

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION

Part I. Narrative

INTRODUCTION

The long history of graduate education at the University of Tennessee extends back to 1821, when the Board of Trustees referred to graduate education and the requirements for attainment of a master's degree, at the time awarded primarily as an honorary degree; a Graduate Department that awarded master's and doctoral degrees in selected graduate programs was formally established in 1879 and later renamed the Graduate School in 1912.¹ High standards of quality were established and maintained for the development and maintenance of graduate programs and degrees, and sponsored research and connections with state and national entities such as Oak Ridge National Laboratory grew and expanded over the course of the century.

In 2001 administrative reorganization led to the dismantling of the Graduate School as a unit on the Knoxville campus. The Office of Enrollment Services assumed administration of Graduate and International Admissions and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies maintained responsibility for oversight of all graduate programs. Many administrative functions were decentralized and handled by a considerably reduced staff the Office of Graduate Student Services, in collaboration with the department heads, directors, and graduate program coordinators. In fall 2006 the Provost announced plans to reinstate the Graduate School, and in January 2007 a Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School was named. The previous larger organizational structure and larger budget, however, were not restored. It is critically important to put in place an adequate administrative structure that is capable of giving direction to and supporting the enrichment of graduate education, research, and professional development for students on the Knoxville campus in the coming years.

The University of Tennessee's commitment to providing excellence in graduate education, to recruiting and maintaining a diverse graduate student population, and to fostering opportunities in research, creative achievement, and professional development addresses the three themes of this strategic plan: accessibility, quality, and diversity and inclusiveness. This strategic plan comes at a time when the Graduate School, through its reinstatement and restructuring, is poised to strengthen and enhance its best practices and to emulate national standards for excellence by improving and developing programs that reflect interdisciplinary teaching and research and new technologies in connection with the six strategic initiatives of the University of Tennessee System: student access, student success, research, economic development, outreach, and globalization. Our benchmarks,

¹ Diana Lopez provides detailed information in the first chapter of her book, *Graduate Education at Tennessee: An Historical Perspective* (Knoxville: The Graduate School, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1990). The work outlines graduate education at the University of Tennessee from its beginning to 1988.

goals, and strategies provide the foundation for long-term growth, enhancement of our national and international stature and of quality of programs, and expansion of our ability to serve the public good.

STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Scope

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville offers various master's degrees in 83 fields, Specialist in Education degrees in 5 fields, and doctor of philosophy degrees in 51 fields. UTK also offers the following professional degrees: Doctor of Audiology, Doctor of Jurisprudence, and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. Graduate certificates are offered in 28 fields. These graduate degree programs are offered in eleven colleges and from intercollegiate programs in the UT Space Institute and Comparative and Experimental Medicine. The Graduate School oversees general admission to graduate study in nine of the colleges, which include: the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources; College of Architecture and Design; College of Arts and Sciences; College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences; College of Engineering; College of Nursing; College of Social Work. Once graduate school requirements are met, programs in each of these colleges maintain specific admission criteria and make the final decision for admission to degree programs. Two of the professional schools, the College of Law and College of Veterinary Medicine, maintain independent admissions procedures and criteria.

Administrative Structure and Space

The reinstatement of the Graduate School includes plans for enhancement of programs, development of new initiatives to support graduate student academic and professional development, and growth in enrollment that reflects a broad diversity of students. This will require not only increased financial resources for programming but also adequate space and funding to expand the administrative structure in order to move forward. When the Graduate School was decentralized and Graduate Admissions was moved to Enrollment Services, the Office of Graduate Student Services reported to the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies and occupied a very limited space. The staff included a half-time associate dean, an assistant to the dean, a thesis/dissertation consultant, an information technology specialist, and a program resource specialist. A space was identified for a new location and enhanced presence of the Graduate School, but serious limitations and challenges in addressing the functions associated with the reorganization remain. Oversight, development, and maintenance responsibilities of the Graduate School currently include:

- Administrative functions related to registration, degree progression, appeals, and requirements for graduation
- Guidance for thesis/dissertation preparation and submission approval
- Graduate assistantship and fellowship administration

