that the University adopt a more shared approach to graduate student support and financing. What we mean by this is that the University utilizes its scale and ability to pool funding to allow Colleges more flexibility. Specifically, as it currently stands,

funding is strictly apportioned and silo-ed to particular Units; the result, oftentimes, is that colleges become increasingly risk averse as they have limited flexibility with funding. We thus suggest that using a pooled funding, “community” model, the University can better back up, support, and be responsive to colleges so that they can take strategic risks to make the necessary investments in graduate education. In practice, this means that graduate education should be an important part of the annual University cost pool discussions so that deans and provost can clearly understand and be responsive to how allocation decisions are made.

Moreover, we recommend the removal of the various disincentives at the college and departmental levels to train graduate students, as well as the generation of more revenue such that increased financing for graduate education is not on the backs of graduate students themselves.

INITIAL LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Reduce the Costs of Graduate Education

- a. **Tuition Alleviation:** Our tuition (especially relative to stipend) is high among our competitors, and we have serious concerns about the sustainability of graduate education and financing, as well as the competitiveness of our graduate recruiting. High tuition also makes RAs and TA’s very expensive, especially in grants. We recommend:
 - i. **that graduate student tuition at the University of Minnesota be brought in line to the mean cost of our peer institutions.**
 - ii. **that the cost of hiring and including graduate students on external grants not exceed that of a postdoc.**
- b. **Alleviation of Graduate Student Fees:** We hear from both graduate students as well as from the annual COG Survey Report, that graduate student fees and out of pocket expenses, often catches them unawares. While different schools/colleges have various ways of alleviating the fees, it is quite uneven, and oftentimes, there is no indication of such fees in offer letters to graduate students. Departments also dip into block grant funds to help students who are hard-pressed to pay these fees, which is not the best use of these funds. We recommend:
 - i. **that offer letters state clearly the fees for which the student will be responsible.**
- c. **Recalculation of Health Insurance:** As it stands, costs of graduate student health insurance are calculated as a percentage of stipend (15.7%). Higher stipends incur higher costs of health insurance although of course, the health insurance received is identical.

2. **Endowment Funds for Graduate Education:** In our discussions, we also strongly endorsed the creation of endowment funds earmarked for graduate education. We believe that matched investments or a major capital campaign would be worthwhile, though we recognize this also demands resources and

- time. Let us find ways to expand the pie. We recommend:
- a. **that the University of Minnesota assign a development officer to work with the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education.**
 - b. **that the creation of endowments in the Graduate School and in colleges be a priority in the next capital campaign.**
3. **Summer Funding for Graduate Student Research:** Although summer funding varies widely by college and by kind of degree, we agreed that for most doctoral students, summer is a crucial time to conduct research, such as fieldwork or archival research, and yet it is also a time where funding is often not guaranteed and highly variable. We believe strongly in creating central institutional support for guaranteed summer funding, at least for a few summers. For example, in the College of Liberal Arts, most departments use block grant money for summer research grants. However, most departments are not able to offer guaranteed summer funding, and as such, we often hear that we are losing some of our “best and brightest recruits” to schools that are able to guarantee summer research funding. In another example, at the Institute for Child Development and in CEHD, they no longer have their block grant allocation, and have very little flexibility to fund summer research. Money that used to be available no longer available. Of course, we also discussed that block grants were often used as fill “gaps,” and should not be used as a permanent solution to the issues surrounding central allocation for graduate education.
4. **Mentor awards:** We discussed the importance of rewarding high quality mentorship, and while we know that there are singular university awards such as the Graduate Professional Teaching Award out there, they are too few and far in between. We strongly believe in the importance of rewarding faculty for the quality of their graduate mentoring. We recommend:
- a. **that the Graduate School reward great mentorship by offering a graduate fellowship to the named mentor that he or she can then provide in the future to a graduate student.**
 - b. **rewarding graduate programs for providing professional development training (grant writing, giving talks, how to interview and negotiate...) to their graduate students.**
5. **Senate Committee on Graduate Education**
- a. An arena in the senate that focuses on graduate matters would better reflect its importance to the mission of the University. Although the Senate Committee on Educational Policy’s charge covers both graduate and undergraduate education, its agenda mainly focuses on undergraduates. We recommend:
 - i. **that the Senate Committee on Educational Policy should have two subcommittees, one that focuses on graduation education, the other on undergraduate education.**
6. **Graduate Assistantships:** Regarding both Research Assistantships and Teaching Assistantships, graduate students should be prioritized for grant funding and teaching opportunities.
- a. It is necessary to provide incentives for faculty to write graduate students into their external grants. We heard unequivocally that while most

- program or clusters of graduate programs (e.g., EEB 8500 and EEB8550).**
- c. that the Graduate School provide some kind of reward/incentive/acknowledgement mechanism to faculty and to units that offer such training.**
 - d. that the Graduate School train faculty in the art of letter-writing for these external grants.**
 - e. that the Graduate School match external fellowships if the grant does not cover all of tuition.**
 - f. removing the “costs” associated with applying for grants. For example, regarding “internal” grants, such as the ICGC (Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Global Change), many departments within CLA are discourage from applying for them. Departments whose incoming graduate students receive an ICGC fellowship actually need to pay thousands of dollars (from their own “block grant” allocation) to fund these students.**
 - g. a modification of the cost pool structure that differentiates between research and training grant expenditures in determining the central administration “tax” rate at the unit level. In effect, we recommend using the Modified Total Direct Costs (total direct costs minus equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, student tuition remission, rental costs of off-site facilities, scholarships and fellowships, and the portion of each subgrant and subcontract in excess of \$25 ,000) be used for determining a unit's cost pool allocation. We also recommend increased resources in the Graduate School for matching dollars for all types of institutional training grants, if allowed by the grant mechanism.**
- 8. Recruitment Fellowships:** On the topic of quality and the most highly ranked programs, we mainly agreed that “quality” and “ranking” are not always the same thing, and that there are a variety of “metrics” that can be used to measure and that differ depending on the college. We did agree, however, that that many of our departments are “losing” out on the best and the brightest students to our competitors because we do not have the flexibility of funding to recruit these students. For example, in addition to the lack of summer funding, we heard repeatedly from faculty members that single-year fellowships (such as the GSF) do not allow us to compete with private nor other strong public research universities. We discussed the need for resources so that recruitment success can match program success and quality. We discussed that there is general risk aversion to buck “the trend” (i.e. we tend to jump the ship with everyone else), and we advocate for judicious risk-taking and a longer-term horizon when it comes to graduate education. We recommend:
- a. that in order to allow programs to recruit the most promising graduate students, programs need to be able to offer multi-year fellowships to such students. For prospective graduate students**

who are also being competitively recruited by other top programs in the discipline, the University should provide units the flexibility of multi-year fellowships as a powerful recruitment tool. What constitutes a top program will be judged by strength of faculty research, placement, reputation, as well as NRC rankings.

- b. offering multi-year, guaranteed summer funding as part of the recruitment process. Currently, most departments are only able to piece together summer funding on an ad hoc basis, although there is much uneven-ness, and thus less resourced departments are less able to attract excellent candidates. To aid in the recruitment of these highly competitive students, we recommend guaranteeing top prospects five years of summer funding. The funding for these summers would derive from a pool of flexible funding through cost sharing from multiple units.**
- 9. Publicity:** The broader public, for example, mainly relate to undergraduate education, and as such, we recommend a concerted, publicity effort to “sell” to the state the importance of graduate training and research, and how these investments and successes redound to the stature of the University. Our graduate alumni are engaged in groundbreaking efforts and projects throughout the state, nationally, and globally; we need to publicize these successes. We recommend:
- a. that the University begin to tell a stronger narrative of how and why graduate students are central to our mission and to the state.**

Special Committee on Graduate Education
Subcommittee on Facilitation of the Graduate Student Experience and Ensuring Program Quality

Prepared by George Heimpel, faculty in Entomology/CFANS, on behalf of the Subcommittee on Facilitation of the Graduate Student Experience and Ensuring Program Quality

The committee would like to acknowledge that Graduate Student Services and Progress (GSSP) was moved from the Graduate School to the Office of the Registrar. GSSP continues to have an important role in graduate student progress, degree completion, and record-keeping. We recommend that GSSP continue to manage processes, and that the Graduate School focus on policy oversight and graduate education quality. GSSP, the Graduate School, colleges, and programs should work as a team to deliver a seamless graduate experience to students.

1. What are the appropriate roles of the Graduate School and the colleges in guiding and managing student progress towards degree completion?

Our over-arching response to this question is that the Graduate School should focus on **oversight** and training tasks (see below). Programs know best how to identify and address routes and barriers to student success, and strategies for managing student progress should therefore be initiated at the program level. Recommendations:

- a. Give colleges/departments flexibility in setting optimal time-to-degree as a component of quality metrics. Norms and optimal time-to-degree can vary across fields due to differences in funding for graduate students, expectations of the job market, and so on.
 - b. Develop more holistic measures of student success that include not only time-to-degree but also discipline-relevant criteria. The Graduate School should partner with programs to develop these measures.
 - c. The Graduate School should provide training to incoming Directors of Graduate Studies in resources available for student mental health and conflict resolution issues. This could be part of a broader training series.
 - d. Tie goals and metrics more to data on student job placement and generate data sets to facilitate this. These data should be housed in a centralized record-keeping system to organize and make available these data in a user-friendly manner. Directors of Graduate Studies and relevant staff should be able to add to, access, and edit this data set.
- 2. Which essential record-keeping and oversight tasks should be done by the Graduate School and which by the colleges, and can these be managed more effectively?**

Our over-arching response to this question is that tasks should be streamlined so that faculty, department heads, Directors of Graduate Studies and deans can spend more time on pursuit of excellence. Recommendations:

- a. GSSP in coordination with the Graduate School should archive official records.
- b. Colleges and programs should be given flexibility in terms of who needs to sign off on the various forms and the ability to delegate.
- c. Continue making forms digital and/or online workflows; this seems to be working well. In addition, oral/defense forms should be printable.

- d. The Graduate School should work with GSSP, colleges, and programs to analyze graduate student business processes and develop a strategy and communications plan to connect students to administrative resources (such as forms). Students and faculty are confused about how their program, college, GSSP, and the Graduate School work together, where responsibilities are located, and where to go for answers and resources.

3. What process should be used to close weak graduate programs?

Recommendations:

- a. a new committee composed of faculty and staff is needed to focus solely on a specific policy and procedure to address this question, including criteria used for program closure. This new policy should be subject to comment from all University stakeholders in a transparent manner.
- b. This discussion should include options to improve/strengthen/merge weak programs. Closing should not be the first option explored for departments that are deemed weak.
- c. A process should be developed to account for how graduate students will be able to finish their degree in a program that is closed.

4. Are the needs and activities of graduate students handled effectively and with genuine care? If no, what improvements should be made?

Our over-arching response to this question is that the University community needs to develop and promote best-practices for advisors and Directors of Graduate Studies. Along with this, mechanisms for increasing faculty accountability in the area of advising graduate students need to be put into place. Recommendations:

- a. Mandate more formal training for incoming Directors of Graduate Studies; especially in how to access/use mental health/conflict resolution services (see recommendation 1.3).
- b. To provide incentives for faculty members to engage in effective and supportive advising of graduate students, encourage units to address the quality of advising in annual performance reviews of faculty members.
- c. The Graduate School, in consultation with colleges and programs, should develop ways to include graduate advising in assessment of program quality.

Graduate Program Enrollment Management Subcommittee Report

Participants: Jane Glazebrook, Andrew Simons, Thomas Holmes, John Sullivan, Wayne Gladfelter (Chair), Mats Heimdahl, Timothy Ebner, Vicki Field, Vivek Nagaraj

Charge to the subcommittee:

The subcommittee addressed the following four questions.

- 1. What are the trends and current practices in setting enrollment targets for U of M graduate programs?*
- 2. How should enrollment targets be set in the university's various graduate programs?*
- 3. What should be the relative roles of the Graduate School and the colleges in making decisions about the size of individual programs?*
- 4. What are the appropriate metrics for determining enrollment targets? (e.g., number of research active faculty, post-graduate employment opportunities and placement success, undergraduate teaching needs, quantity and quality of applications, competitiveness with similar programs nationally, etc.)*

In addition, the subcommittee considered the following additional questions.

- 5. How can we ensure that interdisciplinary, interdepartmental graduate programs treat all graduate faculty members and their students equitably, regardless of their tenure-home department and college?*
- 6. What is the best way to organize and structure mechanisms for faculty governance of graduate education?*

Data Analyzed:

In 2011, a report entitled “A Vision for Enrollment Management at the University of Minnesota” described the current state of undergraduate and graduate enrollments. The Enrollment Management subcommittee of the Special Graduate Education Committee began its work by updating the tables on graduate enrollment. Since the 2009-10 academic year, Table 1 shows that the number of professional and research masters awarded decreased from 2,251 to 2,101 and 1,180 to 1,125, respectively. The number of professional doctorates increased from 926 to 1053. The smallest of the degree categories, research doctorates, increased from 702 to 773.

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Table 1: UMTC graduate/professional degrees

Category	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	10 Yr change
professional masters	1,604	1,699	1,803	1,836	1,907	2,116	1,959	2,251	2,287	2,243	2,101	497
<i>% of 2002-2003</i>	100%	106%	112%	114%	119%	132%	122%	140%	143%	140%	131%	31%
professional doctorate	739	778	829	840	922	894	921	926	969	945	1,053	314
<i>% of 2002-2003</i>	100%	105%	112%	114%	125%	121%	125%	125%	131%	128%	142%	42%
research doctorate	545	532	631	704	751	690	683	702	723	735	773	228
<i>% of 2002-2003</i>	100%	98%	116%	129%	138%	127%	125%	129%	133%	135%	142%	42%
research masters	1,001	987	1,023	1,156	1,136	1,117	1,192	1,180	1,092	1,170	1,125	124
<i>% of 2002-2003</i>	100%	99%	102%	115%	113%	112%	119%	118%	109%	117%	112%	12%
total	3,889	3,996	4,286	4,536	4,716	4,817	4,755	5,059	5,071	5,093	5,052	1,163
<i>% of 2002-2003</i>	100%	103%	110%	117%	121%	124%	122%	130%	130%	131%	130%	30%

Table 2 summarizes graduate student enrollments for the past ten fall semesters for different degree categories. For the research doctorate a 7% increase was observed over the 10-year period, however, **since the fall of 2008 there has been a steady enrollment decline.**

Table 2: UMTC graduate/professional enrollment by degree objective category

Degree Objective Category	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	10 year change
professional doctorate	2,824	2,894	2,962	2,972	2,993	3,042	3,096	3,174	3,295	3,366	3,399	575
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	102%	105%	105%	106%	108%	110%	112%	117%	119%	120%	20%
professional masters	4,145	4,462	4,656	4,777	4,696	5,108	5,066	5,225	5,176	4,899	4,710	565
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	108%	112%	115%	113%	123%	122%	126%	125%	118%	114%	14%
research doctorate	4,158	4,353	4,571	4,582	4,541	4,560	4,600	4,567	4,565	4,470	4,467	309
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	105%	110%	110%	109%	110%	111%	110%	110%	108%	107%	7%
certificate	126	257	329	382	401	354	430	463	459	401	389	263
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	204%	261%	303%	318%	281%	341%	367%	364%	318%	309%	209%
med fellow/resident	669	638	784	593	783	801	785	809	751	728	893	224
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	95%	117%	89%	117%	120%	117%	121%	112%	109%	133%	33%
nondegree	859	807	770	798	725	799	737	622	526	556	430	-429
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	94%	90%	93%	84%	93%	86%	72%	61%	65%	50%	-50%
research masters	2,452	2,346	2,326	2,224	2,201	2,144	2,226	2,062	1,964	2,007	1,970	-482
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	96%	95%	91%	90%	87%	91%	84%	80%	82%	80%	-20%
Total	15,233	15,757	16,398	16,328	16,340	16,808	16,940	16,922	16,736	16,427	16,258	1,025
<i>% of 2002 enrollment</i>	100%	103%	108%	107%	107%	110%	111%	111%	110%	108%	107%	7%

In addition to the above data, the committee members contacted appropriate administrators, typically Associate Deans charged with graduate education, in each of the colleges to discuss their enrollment management practices. The results are summarized in following section (Task 1).

Task 1. Current Practices in Setting Enrollment Management Targets

At the University of Minnesota, the universal top criterion determining the enrollment in graduate programs is available funding. Beyond funding, applicant quality and faculty capacity are important factors. Program quality enters into these decisions through the indirect relationships between each of the major criteria and scholarly excellence. Most colleges and programs rely on grant money, RAs and TAs to address the first criterion, funding. Because many sources of grant monies are disappearing or declining, programs are cutting back their graduate enrollments. Some colleges have goals or provide general guidance for programs in making these decisions, while other colleges assume that programs will not grow beyond their ability to fund, mentor and place graduates. For example, CBS has a college goal of two years of support per student as an RA or TA but leaves enrollment decisions up to the programs. It provides support for first year students and hopes to expand that to a second year. It does not use quality metrics to distribute block grants and fellowships but instead follows the historic pattern of distribution. CSE allows programs to make all of these decisions and does not provide general guidelines for them to follow. Block grants, which can be used to support more graduate students, are allocated using an algorithm that gives equal weight to size and success in attracting RA and fellowship support. CFANS also has departmental/program control of admissions and distributes block grants and fellowships using quality metrics. Pharmacy uses its own quality metrics to distribute block grants and fellowships, based on student publications, awards and placement. The Medical School uses historical patterns to distribute its graduate quality funds.

Central administration's support for interdisciplinary programs, including the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship program, has been invaluable to graduate students moving into emerging areas.

Historically, enrollment targets have been set at the programmatic level based on a variety of criteria applied by departmental and program faculty and administrators. Most colleges at the University of Minnesota continue to function this way. CLA is a notable and large exception. Its enrollment policies have evolved to the point where each Ph.D. program is given a specific number of admissions as a target for each academic year. It is college policy to provide all matriculating Ph.D. graduate students with a full five-year funding package and each program is required to create a spreadsheet delineating the sources of five year funding for each matriculating student. If the program admits more than its graduate program funds can support, it is required to divert funds from other areas to cover the shortfall, although in some cases this is not possible and the College works with the program to cover it. CLA relies primarily on three main criteria in setting program enrollment targets: available financing, size of available faculty, and placement.

Recommendations to be Implemented:

Task 2. How should enrollment targets be set in the university's various graduate programs?

The Graduate School does not now set enrollment targets, nor should it. There is no compelling argument to manage graduate enrollments centrally, as the University now does for undergraduate enrollments. We recommend that the Graduate School increase the use of central funds to support enrollments for very high quality graduate programs. This would be especially valuable for interdisciplinary program and programs that may not be able to sustain a sufficient core of students due to funding issues. The 2011 report on graduate enrollment management recommended that outstanding programs be able to enroll a minimum of 10-15 students a year to ensure continued excellence, unless the program believes it can do so with fewer students.

The current practice (i.e. programmatic/departmental control of enrollment management) should be continued with the possible exception of CLA where it is conducted at the college level. Should other programs move in the direction of CLA, should CLA drop its current practice of enrollment management, or should the status quo continue unaltered? There is little impetus or rationale for us to recommend that other collegiate units should begin to control program enrollment numbers as CLA does. There is no obvious evidence that non-CLA programs have been unable to balance enrollments with funding, available faculty or placement desiderata just as CLA has for its programs. At the programmatic level, there seem to be self-regulating mechanisms that create equilibrium.

Should CLA continue to regulate enrollment as it has in the past? CLA also requires programs to transfer their own funds internally (for small programs this may not be possible) to cover over-commitments to graduate students. For programs where CLA resources are directly at risk, there might be a compelling argument to continue this practice of controlling departments' enrollments. In the absence of such risk, it appears to be likely that CLA departments would act much like non-CLA departments in balancing their own available funds, their faculty availability and their placement record to regulate enrollments. This is especially true given the 5-year funding policy, which would still be in effect, and the requirement that departments cover their own shortfalls (for programs with sufficient resources). The advantage would be greater program autonomy, less regulation, and presumably the same or very similar outcomes with less overall cost.

Task 3. What should be the relative roles of the Graduate School and the colleges in making decisions about the size of individual programs?

For emphasis, we reiterate that the Graduate School should have no direct role in setting enrollment targets, which are best determined at the program level in collaboration with their college and, if appropriate, their department. Programs should have the prerogative to admit students to the extent they can fund them, provide strong advising, and offer excellent education and training opportunities. However, program decisions must be made in the context of quality considerations—e.g., the capacity of the faculty to assume additional advising responsibilities, the caliber of the program, need/demand for graduates, student satisfaction and placement.