- Database management for student information
- Coordination of programs for graduate student professional development (e.g., Best Practices in Teaching, the SPEAK Test)
- Administrative support for graduate program directors
- Administrative support/advising for the Graduate Student Association
- Graduate Council activities and committees that govern Graduate School policies
- Participation in program reviews
- External relations with the Office of Research, University Registrar, University Libraries, Office of Information Technology
- Editorial functions related to production of the catalog
- Administration of the Professional Development Awards funding for faculty research and creative achievement

Early in the fall 2007 semester, a task force was appointed to review the structure of the Graduate School and to make recommendations regarding an organizational model that supports academic achievement and professional development, efficient implementation of procedures and policies, recruitment, and program development. The charge given to the task force had three components: (a) a review of past and current functions in the organization and administration of the Graduate School; (b) an examination of graduate school models maintained by our peers and aspirational peers; and (c) recommendations for possible restructuring, expansion, and/or reduction. The task force considered a broad range of areas and functions, such as administrative staffing, recruitment, admissions, development, and public relations. They provided an overview of the functions of the Graduate School and made recommendations in five areas: Reorganization, Student Services, Curriculum, External Relations, and Ongoing Assessment (see <http://gradschool.utk.edu/temp/TaskForceReview.pdf> and Appendix A).

The task force made several recommendations for establishing a more creative and effective administrative structure that can enhance the functions which the Graduate School currently performs, support new interdisciplinary programs and joint degree programs as well as degrees in traditional disciplines and areas of study, and provide a structure on which to build and exercise leadership in standards for excellence and innovation in graduate education. Some adjustments to the staff and functions are under way, and further renovation of the space and the move and reorganization of the staff (projected fall 2008) are among the first of major changes suggested by the task force.

Based on the report of the task force, full support of the functions listed above and the additional responsibilities listed below calls for growth in staff that would include a full-time associate dean for academics, an associate dean for administration, an assistant dean for recruitment, two program coordinators, a budget officer, and additional staff support persons for the new positions. Oversight, development, and maintenance responsibilities of the Graduate School should be expanded to include:

- Enhancement of student access and success through improved systems for data and enrollment management, in particular, to track academic progress, time-to-degree, scholarly and professional accomplishments, and placement of graduate

students

- Oversight of Graduate and International Admissions (effective July 1, 2008)
- Expansion of programming to support mentoring, training in teaching and research, and other aspects of professionalization for graduate students
- Strengthening of the collaborative relationship with the Office of Research and Engagement
- Assistance with coordination of campus-wide recruitment efforts, in particular, to improve access for underrepresented populations
- Implementation of a “live catalog” (in progress) to improve efficiency of curriculum changes
- Participation in the process of graduate program development and graduate program revision as a follow-up to program reviews
- Involvement with development of interdisciplinary programs/degrees, joint degree programs, global studies, and professional masters and doctoral programs
- Elevation of the national and international visibility of the Graduate School through restructuring of the web site, participation in professional organizations, enhancement of public relations and communication, and engagement in outreach
- Establishment of a development program to build funding resources

Minimal staff additions have been made (an administrative assistant for the dean, two graduation specialists transferred from the Office of the Registrar, and two graduate assistants), space renovations and a move are scheduled, several policies and procedures have been reviewed for improvement and are in the process of revision, and the Office of Graduate and International Admissions is scheduled to move to the Graduate School, effective July 2008. The current organizational structure, however, is not adequate to put in place and sustain effectively the strategic goals and strategies the university expects to achieve over the next decade. Building and enhancing the structure recommended by the task force is a short-term goal that requires immediate attention in order to begin work on and achieve the long-term goals defined for the next decade.

Policies and Procedures: Governance

The Graduate Council, as a body of the Faculty Senate, works in partnership with the Graduate School to create and monitor policies governing graduate education. While departments and programs have specific requirements for admission and progression toward attaining degrees, the Graduate Council establishes campus-wide standards for overall administration of those programs. The Graduate Council, consisting of faculty members elected by their colleges, the president and vice-president of the Graduate Student Senate, and appointed ex-officio members of the faculty and administration, determines standards for admission, retention, and graduation; reviews curricular matters in graduate programs; and approves new programs and other educational policies related to graduate education. (Faculty Senate Bylaws, <http://web.utk.edu/~senate/bylaws.shtml>). Graduate Council meetings and activities of its subcommittees and the advisory body constituted by the graduate deans of each college are coordinated by the Dean of the Graduate School and staff. The Graduate School and the Graduate Council work

collaboratively with the faculty to review, implement, and monitor the established policies, primarily through the work of the graduate directors, each of whom is the primary contact at the graduate school level and reports to the Dean of the Graduate School on graduate program matters.