To the extent that colleges allocate O&M funds to departments and these funds are used to support graduate students (e.g., via fellowships and graduate assistantships), colleges also play

a role, although somewhat indirectly, in determining how many graduate students a program may be able to admit. **Funding decisions at the college level may be based on a variety of factors, but graduate program quality should be an important consideration.** Funding decisions at the collegiate level based on strategic plans may play a major role in enrollment targets, for example when developing a new discipline or expanding emphasis on a discipline.

The Graduate School’s role should be to facilitate both periodic and ongoing examinations of program quality. The Graduate School should lead initiatives that develop processes and mechanisms for program review and improvement, identify the dimensions along which graduate program quality should be assessed, and ensure relevant data are collected to inform quality review. Quality reviews of graduate programs—coupled with considerations about need and demand, and the emergence of new areas of intellectual inquiry—should drive strategic planning at the college level and collegiate decisions about investment in high quality programs, as well as support for new areas of scholarly interest. The Graduate School, with oversight for the University’s graduate education enterprise, should be included in discussions about colleges’ graduate education priorities.

The Graduate School, together with the Provost, should also play a role in sunseting graduate programs when programs are deemed not to be of high quality, are too small or are no longer useful, and no further investment in them is warranted. In some cases, the Graduate School’s participation in such deliberations may include assisting the relevant college(s) in identifying acceptable alternative options to program closure that will ensure the continued training of students—for example, transforming a degree-granting program into a free-standing minor, or absorbing the program as a formal subplan (“track”) within another graduate program where there is intellectual “fit.” To the extent that available funding is a key consideration in determining graduate program size, closing or restructuring of graduate programs may free up resources that may then be redirected to support high quality graduate programs, promising programs that warrant additional investment, or new graduate programs. The colleges should play a major role in their decisions for collegiate-based programs.

Finally, the Graduate School should play a prominent role in deliberations to sunset interdisciplinary graduate programs, given the Graduate School’s unique perspective across the whole of the graduate education enterprise and colleges’ sometimes competing priorities with respect to the support of interdisciplinary graduate education.

Task 4. What are the appropriate metrics for determining enrollment targets? (e.g., number of research active faculty, post-graduate employment opportunities and placement success, undergraduate teaching needs, quantity and quality of applications, competitiveness with similar programs nationally, etc.)

Determination of appropriate enrollment targets requires balancing a number of important metrics. These include:

- 1. The capacity of a program to support students.** It is essential that programs have active research faculty who are willing to support students and devote the necessary time to advising them. Quality advising and mentoring are critical to student success. Similarly, in most disciplines it is customary to financially support students through RAs, TAs, and fellowships. In many scientific disciplines, the bulk of financial support for students is derived from Federal research grants. As this funding becomes scarcer, it becomes more difficult for programs to

support students, and faculty members hesitate to take on new students, due to the perceived risk that they may be unable to support them through degree completion. Enrollment targets should be carefully adjusted annually to ensure that enrollment does not exceed program capacity for faculty advising or financial support.

2. Evidence of scholarship. Graduate students are essential for the research enterprise and the overall health and reputation of research universities. Faculty members who have funded research projects require graduate students to complete those projects and are generally willing to advise students and have the means to support them, so this metric relates to metric #1, above. High quality research conducted by graduate students provides evidence of scholarship activity needed for acquisition of additional research funding, and for supporting the reputation of the University as a Tier 1 research university.

3. High quality applicants. Intellectual ability and dedication to research are important requirements for student success in graduate programs. Programs should attract high-quality applicants, so that only students with strong qualifications are admitted. Applicant quality can be judged by success in prior research activities, strength of recommendations by suitable people who know the applicants well, grades in relevant subjects during undergraduate education, and scores on standardized exams.

4. Student placement. Economic demand for students with Ph.D. educations in particular disciplines should also be considered. Some students may pursue graduate education for intellectual satisfaction, yet the majority expects to apply knowledge gained in Ph.D. studies to future employment. Thus, it is important for programs to monitor placement of students who complete the program. Programs should also survey graduates to determine their levels of satisfaction with the education they received. If many students experience difficulty in finding suitable employment, and/or think that their Ph.D. education did not have a sufficiently beneficial impact on their lives, then reduction of enrollment targets should be considered.

5. Critical mass. Intellectual interactions among students in a cohort are a fundamental part of graduate education. Program enrollments should be high enough to create cohorts of students that are large enough to create a critical mass for stimulating intellectual interactions. Programs that cannot create such cohorts due to limitations created by the criteria discussed above should merge with related programs so that student cohorts can be made sufficiently large.

Sweeping criteria for enrollment are not recommended. Rather, enrollment criteria should be considered program-by-program. Similarly, many graduate programs are small, so the actions of small numbers of students can markedly affect quantitative metrics. Care should be taken that quality data applied to programs are based on suitably large data sets, and that they don't create perverse incentives.

Task 5. How can we ensure that interdisciplinary, interdepartmental graduate programs treat all graduate faculty members and their students equitably, regardless of their tenure-home department and college?

Managing the enrollment of interdisciplinary programs presents extra challenges. Because enrollment targets relate to the amount of funding available to the program, students working in interdisciplinary fields can have a more difficult time procuring support. Interdisciplinary programs may not have sufficient access to recruitment fellowships or TA funds, which may prevent programs from attracting promising students, or may inhibit students'

academic and professional development once they are here. Central funds for these purposes, allocated on a competitive basis, would enable interdisciplinary graduate programs to successfully recruit new students without detracting from the fellowship and TA support offered by discipline-based programs. **Specifically, to promote interdisciplinary inquiry by graduate students, funding for the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship program should be maintained, if not increased.**

GRADUATE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Current Practices in Setting Enrollment Management Targets
 - a. At the University of Minnesota, the universal top criterion determining the enrollment in graduate programs is available funding.
 - b. Historically, enrollment targets have been set at the programmatic level based on a variety of criteria applied by departmental and program faculty and administrators.
2. How should enrollment targets be set in the university's various graduate programs?
 - a. The Graduate School does not now set enrollment targets, nor should it. The current practice (i.e. programmatic/departmental control of enrollment management) should be continued with the possible exception of CLA where it is conducted at the college level.
3. What should be the relative roles of the Graduate School and the colleges in making decisions about the size of individual programs?
 - a. The Graduate School should have no direct role in setting enrollment targets, which are best determined at the program level.
 - b. Funding decisions at the college level may be based on a variety of factors, but graduate program quality should be a primary consideration.
 - c. The Graduate School's role should be to facilitate both periodic and ongoing examinations of program quality.
 - d. The Graduate School, together with the Provost, should also play a role in sunsetting graduate programs when programs are deemed not to be of high quality, are too small or are no longer useful, and no further investment in them is warranted.
4. What are the appropriate metrics for determining enrollment targets? (e.g., number of research active faculty, post-graduate employment opportunities and placement success, undergraduate teaching needs, quantity and quality of applications, competitiveness with similar programs nationally, etc.)
 - a. The appropriate metrics include the capacity of a program to support students, evidence of high quality graduate student scholarship, the quality of the applicant pool, placement of graduates, and the presence of a critical mass of students to support effective graduate education.
5. How can we ensure that interdisciplinary, interdepartmental graduate programs treat all graduate faculty members and their students equitably, regardless of their tenure-home department and college?
 - a. To promote interdisciplinary inquiry by graduate students, funding for the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship program should be maintained, if not increased.

Special Committee on Graduate Education
Subcommittee on Oversight of, and Advocacy for, the Visibility and Quality of
Graduate Education
Final Report – 10.30.13

Subcommittee Membership

Dick Brundage, College of Pharmacy
Clay Carter, University of Minnesota, Duluth
Amber Cellotti, Academic Support Resources
Yiannis Kaznessis, College of Science and Engineering
Mike Kilgore, College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences
Karen LaBat, College of Design
Carissa Schively Slotterback, Humphrey School of Public Affairs (Subcommittee Chair)
Katherine Scheil, College of Liberal Arts
Diane Wiese-Bjornstal, College of Education and Human Development

Subcommittee Charge

The Subcommittee was charged with addressing five key questions, including:

1. In light of the similarities and distinct differences between professional and graduate education, what is the appropriate role of the graduate school with respect to oversight and advocacy?
2. How can we facilitate understanding – on and off campus – of the central importance of graduate education to the university’s mission?
3. What should the university do – and at what levels – to determine metrics and monitor the quality of the university’s graduate programs?
4. What steps can we take to increase appropriate diversity in our graduate programs?
5. What steps should be taken to highlight and celebrate the university’s high functioning and highly ranked graduate programs and graduate faculty?

The Subcommittee was also encouraged to address additional over-arching questions recommended by the Special Committee on Graduate Education, to be addressed by all of the subcommittees. These questions included:

1. How can we ensure that interdisciplinary, interdepartmental graduate programs treat all graduate faculty members and their students equitably, regardless of their tenure-home department and college?
2. What is the best way to organize and structure mechanisms for faculty governance of graduate education?

For the first over-arching question above, we evolved the question to focus generally on interdisciplinary and interdepartmental education relative to visibility and quality. Because the second over-arching question above was addressed in the Subcommittee’s question 1, we did not address it explicitly.

In addition to the questions noted above, the Subcommittee explored the broader and aspirational question of “What should graduate education at the University of Minnesota look like in 10-20 years?”

Process

The Subcommittee met four times in September and October 2013 and engaged in collaborative discussions around the questions it was asked to address. The Subcommittee used a GoogleDoc to organize emerging recommendations and to share meeting outcomes with Subcommittee members unable to attend. Because the issues to be addressed by the Subcommittee have not been addressed by previous graduate education committees, the Graduate School, or other entities, there was little data to rely on in formulating recommendations. Further, the tight timeline precluded data collection and analysis that might have been informative to the committee. The Subcommittee drew on the diversity of experience and affiliation of its members in informing recommendations that account for the range of degrees, disciplines, and approaches represented within graduate education at the University of Minnesota.

Observations

Prior to presenting the Subcommittee's recommendations, it is important to highlight two critical observations that inform the future implementation of the recommendations specified below.