The Graduate School has made progress in ongoing efforts to enhance student access and success, opportunities for research, and engagement in outreach and globalization through the work of the Graduate Council subcommittees. Issues under revision and/or development include:

- Guidelines for directing dissertations, including the role of external reviewers (Credentials Committee)
- The process for graduate student academic appeals (newly established standing Appeals Committee)
- Admissions policies governing international graduate students and visiting scholars (Academic Policy Committee)
- Guidelines for development and implementation of domestic and international joint degree programs (Academic Policy Committee)
- Graduate Council Bylaws

Areas for improvement remain, however, in clarifying and strengthening the role of the Graduate School in the implementation of policies and procedures that affect program funding and development.

Management and Development of Funding Resources

Nationally, funding resources remain the primary challenge in enhancement of graduate student opportunities and program development and growth. Competition for highly qualified students centers on increasing demand for higher level stipends, greater numbers of assistantships and tuition and fee waivers, in particular, to support out-of-state students, fellowships, more comprehensive personal benefits, such as health insurance, support for travel to conferences and international seminars, and programs to support professional development. For our current enrollment of approximately 6,000 graduate students, the University of Tennessee currently spends \$25 million dollars in stipends and \$11 million in tuition and fee waivers to support 2,000 students. Over the next ten years, in order to reach an enrollment of 8,000, the University will not only need to find new resources but also to change the manner in which we allocate and use those resources. For each of the past three years (2006-2009) new money has been allocated by Central Administration to the total amount available for fee waivers and stipends: \$200,000 for FY 2007 and 2008 and \$400,000 for FY 2009. While continued increases are essential for growth in enrollment, this augmentation must be supported by new models for allocation that allow the funding to support an even greater number of in-state, out-of-state, and international students.

In fall 2007 a task force was appointed to review the existing model for management and allocation of assistantships available for graduate study at the University of Tennessee. The charge to the task force included a review of the current means and types and distribution of assistantships (teaching, research, and general assistantships); an examination of graduate school models for student financial support maintained by our peers and aspirational peers; the compilation of recommendations regarding models that could allow for a broader level of support. Specific issues for focus in the final report of the task force (anticipated completion summer 2008) include consideration of:

- Distribution and use of graduate teaching assistantships, graduate research assistantships, and graduate assistantships, in particular, how we admit and how we fund masters and doctoral level students
- Increases in stipend levels (minimum salaries were last adjusted in 2001) including a comparison of stipend levels in various areas of study, i.e., the humanities and arts, social sciences, and natural science
- The manner in which fee waivers are charged for in-state and out-of-state students
- The manner in which waivers are handled at the master's and doctoral levels, including allocation and charges for tuition waivers and fees based on student level and advancement toward degree
- Administrative management of fee waivers, including parameters for college-level (deans) and Graduate School oversight and decisions governing allocation of funding

Curriculum Matters and Program Development

Currently graduate degree programs are evaluated during the course of more comprehensive departmental/program reviews within each college, and the dean and associate dean of the Graduate School are available to answer questions about Graduate School policy during the review process. Ideally, those making decisions about implementation of recommendations by the reviewers should seek input from the perspective of Graduate School administration before curricular and/or other proposals for program changes are implemented or planned for presentation to the Curriculum Committee of the Graduate Council.

Similarly, the role played by the Graduate School and the Graduate Council in program development typically emerges closer to the end rather than during the formulation of the process, at the point before requests are sent to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and to the Board of Trustees for final approval. Given the increased emphasis on interdisciplinary research and teaching, a model for Graduate School involvement is called for that can help facilitate management of interdisciplinary courses and/or degrees that might otherwise be hindered by the limitations of existing program structures within the colleges. A pool of funding resources would need to be available to develop those initiatives and provide continuity in programming for students. Enhancement of existing programs and development of new areas of study would benefit from the creation of guidelines that delineate the collaborative roles of the Office of the

Provost, the Graduate School, the College, and the faculty in the prioritization of programs and resource allocation of funding for new areas of development at the campus level.

Communications and Public Relations

The Graduate School maintains a web site with copious information for faculty and prospective and current students about a wide range of graduate student services (e.g., graduation deadlines, the Graduate Council, links to Admissions and the Graduate Student Senate). A bolder presence and more effective outreach must be pursued, ideally through addition of a Graduate School Coordinator of Special Projects and Communication and minimally through revamping of the web site through collaboration with the Graduate School information technology specialist, dean, associate dean and assistant to the dean, and a representative from the Office of Communications and Marketing. Such enhancements can support recruitment and student access through direct links from the web site to various programs, as well as motivate student progress through highlighting outstanding student successes and external as well as internal research and professional development opportunities.

Development and Alumni Relations

It is a well established and understood phenomenon that tuition revenues and state allocations can not begin to meet the growing demand for resources to support the costs of graduate education. Alumni development and fundraising, therefore, have become increasingly essential components for the recruitment and retention of talented graduate school students and maintenance of high quality programs. While colleges naturally look to their alumni for donations to support specific degree programs, graduate schools also seek to encourage gifts and endowments for general graduate school funds from those specifically interested in advancing opportunities for graduate education in ways that have an impact on diversity and inclusion campus-wide. In order to advance graduate education, it is critical to:

- Increase the amount in regular endowments for specifically designated purposes such as stipends or dissertation-year awards
- Increase funding to provide multi-year support
- Increase the availability of quasi-endowments, which offer less restrictive guidelines and can be used for special awards and recognition of achievement or travel to international workshops and seminars

Close work with the Development Office is critical. In the absence of a development officer located in the Graduate School and dedicated solely to that unit, the Graduate School must look at ways to support the efforts of the University Development Office. Increasingly, national trends reveal development of alumni boards of advisors who are willing to assist with recruitment and outreach, to stimulate public interest in fundraising

for graduate education, and to make connections with the public and policymakers about the importance of graduate education. The Graduate School will consult with the Development Office about the best ways to explore that option.

ADMISSIONS

Recruitment

Impressions of student life and campus climate do not begin when the student arrives on campus to matriculate but are built at initial points during the processes of recruitment and application. Thus, the foundation for admissions and matriculation of a select graduate student population lies in effective recruitment. Currently, recruitment of graduate students at the University of Tennessee is based primarily in the departments and programs and handled through web sites, faculty contacts with other programs, and program brochures and other advertising materials. While programs must necessarily play a major role in advertising and promoting their degree programs, it is important for the Graduate School to be centrally involved in the coordination of recruitment efforts by participating in and hosting graduate school fairs, assisting with sponsoring graduate visiting days, producing and distributing marketing materials, and finding ways to share resources and strategies for enhancing diversity and quality that benefit several programs across campus.

Recruitment goals ultimately must be based on firm principles for enrollment management and plans for growth. By assuming oversight of Graduate Admissions and working closely with departments and programs, the Graduate School will be able to play a more central role in the processes and outcomes of recruitment and admissions. While a large quantity of data has been collected over the last ten years related to demographics, program enrollment, and degree completion, improved databases and ways to capture and track information about graduate student progress (i.e., time to degree completion, job placement, scholarly productivity and creative achievement, student satisfaction, internal and external awards) are essential not only to formulating plans for growth but also for designing initiatives to improve student access, retention, and success.

Information and assistance provided during the process of application is of prominent concern for domestic and international students. Our existing online and paper applications offer convenience but are not uniformly synchronized with the departmental and program processes. An online application system that smoothly coordinates the evaluation and selection within the programs with the work of graduate admissions can facilitate student access and improve the desired enrollment yield.

Growth

Strategic planning and long-term goals of the system projected over the next decade have focused on growth of Graduate School student enrollment from approximately 6,000 to 8,000, enhancement of current and development of programs to meet demands of society and economic development, and provision of an inclusive campus with adequate funding and services to support a highly qualified, diverse student population. Development of a model for student growth and increases in program quality and offerings must be addressed through an aggregate model that takes into account several factors: ongoing assessment and evaluation of programs, allocation of resources dedicated to areas of study in the context of developments of national trends, the differential levels of emphasis to be placed on masters, doctoral, and professional degree programs in relationship to the institution's land-grant imperative, shifting statewide and national needs, and international perspectives and global issues that have an impact on domestic developments. Effective recruitment and admissions, however, lack meaning without secure retention measures. The success of those measures is determined by the quality of student campus life and the student and career services made available by several campus entities.