1. **Lack of clarity in roles, responsibilities, and relationships in graduate education.** As the reorganization of the Graduate School has occurred, there remains a lack of clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities for graduate education. In addition, the relationships among programs, colleges, the Graduate School, and governing bodies are unclear. It is essential that roles and responsibilities be specified from governing bodies and the Graduate School down to advisors and students, in order to facilitate implementation of efforts intended to enhance visibility and quality.
2. **Lack of consensus as to what constitutes graduate education.** While the Special Committee on Graduate Education was encouraged to focus on PhD granting programs, the Subcommittee's discussion engaged a broader definition of graduate education that included professional, as well as PhD and master's degree programs. As the University of Minnesota explores opportunities to enhance the visibility and quality of graduate education, it is essential that we have clarity in terms of the subject(s) of that enhancement. The Subcommittee engaged in ongoing discussion about the diversity of graduate and professional programs at the University of Minnesota and noted the varied, but significant contributions that each makes to the University's mission in terms of research, education of future researchers and practitioners, and outreach. The Subcommittee's recommendations are explicit in expressing connections to both graduate and professional education.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee's recommendations are organized by the questions that the committee was charged with addressing. In a few cases, the Subcommittee highlighted priority recommendations that should be pursued prior to others.

Q1. In light of the similarities and distinct differences between professional and graduate education, what is the appropriate role of the Graduate School with respect to oversight and advocacy?

Q1-1 (priority). Clarify roles and responsibilities for graduate and professional education, including those attributed to the Graduate School, colleges, programs (including interdisciplinary/interdepartmental/intercollegiate programs), and graduate education committees (e.g. Special Committee on Education Policy (SCEP), Graduate Education Committee (GEC)).

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Q1-1a. Specify the roles and responsibilities of the Graduate School, colleges, and individual graduate programs relative to both graduate and professional education.

Q1-1b. Specify the roles and responsibilities of the GEC and SCEP relative to graduate education and professional education policy and explore the need for additional or alternative graduate and professional education committees.

Q1-1c. Specify the level(s) at which program and student milestones are tracked.

Q1-2. Considering the evolved role of the Graduate School, identify and further empower key leaders to represent and advocate for graduate and professional education.

Q1-3. Develop a definition of graduate education that clarifies intersections with professional education and is informed by the diversity of post-baccalaureate education at the University of Minnesota.

Q1-4. Develop prototype language at the University level or draw on existing exemplary models, for use in college-level constitutions and bylaws to define graduate and professional education.

Q1-5. Ensure that college constitutions and bylaws include language that defines graduate and professional education in a manner that is reflective of the diversity in conduct and content of post-baccalaureate education in the college.

Q2. How can we facilitate understanding – on and off campus – of the central importance of graduate education to the university’s mission?

Q2-1. Create venues for discussion and promotion of the ways in which faculty, students, and staff associated with graduate and professional education, advance the University’s mission.

Q2-1a. Encourage colleges and programs to facilitate discussions and communication about how their faculty, students, and staff contribute to the University’s mission.

Q2-2. Identify and strategically target key audiences (e.g. prospective students, legislature, Regents, alumni) relative to graduate and professional education and the University’s mission.

Q2-3. Explore a new advertising campaign that highlights graduate and professional education.

Q2-4. Make a stronger connection between graduate/professional education and careers/professions as a means of showing how alumni of graduate and professional programs impact communities.

Q2-5. Work with and coordinate college-level alumni and external advisory councils to increase the visibility and impacts of graduate and professional education.

Q2-6. Provide briefings to the Board of Regents specific to graduate and professional education.

Q2-7. Work with and coordinate the Graduate School, colleges, and programs to provide information about graduate and professional education via multiple media, including social media.

Q3. What should the University do – and at what levels – to determine metrics and monitor the quality of the university’s graduate programs?

Q3-1. [priority]. Develop a metrics framework at the University level that reflects the diversity of graduate and professional programs, the varied characteristics of students, and the wide-ranging markers of success in different disciplines.

Q3-1a. Charge colleges and programs to develop their own quality metrics that are consistent with this framework, yet reflect their unique characteristics.

Q3-1b. Ensure that the quality metrics framework is clearly understood by colleges and programs in terms of its intention and use.

Q3-1c. Ensure that university-wide metrics do not serve as the sole basis upon which to allocate University resources.

Q3-1d. In developing metrics, the University and programs might be informed by recommendations presented in the 2011 *A Vision for Enrollment Management at the University of Minnesota* report, but with an emphasis on the recommendations presented here.

Q3-1e. In developing metrics, consider the multiple motivations of the University, colleges, and programs in advancing quality, as well as generating enrollment and tuition.

Q3-2. Increase internal program review opportunities (e.g. Graduate Review & Improvement Process) that facilitate the development of tailored college/program metrics to assess quality.

Q3-3. Provide funding for colleges and programs to develop targeted approaches to increase external ratings/rankings.

Q3-4. Develop a graduate student survey or evaluation to capture the feedback at the time of graduation, encouraging participation via the Graduation Checklist.

Q3-4a. Incorporate a limited number of college-specific survey questions to provide critical feedback and data to colleges.

Q4. What steps can we take to increase appropriate diversity in our graduate programs?

Q4-1 (priority). Engage colleges and programs in identifying key types of diversity that are relevant to recruitment efforts in their units and account for the historical nature of the program and students attracted to the field of study.

Q4-2. Ensure flexibility in recruitment for diversity at the college level by allocating resources (e.g. Diversity of Views and Experience (DOVE) funding) to accomplish college and program-specific diversity priorities.

Q4-2a. In designing and implementing diversity strategies, acknowledge that priorities vary by college and program.

Q4-2b. Create further incentives for enrolling diverse students, by ensuring that diversity funding associated with DOVE and other initiatives covers all costs and/or subsidize program/faculty funding for diverse students.

Q4-3. Ensure that graduate and professional education are represented in the Office of Equity and Diversity's initiatives.

Q4-3. Develop and fund named fellowships at the Provost/President level to help attract and retain diverse graduate and professional students.

Q4-4. Engage the University of Minnesota Foundation to assist college-level fundraising for graduate and professional student fellowships, with a focus on named fellowships that can be used to attract and retain diverse students.

Q4-5. Couple efforts to increase diversity in graduate and professional programs with efforts to ensure a positive climate for diverse students and to ensure retention.

Q5. What steps should be taken to highlight and celebrate the University's high functioning and highly ranked graduate programs and graduate faculty?

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Q5-1. Engage U Relations and the University of Minnesota News Service to assist colleges and programs in highlighting and celebrating high performing faculty and programs that represent graduate and professional education.

Q5-2. Provide resources for colleges and programs to develop targeted promotion materials for key audiences.

Q5-3. Assign a university-level public relations staff person to work solely on graduate and professional education.

Q5-4. Promote the National Research Council (NRC) and other college and program-specific rankings more widely.

Q5-5. Develop a marketing campaign at the University level that is focused on graduate and professional education.

Over-arching Q1. How can we ensure that interdisciplinary, interdepartmental graduate programs treat all graduate faculty members and their students equitably, regardless of their tenure-home department and college?

Over-arching Q1-1 (priority). Define the terms “interdisciplinary,” “interdepartmental,” and “intercollegiate” to ensure that the definitions clearly articulate the nature of disciplinary representation, intention, and value attributed to each term.

Over-arching Q1-2. Ensure that interdisciplinary programs are assigned to a single administrative home, but facilitate shared responsibilities and resources for all partners via a memorandum of understanding.

Over-arching Q1-3. Be strategic in identifying opportunities for new interdisciplinary programs that respond to critical societal needs and student demand, without compromising support for existing interdisciplinary programs.

Over-arching Q1-4. Ensure that a tenure home for faculty in interdisciplinary programs is clearly addressed at the time of hiring.

Over-arching Q1-5. Develop prototype language at the University level related to interdisciplinary work that can be added to college 7.12 statements.

Over-arching Q1-6. Develop promotion and tenure guidance and programming to help faculty be strategic in positioning their interdisciplinary work for internal and external review.

Over-arching Q1-7. Establish a special committee to review and make recommendations to the Provost relative to obstacles to interdisciplinary teaching (e.g. co-teaching, tuition models, course designators).

Over-arching Q1-8. Identify and empower key leaders to support the administration and promotion of interdisciplinary education.

The Future of Graduate and Professional Education at the University of Minnesota

As noted earlier, the Subcommittee explored the aspirational question of “What should graduate education at the University of Minnesota look like in 10-20 years?” The Subcommittee’s vision statements included:

SCGE – Subcommittee on Oversight of, and Advocacy for,
the Visibility and Quality of Graduate Education

- The University of Minnesota community has developed an understanding and consensus around the vital contributions of the range of graduate and professional programs to the mission of the University of Minnesota.
- The University of Minnesota's graduate programs are world class, recognized through the state and ranked nationally and internationally amongst peer institutions.
- The University of the Minnesota is the go-to institution in Minnesota for graduate and professional education and research.
- The people of Minnesota support a world-class institution that brings together students from Minnesota, with students from across the U.S. and the world.
- The University of Minnesota's graduate and professional education activities resonate with the average person in the state.
- The University of Minnesota dedicates sufficient resources to graduate education.
- University of Minnesota faculty members win top international honors and are widely celebrated for their accomplishments.
- Graduate and professional education at the University of Minnesota is inclusive of all, with resources provided to attract students representing a range of diversity types.
- The University of Minnesota offers students from around the world to make significant contributions to knowledge.
- The University of Minnesota's graduate and professional programs integrate expertise across disciplines to offer critical contributions to addressing the world's most challenging problems.

INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND GRADUATE EDUCATION

Interdisciplinary graduate programs exist at the intersection of disciplines, where solutions to some of the most challenging questions of our time are explored. Our graduate students are increasingly drawn to the interstices between disciplines. Yet, interdisciplinary graduate programs have their roots in established fields and their success depends on strong disciplines.

The structure of universities is inherently not conducive to developing and supporting interdisciplinary graduate programs, which may require additional effort and resources to seed and sustain. Universities' organization into colleges and departments, the merit and promotion and tenure decisions that are tied to this structure, and the institutional budget models that drive it are significant barriers to the introduction of, and continued support for, interdisciplinary programs that cross traditional academic boundaries. In times of fiscal constraint especially, colleges may focus on their core mission, typically reflected in departments, and give less attention to interdisciplinary programs, which tend to exist at the periphery. Reluctance to invest in interdisciplinary graduate programs and emerging areas of intellectual inquiry is detrimental to interdisciplinary graduate education, inhibits discipline evolution, and is contrary to the spirit of innovation and discovery that became the hallmark of U.S. research universities in the 20th century.