STUDENT LIFE

Many aspects of student life and campus climate rely not only on the Graduate School and program services but also on auxiliary entities that serve all students across the campus, such as Career Services, the Center for International Education, Health Services, Minority Student Affairs and Student Affairs, University Housing, and the UT Police Department. While the Graduate School does not have direct responsibility for student health and insurance benefits, safety issues, housing, and parking, we are committed to working closely with those offices and advocating on behalf of students to provide a supportive environment in which they can thrive and succeed. Among the issues to be addressed are: a clear family and medical leave policy for graduate students; further improvements for family medical and health insurance, office space that places all graduate students in close proximity with their mentors (currently, only selected programs offer such an arrangement), and university-wide access to SMART classroom technology.

Funding is perhaps the greatest concern for students among the factors that have an impact on the quality of their lives. The Graduate School office and web site currently provide information about the requirements and expectations associated with an assistantship award as well as information about internal and selected external fellowships and grants (see <http://gradschool.utk.edu/GradAsstHandbook.pdf>). A centralized website for funding (internal and external) and other teaching, research, internship, and postdoctoral opportunities, developed in collaboration with the Office of Research and Engagement, would help recruit prospective students and offer current students an expanded resource as they progress toward their degrees and beyond.

Graduate student participation in campus organizations and program administration provides opportunities to build leadership skills and contribute to the quality of life on campus. Graduate student engagement in governance is managed primarily through two sources: the Graduate Student Senate (GSS), which is composed of an elected representative from each graduate and professional program, and the Graduate Council, on which the president and vice-president of the Graduate Student Senate serve as voting members. Members of the Graduate Student Senate, as well as other graduate students at large, also represent the views of graduate students on various university-wide committees, departmental/program committees, and faculty and staff searches and are considered key voices in program review and development. One of the major functions of the Graduate Student Senate is to manage the travel fund for students proposing to make presentations at national and international conferences. As more and more students become productive and are invited to share their scholarship and research, the demand for funding continues to increase. Another active graduate student organization is The Black Graduate and Professional Student Association (BGPSA), which is affiliated with the Office of Minority Student Affairs; it is less concerned with governance and more focused on providing a professional and social network for African American and other minority graduate students. The organization works with the Dean of the Graduate School and faculty mentors to offer career development workshops open to all students. The Center for International Education, the International House, and several international associations that serve undergraduate as well as graduate students add another dimension to the available social and professional networks.

Graduate student participation in governance and other campus extracurricular activities is essential to building and sustaining a diverse student population and a welcoming, inclusive climate that recognizes a broad base of international and intercultural perspectives. Along with encouraging student participation on committees such as the Commission for Blacks, the Commission for Women, and the Council on Diversity and Interculturalism, we must support opportunities for collaboration between the Graduate Student Senate, the BGPSA, and various student international associations to foster intercultural and international engagement on our campus and to contribute to development of the Graduate School diversity plan.

STUDENT AND CAREER SERVICES

Matriculation, Retention, and Progression toward the Degree

Graduate student orientation sessions conducted by the Graduate School and by academic programs help students acclimate to their surroundings and to inform them about the resources available to them to help them succeed. Department and program orientations provide the opportunity for graduate students to familiarize themselves with program structures and requirements and to begin building a social and intellectual community of their peers and mentors. Currently, each program is required to have in place a Graduate Student Handbook outlining degree requirements, policies, and procedures related to academic performance and progression toward the degree. Having

the correct, updated information is crucial for student success. The Graduate School works closely with the graduate directors and other faculty on numerous academic matters, and we are committed to working with the programs to ensure that students do have the most current information. It is important to review periodically all handbooks to be sure that the required and correct information is supplied.

The Graduate School offers in the fall semester a special half-day orientation for all new graduate teaching assistants. For all new students an online orientation is offered, and the Center for International Education offers an orientation for international students. Any one student might attend as many as three to four separate orientations. A survey of student impressions of those experiences would help us to determine whether we need to consider alternative means of delivering the information, e.g., whether to offer more online or video resources, more frequent workshops at different points throughout the year addressing targeted student groups, or more workshops for faculty mentors.

In addition to attending orientation sessions, international students must take the English Placement Examination (EPE), to determine whether they need remedial language instruction to help them academically, and for those who will be teaching assistants, to take the SPEAK Test, a State mandated requirement. Since the Educational Testing Service will limit access to the test beginning in 2009, we must consider development of an alternative. Even more importantly, we must look at ways to provide additional support for spoken language improvement for graduate teaching assistants. Most students and many departments cannot pay for the instruction offered by the English Language Institute; nor is there a system in place for follow-up of those students who fail or minimally pass the SPEAK Test. A committee or task force of individuals associated with the SPEAK Test, the English as a Second Language program, the Center for International Education, and the Graduate School must review the ongoing assessment of performance on the EPE, SPEAK, and required tests for application (e.g., TOEFL) to determine future options and how to move forward.

Mentoring and Professionalization (teaching, research, professional service and civic engagement)

Mentoring and professional development training are two of the most important aspects of graduate education. Graduate directors, faculty mentors, and the Graduate School staff all collaborate to offer advising, career planning workshops, and teaching and research experiences in order to prepare those who will become the next generation of professionals. In the initial months after reinstatement, the Graduate School saw the need to clarify and strengthen the role of the graduate director as the individual within each program who would be the primary point of contact (for students, faculty, and the Graduate School) and oversight for all issues related to graduate education. Biannual workshops for graduate directors and program staff assistants are held to provide information and updates on procedures and policies and discussion of Graduate Council issues. It would be helpful to have an additional workshop during the year or a series of

small group sessions to probe more deeply aspects of best practices in mentoring with relationship to course work, preparation of the thesis and dissertation, and job placement.

Programs are expected to prepare graduate teaching assistants for their teaching assignments. The level and intensity of preparation vary widely across campus. In an effort to supplement teacher training offered by programs, three years ago the Graduate School developed a “Best Practices in Teaching” program to provide information about resources and a forum for discussion of a wide range of issues surrounding teaching, including the preparation of a teaching portfolio. Originally offered once a year over two semesters, the program is now offered every semester and includes graduate students, lecturers, post-docs, and assistant professors who meet a broad variety of faculty and staff to discuss topics such as syllabus preparation, diversity, classroom expectations and civility, and mentoring.

Recent discussions have centered on the need for a sequence on best practices in and responsible conduct of research. There are classes on ethical research and on grant-writing offered on the topic in selected programs. We must find a way to make that information available to all graduate students. For students enrolled in doctoral degree programs, a recent initiative, begun in fall 2007 in a partnership between the Graduate School and the University Libraries, featured a day-long symposium on the dissertation and scholarly inquiry. All such initiatives, especially if developed in collaboration with the Office of Research and Engagement, can help to increase graduate student productivity, their attainment of external grants and awards, and can improve job placement. Ideally, efforts could be centralized through establishment of an Office of Mentoring and Training that would potentially have a positive effect on recruitment and retention of a broadly diverse and talented group of students, lead to a higher level of student involvement in securing and participating in research grants, and develop faculty who model excellence and equity in their collaborations with their colleagues and students, and attract and retain a broadly diverse faculty.

Career Success

We must promote the ability of students to follow a career path of their choice in which their research activities are focused, so as to enhance their career goals. Objectives include: (a) ensuring that students are informed about the diversity of career options available, (b) ensuring that students are appropriately mentored to match their choices of research with those most suited to their career objectives, (c) encouraging all graduate programs to incorporate discussions of career alternatives as part of their graduate education initiatives, and (d) promoting high quality mentoring by faculty that allows for the diversity of research experiences appropriate to the diversity of career options of their students. As a measure of our success, we would look at the numbers of students meeting their career objectives both short-term, upon leaving UT, and long-term as well as the connections made with institutions offering career opportunities for graduating students.

ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT/CURRICULUM

Graduate programs today are faced with fundamental questions of purpose, vision, and quality. According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in its recent publication, *The Formation of Scholars*, the solution is not to add more requirements or components, but to investigate whether the many traditions that have grown up within academe still serve their intended purpose.