Visible attention to and promotion of interdisciplinary graduate education by the institution's senior leadership is essential if the University is to successfully seed and sustain excellent interdisciplinary graduate programs. In some cases, central funding may be required to maintain such programs and to fund the students in them. For example, the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship (IDF) program, intended for students in their second or subsequent years, provides a means to support doctoral students working in interdisciplinary areas, regardless of their graduate program or college. Awards are made by a committee that is representative of the University as a whole. In these respects, the structure of the program facilitates the equitable treatment of students. To promote interdisciplinary inquiry by graduate students, IDF funding should be maintained, if not increased. Similarly, interdisciplinary programs may not have sufficient access to recruitment fellowships or TA funds, which may prevent programs from attracting some of the world's brightest students, or may inhibit students' academic and professional development once they are here. Central funds for these purposes, allocated on a competitive basis, would enable interdisciplinary graduate programs to successfully recruit new students without detracting from the fellowship and TA support offered by discipline-based programs.

Formal Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that stipulate how interdisciplinary graduate programs will be funded and administered are a best practice that University leaders should encourage. Template MOUs should be available on University web sites and should be promoted also for intercollegiate, interdisciplinary activities such as team teaching, in hiring new faculty with interdisciplinary scholarly, research or creative interests, or for use by mid-career faculty whose intellectual interests have shifted over the course of their careers and who seek joint appointments or a change in their tenure home.

Innovative approaches that transcend academic structures should be pursued to advance interdisciplinary graduate education as a complement to graduate programs and to provide faculty and students with additional avenues for exploring mutual scholarly or research interests. For example, "interdisciplinary graduate groups" foster the investigation of cross-cutting

questions or problems outside the usual departmental and collegiate silos. This concept, already established at the University of Minnesota, is also evident in more robust programs like [Focal Point](#) and [Intersect](#) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Interdisciplinary graduate programs differ in ways that have implications for the kind of support they may need. These differences include program type (e.g., free-standing minor, master's or Ph.D. program), whether program activities are largely represented within a single college or across two or more colleges, whether the program is well established and has attained departmental status (e.g., Neuroscience, Biomedical Engineering, and American Studies), or whether it does not align with a single department (e.g., Conservation Biology). Special consideration may be warranted for those programs that span multiple colleges and/or are not coterminous with a department in order to maintain their visibility and vitality, and to ensure appropriate attention to faculty and students.

Opportunities in interdisciplinary graduate education could be enhanced by creating linkages (or forging stronger linkages) between the University's academic programs and its research centers and institutes where these connections do not already exist. Creating or strengthening connections between academic programs and research centers and institutes would benefit graduate students by providing them with new or additional ways to network with faculty who share similar intellectual interests, and to engage in the life of the center/institute through participation in talks, brown-bag lunches, and symposia, for example.

To incent large-scale, transformative ideas that cross disciplinary boundaries, the University should dedicate funding for investment in emerging areas of intellectual inquiry that are promising and have the potential to make the University of Minnesota a global leader.

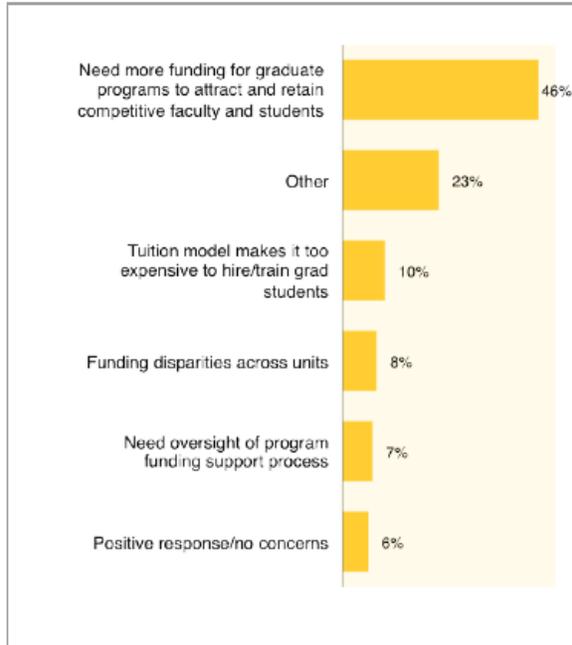
Graduate Education Survey Summary

In April 2013, an email message from the Provost and Vice Provost of Graduate Education with a link to a survey was sent to all graduate students, all faculty with graduate education responsibilities, and select staff. In total, 17,712 people received the survey and 1,124 people responded. The survey asked ten open-ended questions; below are summary responses from these questions.

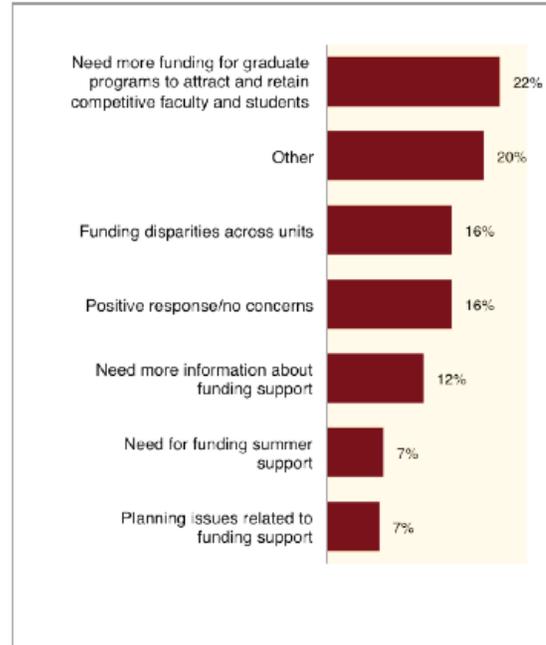
What specific concerns do you have regarding graduate program funding support, if any?

504 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:

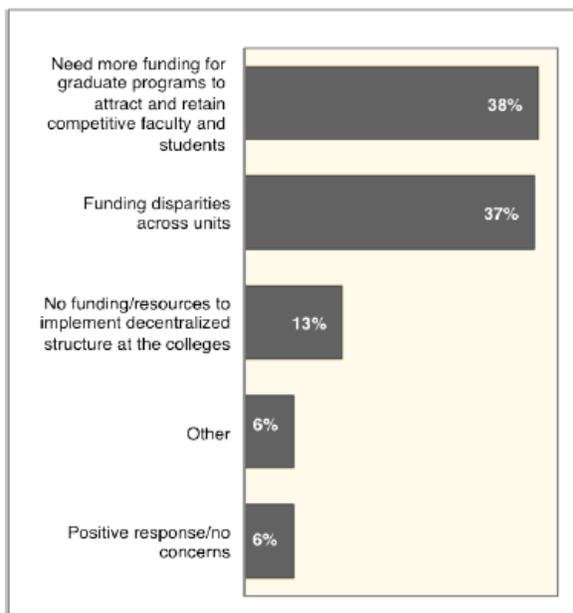
Respondent Type: Faculty (248 responses)



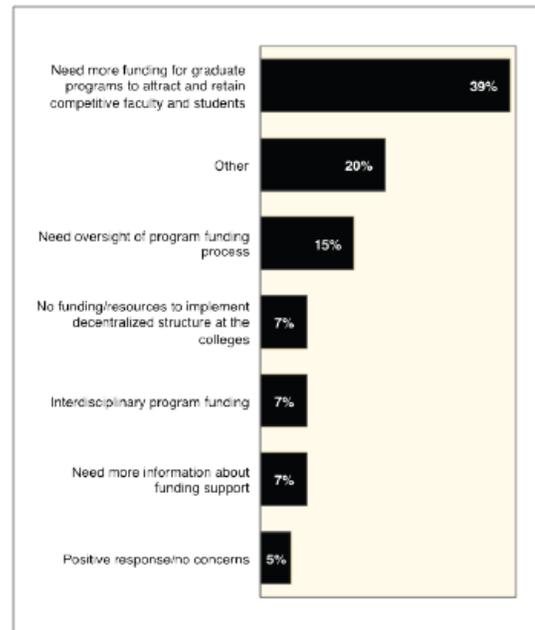
Respondent Type: Graduate Students (199 responses)



Respondent Type: Deans/Assoc/Assist Deans (16 responses)



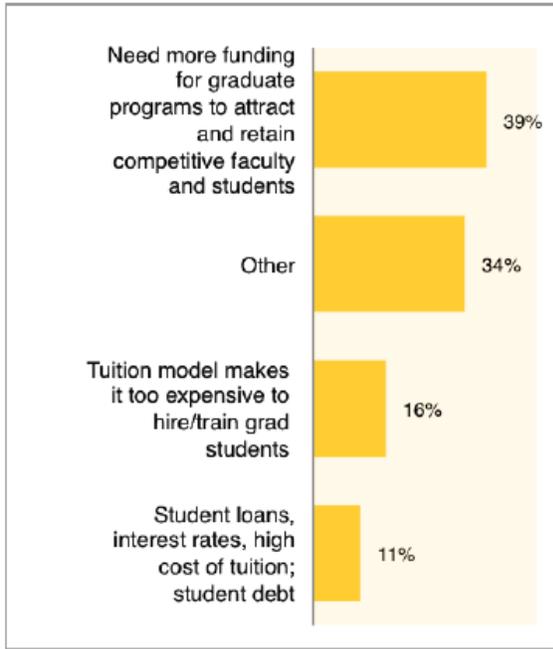
Respondent Type: Staff (41 responses)



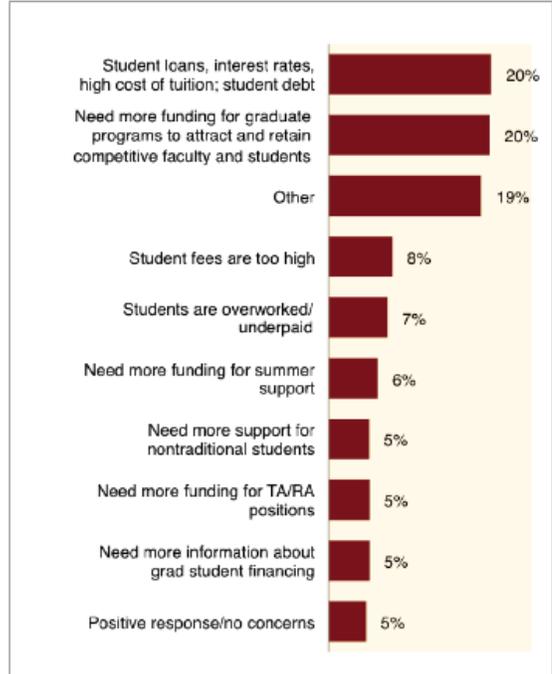
What specific concerns do you have regarding graduate student financing, if any?

768 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:

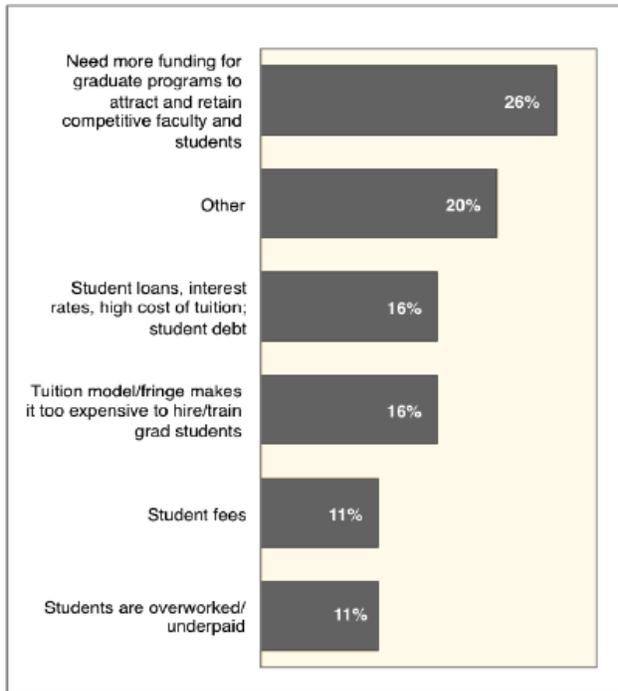
Respondent Type: Faculty (227 responses)



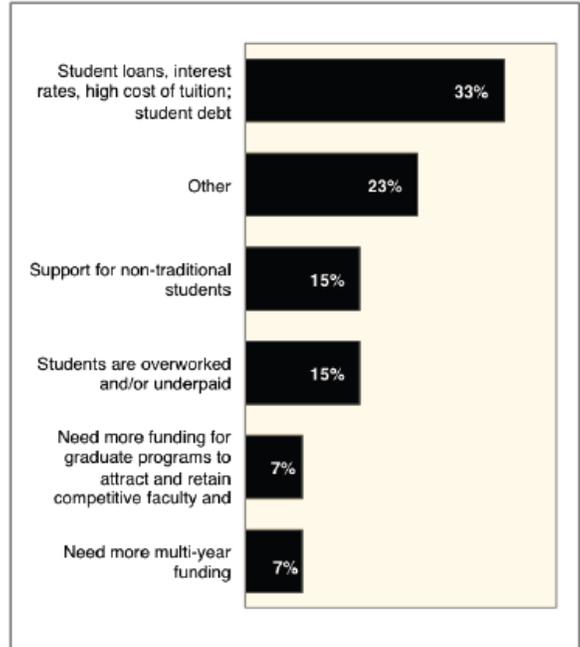
Respondent Type: Graduate Students (495 responses)



Respondent Type: Deans/Assoc/Assist Deans (19 responses)



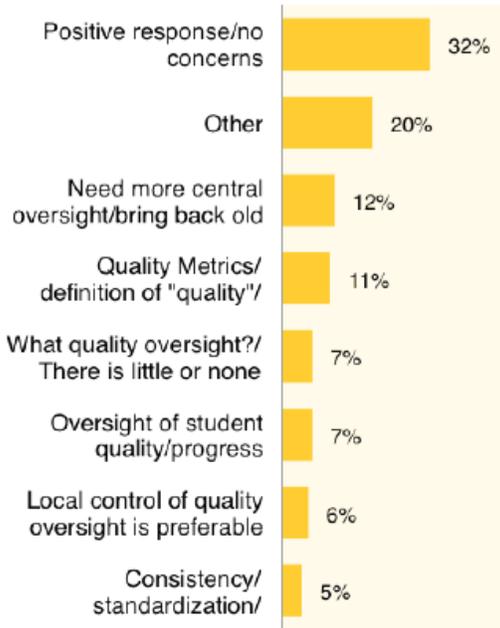
Respondent Type: Staff (27 responses)



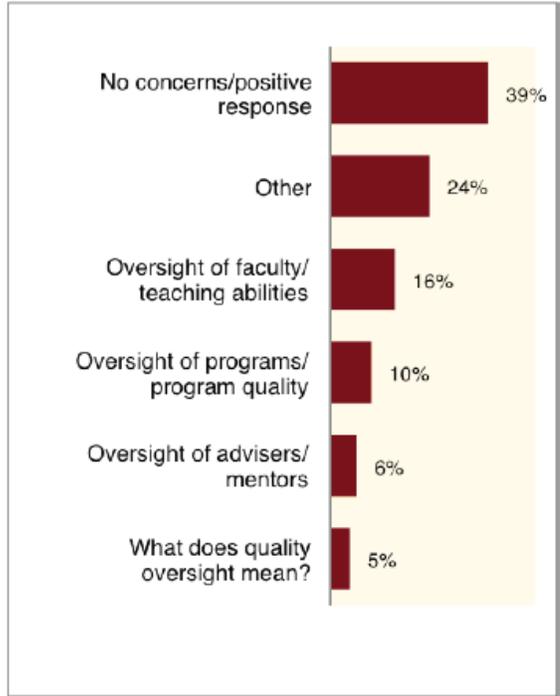
What specific concerns do you have regarding quality oversight, if any?

705 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:

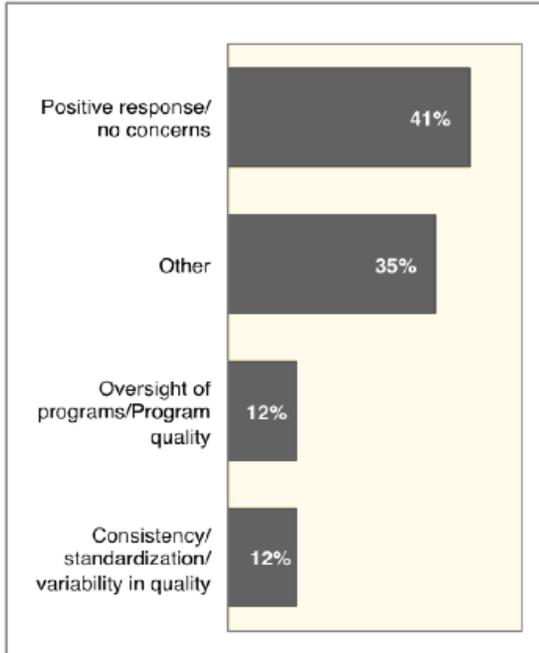
Respondent Type: Faculty (222 responses)



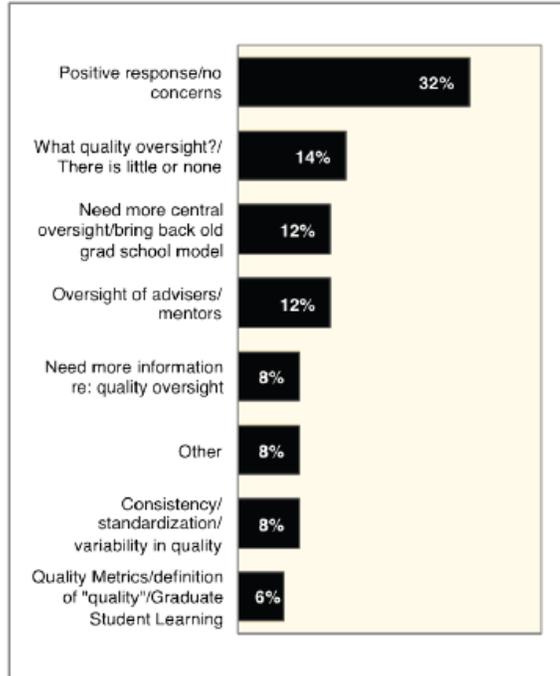
Respondent Type: Graduate Students (417 responses)



Respondent Type: Deans/Assoc/Assist Deans (17 responses)



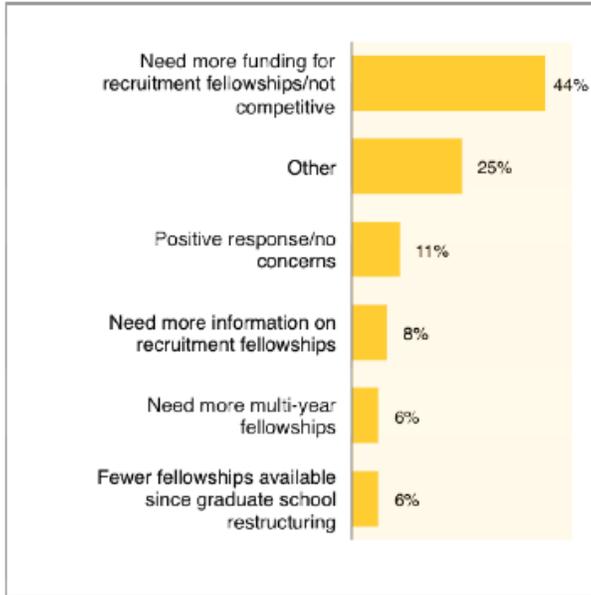
Respondent Type: Staff (49 responses)



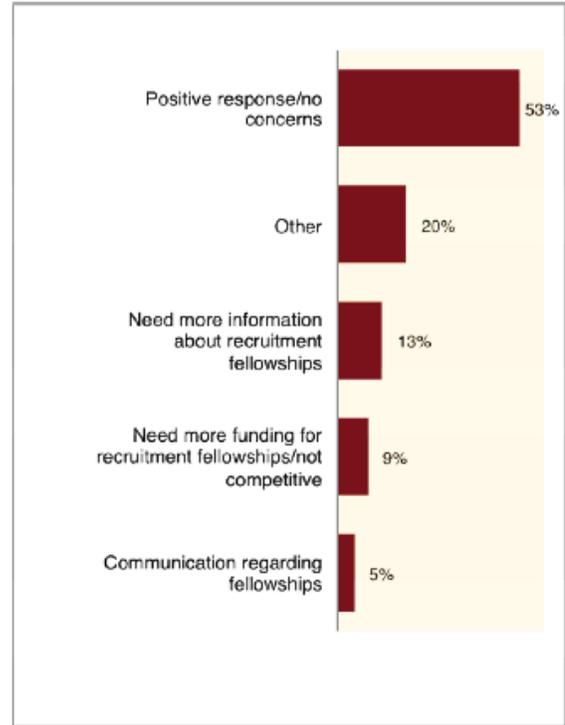
What specific concerns do you have regarding recruitment fellowships, if any?