In articulating a vision for excellence in graduate education and the research and scholarly activities that are associated with it, issues related to curriculum must be given serious consideration. On this front, the Graduate School should establish the standards for excellence that pervade all discussions and decisions regarding curriculum, keep the campus focused on these standards, and provide a roadmap or vision for their attainment. In short, the organization and delivery of the graduate curriculum needs to become the focus of this strategic plan with the emphasis shifting from “just fulfilling degree requirements to satisfy some bureaucratic rule or regulation” to placing the student at the center of the curriculum as we focus on the formation of scholars.

Inherent in the process of articulating a vision for excellence is the leadership that must be provided by the Graduate School which will ensure the rigor and relevance of the curriculum. Recent trends in curriculum development have focused on more flexible and fluid innovations to curriculum, instruction, and assessment. These approaches include: (a) joint and dual degree programs, (b) interdisciplinary programs and degrees, and (c) the infusion of diversity into course content. The three approaches discussed below highlight the flexibility that needs to be enhanced to effectively place the student at the center of graduate education and the formation of future scholars and to advance graduate education at the University of Tennessee into the twenty-first century.

Joint and Dual Degree Programs

The University of Tennessee’s Graduate School encourages graduate students to take advantage of the intellectual resources of the whole university and to have the opportunity to explore the offerings of other educational institutions and entities (e.g., other local, regional, foreign universities) beyond the university. Currently and understandably, students must meet the requirements of their degree programs, and this necessarily limits the number of courses available to take in other colleges and/or programs. Arrangements between and among colleges programs offered at UT, as well as between programs offered at other educational institutions, should be pursued that allow students to earn one degree in two fields at once (a joint degree) or two degrees in two fields, concurrently (a dual degree). Both, joint and dual degrees can be earned by (a) combining coursework from different existing programs at UT (in which case highly individualized dual- and joint-degree options could be considered) or (b) combining

coursework from UT and other educational institutions in the U.S. and abroad in a context of an agreement between these institutions that would provide clear guidelines that determine:

- under which circumstances the degree earned would be jointly granted by all participating institutions,
- under which circumstances only one or the participating institution would grant a joint- or dual degrees for the coursework earned at different institutions, and
- under which circumstances all participating institutions would grant their own joint- or dual degree for the combined work that a student completed at all participating institutions; the latter would most likely be necessary for all those graduate degrees that limit a professional license that is granted along with the degree to a certain state, country, etc.

One example for how a joint degree between could be structured is the “ERASMUS Mundus programme” where a consortium of seven universities offers a master’s degree in the Humanities in “Crossways in European Humanities”(more information is available at:

http://www.munduscrossways.eu/struttura/mundus_struttura.asp?cerca=crossways_intro).

Interdisciplinary Programs and Degrees

The University of Tennessee’s Graduate School actively promotes and supports interdisciplinary initiatives and programs. Recently, discussions revolving around the generation of knowledge have acknowledged that individual disciplines and fields of study are enriched as they adopt an interdisciplinary focus and as a result are becoming more interdisciplinary in nature. The content of the curriculum becomes more relevant and, to a great extent, more rigorous. Graduate students would be encouraged to pursue degrees that combine the offerings of two or more major departments. Many universities have developed interdisciplinary programs at the graduate level such as Women’s or Gender Studies, American Studies, Global Studies, Film and Cinema Studies, and the like. While it could be argued that a maximum of flexibility in the context of joint- and dual-degrees would make it unnecessary to add new interdisciplinary degree program options at the graduate level, one of the guiding principles in this area should be interdisciplinary degree program options at peer institutions because students interested in these areas will most likely specifically look for these programs and base the choice of the institutions they apply to on the availability of a specific interdisciplinary program at the graduate level. It will be necessary for UT to allocate sufficient resources to these interdisciplinary programs (including faculty lines & GTA positions) in order to give these programs the potential to be competitive on a national and international scale and attract high-caliber students.