563 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:

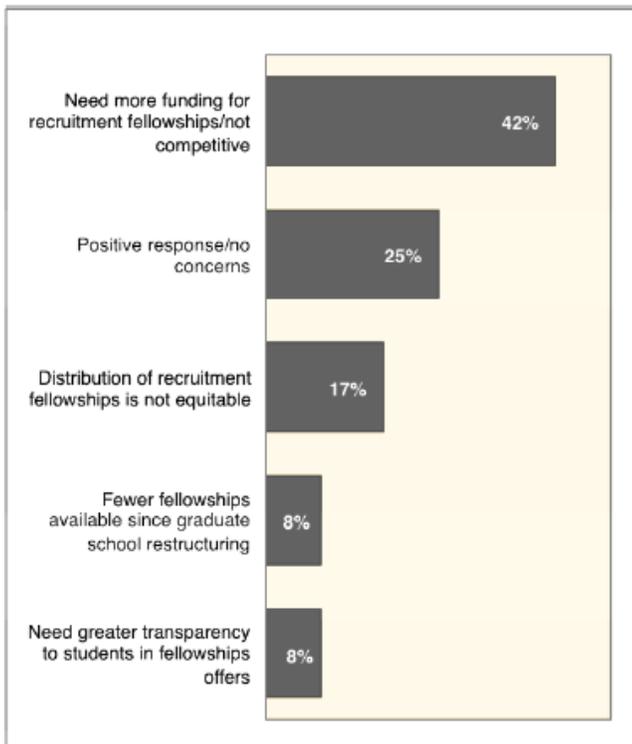
Respondent Type: Faculty (220 responses)



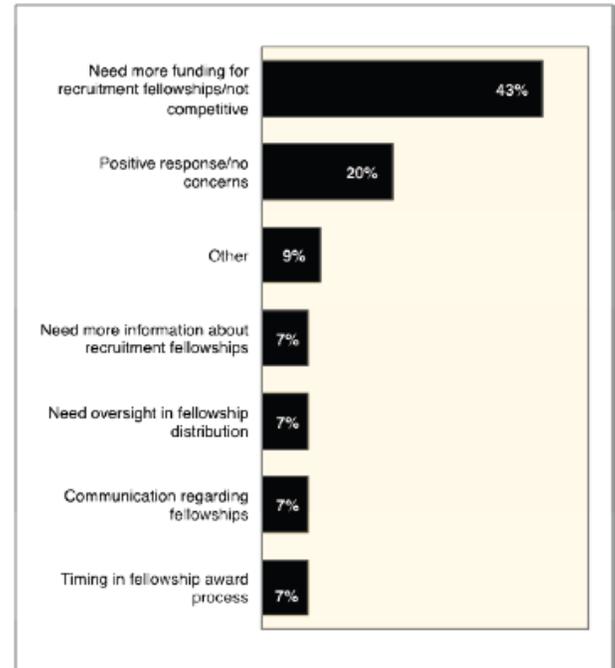
Respondent Type: Graduate Students (301 responses)



Respondent Type: Deans/Assoc/Assist Deans (12 responses)



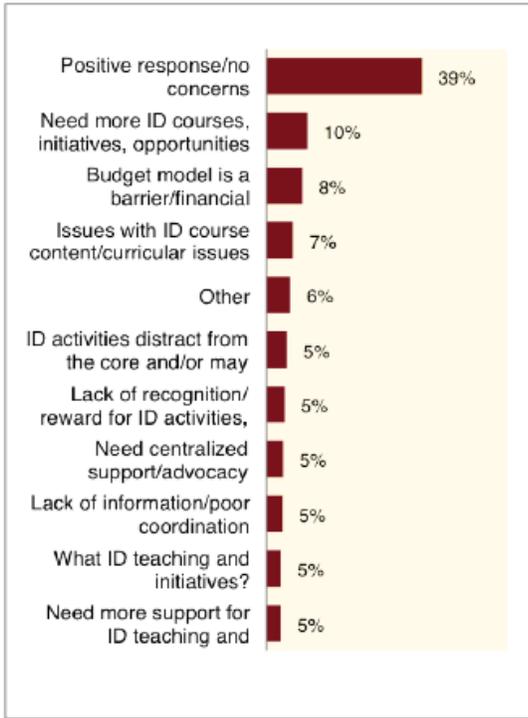
Respondent Type: Staff (30 responses)



GRADUATE EDUCATION SURVEY SUMMARY – APRIL 2013

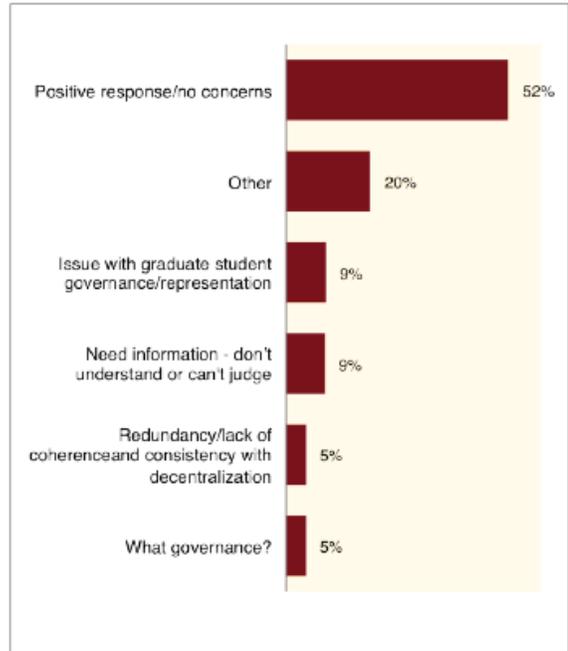
What specific concerns do you have regarding interdisciplinary teaching & initiatives, if any?

523 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:



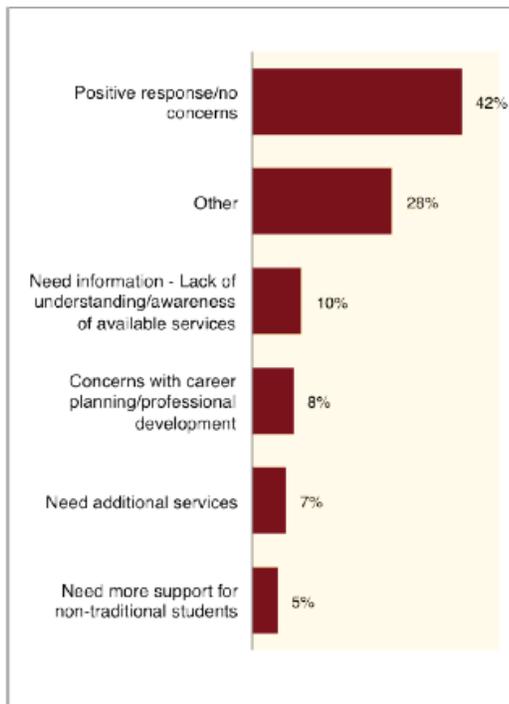
What specific concerns do you have regarding graduate education governance, if any?

425 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:



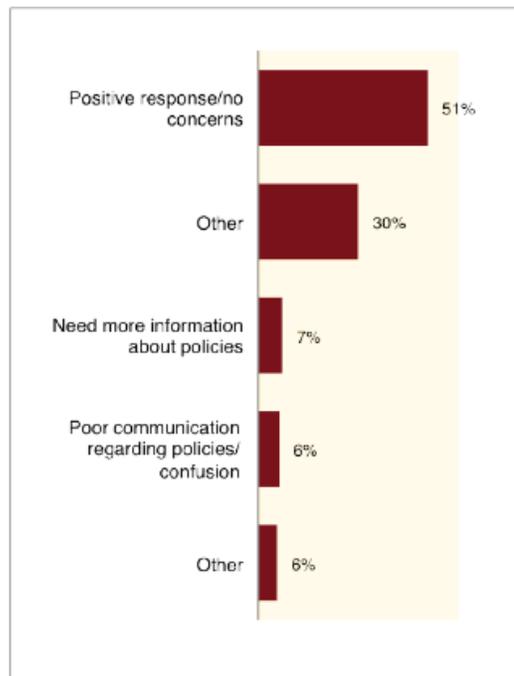
What specific concerns do you have regarding services to graduate students, if any?

523 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:



What specific concerns do you have regarding the University-wide graduate education policies, if any?

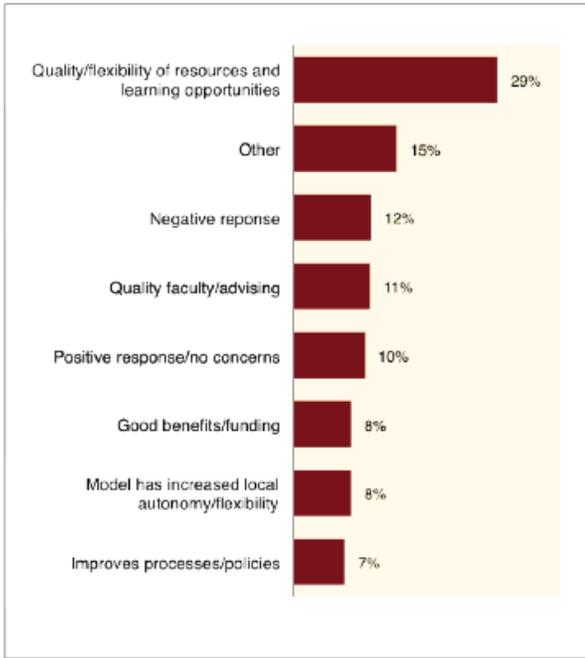
510 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:



GRADUATE EDUCATION SURVEY SUMMARY – APRIL 2013

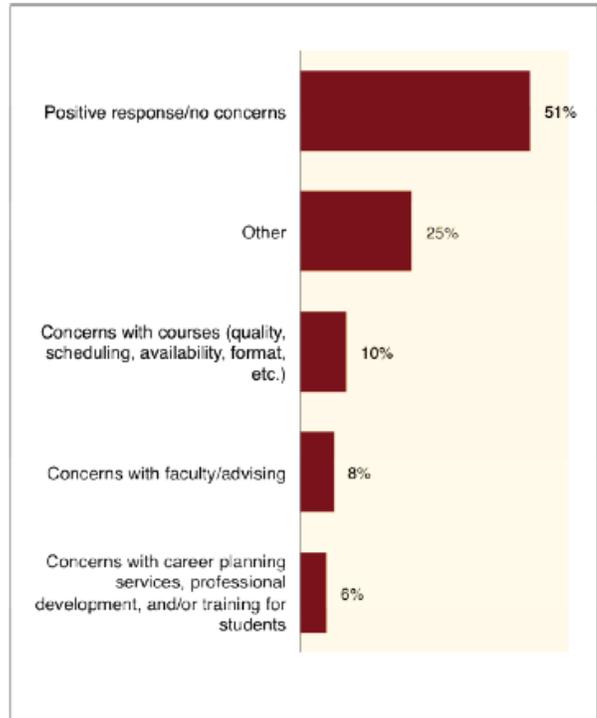
What do you think is working well in the current model of graduate education?

548 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:



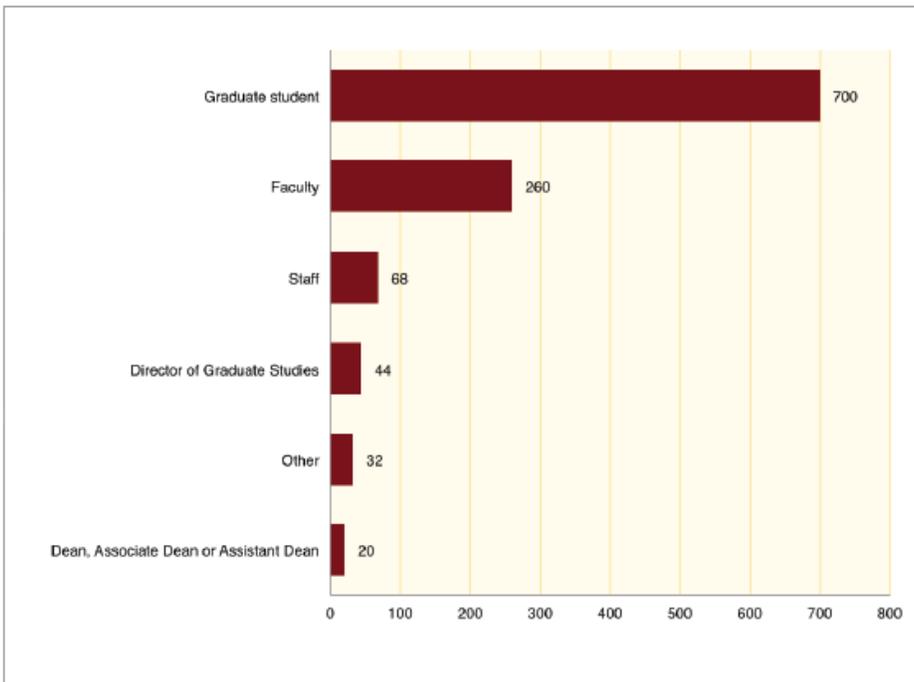
What additional areas of concern or questions do you have regarding graduate education?

253 responses to this question were received and they were categorized as follows:



Total number of respondents: 1,124

Number of respondents by type:



Response rate of those polled:

Dean, Associate Dean, Assistant Dean, DGS or Faculty: 8%

Students: 5%

Staff: 16%

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*Office of the Senior Vice President for
Academic Affairs and Provost*

*234 Morrill Hall
100 Church Street St SE
Minneapolis MN 55455
(612) 625-0051*

August 26, 2013

TO: Special Graduate Education Committee

FROM: Karen Hanson, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Will Durfee, Chair, Faculty Consultative Committee

Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Special Graduate Education Committee (SGE), a committee jointly appointed by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC). It is time to reflect systematically on the reorganization of graduate education that took place three years ago, to consider what is working well and what may need additional attention, and we are grateful you are willing to help with this task.

We note that four issues emerged as major topics in the 2013 survey of graduate students, faculty, and staff who work with graduate students and through reports from Senate committee chairs. Thus, we'd like to structure the SGE into four subcommittees, each of which will be asked to make recommendations on one particular set of issues: 1) graduate student financing, 2) the facilitation of the graduate student experience, 3) graduate program enrollment management, and 4) the visibility and quality of graduate education. We are asking each subcommittee to provide responses to these concerns and, as appropriate, to make specific recommendations that will help strengthen the Graduate School for the future. The whole committee may also decide that there are additional issues it would like to address.

This SGE Committee will mainly focus on programs offering Ph.D. research degrees, particularly those that the National Research Council has identified as central to its assessment of graduate education in the United States. We recognize, however, that there are additional graduate education issues that deserve attention and that may be highlighted by the work of this committee.

An addendum lists some specific questions that might be addressed by each subcommittee. All four subcommittees are also asked to consider two additional questions that will be addressed by the committee as a whole:

- How can we ensure that interdisciplinary, interdepartmental graduate programs treat all graduate faculty members and their students equitably, regardless of their tenure-home department and college?
- What is the best way to organize and structure mechanisms for faculty governance of graduate education?

Because the University of Minnesota is engaged in strategic planning and the future of graduate education is clearly essential in this process, and because it would be ideal to be able to implement suggested improvements as soon as possible, perhaps in time for the next graduate student recruitment cycle, you will need to work relatively quickly. The SGE Committee, reflecting on the work of the whole and the work of the specific subcommittees, is asked to report back to the Provost and the FCC by December 1, 2013

Again, thank you for your willingness to serve on this important committee.

Subcommittee Queries - Initial Suggestions

(Again, the subcommittees may choose to focus their efforts somewhat differently, and it is also the case that some of these questions could be taken up by more than one subcommittee.)

A) Graduate student financing.

- Should changes be made in the way recruitment fellowships are offered in order to matriculate a higher percentage of our top applicants?
- What are the trends and current models for graduate student funding in UofM graduate programs and are they sustainable?
- How does University of Minnesota funding of graduate education compare with that of our peers?
- What funding mechanisms should the Graduate School and the colleges use to provide incentives for establishing and maintaining highly ranked programs?
- What steps can be taken to encourage graduate students and graduate programs to pursue external funding and to reward them for their successes?

B) Facilitation of the graduate student experience and ensuring program quality.

- What are the appropriate roles of the Graduate School and the colleges in guiding and managing student progress towards degree completion?
- Which essential record-keeping and oversight tasks should be done by the Graduate School and which by the colleges, and can these be managed more effectively?
- What process should be used to close weak graduate programs?
- Are the needs and activities of graduate students handled effectively and with genuine care? If not, what improvements should be made?

C) Graduate Program Enrollment Management.

- What are the trends and current practices in setting enrollment targets for U of M graduate programs?
- How should enrollment targets be set in the university's various graduate programs?
- What should be the relative roles of the Graduate School and the colleges in making decisions about the size of individual programs?
- What are the appropriate metrics for determining enrollment targets? (e.g., number of research active faculty, post-graduate employment opportunities and placement success, undergraduate teaching needs, quantity and quality of applications, competitiveness with similar programs nationally, etc.)

D) Oversight of, and Advocacy for, the Visibility and Quality of Graduate Education.

- In light of the similarities and distinct differences between professional and graduate education, what is the appropriate role of the Graduate School with respect to oversight and advocacy?
- How can we facilitate understanding—on and off campus—of the central importance of graduate education to the university's mission?
- What should the university do—and at what levels—to determine metrics and monitor the quality of the university's graduate programs?
- What steps can we take to increase appropriate diversity in our graduate programs?
- What steps should be taken to highlight and celebrate the university's high functioning and highly ranked graduate programs and graduate faculty?

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION MEMBERSHIP

COLLEGE	GRADUATE STUDENT FINANCING	FACILITATION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND ENSURING PROGRAM QUALITY	GRADUATE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT	OVERSIGHT OF, AND ADVOCACY FOR, THE VISIBILITY AND QUALITY OF GRADUATE EDUCATION	Total
CBS	0	0	1	1	2
CEHD	1	1	0	0	2
CFANS	0	1	1	1	3
CLA	1	1	1	2	5
COP	0	1	0	0	1
CSE	1	1	2	2	6
CSOM	1	0	0	0	1
DESIGN	0	1	0	0	1
HHH	0	1	0	0	1
Medical School	0	0	0	1	1
SPH	0	0	1	0	1
Nursing	0	0	1	0	1
Duluth	0	1	0	0	1
VetMed	1	0	0	0	1
interdisciplinary	1	0	0	0	1
Staff	1	1	1	1	4
Student	1	1	1	1	4
TOTAL	8	10	9	9	36

Last Name	First Name	GRADUATE STUDENT FINANCING	FACILITATION OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND ENSURING PROGRAM QUALITY	GRADUATE PROGRAM ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT	OVERSIGHT OF, AND ADVOCACY FOR, THE VISIBILITY AND QUALITY OF GRADUATE EDUCATION
Gunnar	Megan	CEHD			
Ho	Karen	CLA (CHAIR)			
Balas	Gary	CSE			
Curley	Shawn	CSOM			
Oberhauser	Karen	Interdisciplinary			
Holm	Elizabeth	Staff			
Conti	Nicole	Student			
Patterson	Ned	VetMed			
Hobbie	Sarah		CBS		
Heimpel	George		CFANS (CHAIR)		
Gonzales	Marti		CLA		
Barocas	Victor		CSE		
Holmes	Russell		CSE		
Bearinger	Linda		Nursing		
Toscano	William		SPH		
Keeney	Brianne		Staff		
Beek	Aaron		Student		
Glazebrook	Jane			CBS	
Simons	Andrew			CFANS	
Holmes	Thomas			CLA	
Sullivan	John			CLA	
Gladfelter	Wayne			CSE (CHAIR)	
Heimdahl	Mats			CSE	
Ebner	Timothy			Medical School	
Field	Vicki			Staff	
Nagaraj	Vivek			Student	
Wiese-Bjornstal	Diane				CEHD
Kilgore	Mike				CFANS
Scheil	Katherine				CLA
Brundage	Dick				COP
Kaznessis	Yiannis				CSE
LaBat	Karen				Design
Carter	Clay				Duluth
Schively-Slotterback	Carissa				HHH (CHAIR)
Cellotti	Amber				Staff
Morawski	David				Student