Diversity Infusion

The University of Tennessee's Graduate School must lead the way in the establishment of an environment that fosters and values diversity, is broadly inclusive, and is premised on mutual respect. Diversity is central to the University's mission because our constituencies are themselves diverse, because we have an obligation to provide all of our students with an opportunity to succeed and because all students should be prepared for life and work in a diverse society. The University's commitment to diversity spans the curriculum and all aspects of graduate student life. Academic programs should reflect international perspectives and stress multicultural competency and global citizenship. To accomplish this, graduate education should (a) embed diversity and inclusion in the graduate curriculum; (b) ensure that diverse perspectives are prominent in course content; (c) provide service learning and internship opportunities that allow a focus on diversity; (d) create greater opportunities for extended engagement of faculty and student in diversity issues; (e) stress foreign language study as a necessary pre-requisite for true internationalization and intercultural learning, and (f) expand faculty and staff development opportunities for learning about and increasing sensitivity to issues of diversity

One way of how diversity infusion could be promoted is through programs like the above mentioned "ERASMUS Mundus programme" where seven universities from various European countries (along with several other more loosely affiliated universities) offer a joint degree program. Having such a degree option by initiating such a joint program or by becoming a member of this (or any similar consortium) would greatly enhance diversity, internationalization, and intercultural learning at the graduate level. See for example also the section on collaborate research activities in connection with the "ERASMUS Mundus programme" where it states specifically that "Crossways' students are encouraged to participate in the activities of these bodies as a complement to their taught-course and dissertation work. Visiting Scholars will be invited to pursue collaborative projects and read papers." (See the second half of the following web-page: http://www.munduscrossways.eu/struttura/mundus_struttura.asp?cerca=crossways_rm). Adequate preparation in foreign languages would be an important pre-requisite for participation in such programs.

Current Status of Graduate Education and Issues Related to the Three Approaches to Curriculum Development

The three approaches to curriculum development call for revision of several procedures and policies currently in place. In order to incorporate those approaches effectively sustain high standards of excellence in the delivery of the graduate curriculum, we must address the following issues:

- The rules that apply to the counting of students must be revised to allow for dual and joint degree programs.
- Issues related to the appointment of faculty must be revisited to allow for joint appointments and more interdisciplinary endeavors.
- Regulations surrounding class/seminar size (particularly in summer sessions) must be reconsidered.
- Distance Education and Continuing Education must be reconsidered in light of its relationship to degree attainment.
- The faculty hiring process should promote interdisciplinarity as a valued quality.
- The social spaces which affect curriculum and the formation of scholars must be considered. Curriculum is shaped and delivered in social spaces as well as in classrooms, laboratories, and mentoring between student and teacher.
- We need to reconsider the emphasis on rules and procedures and focus on language that speaks to the development of scholars and that places students at the center of graduate education.

In relation to “Academic Improvement/Curriculum,” the following goals are offered for the action of the Graduate School:

- Establish standards for excellence in graduate education;
- Establish guidelines for joint and dual degree programs both within UT and in conjunction with other educational institutions and entities;
- Establish guidelines for interdisciplinary initiatives and programs;
- Develop a system for infusing diversity throughout the graduate curriculum;
- Secure and allocate sufficient resource for joint/dual, interdisciplinary, and diversity initiatives and programs;
- Review existing policies and procedures that have potential effects on joint/dual, interdisciplinary, and diversity initiatives and programs; and
- Develop a system to monitor the implementation of these programs and initiatives and their effectiveness.

In order to accomplish the goals, we offer the following strategies:

Academic Improvement: Program Innovation and Promotion

- Encourage strategic partnerships both within the university and outside it, including collaborations with research institutions at home and abroad; ensure administrative funding, and policy flexibility without compromising quality to facilitate partnerships, joint/dual, and interdisciplinary degrees.
- Facilitate improvement in curriculum planning and communication among programs and student through development of a centralized, transparent curriculum database.

- Get away from the perception of the student as a ‘vessel that needs to be filled with the knowledge we offer’ and replace it with the concept where the student and his/her individual educational needs and interests, research ideas, and abilities are put at the center. This goal can only be reached by making programs more flexible to suit a student’s specific needs and interests.

Examples of how such flexibility could be attained include:

- (a) defining ranges of credit hours for coursework and dissertation hours instead of fixed number of credit hours
- (b) allowing interdisciplinary work under the mentorship of faculty from all involved areas outside pre-defined interdisciplinary fields in order to attract high-caliber students who already have a clear – and in some cases non-traditional – research agenda and/or a career goal that requires preparation in various areas that currently cannot be combined at UT at the graduate level.

- Supporting innovations in teaching across and within disciplines by providing the resources necessary to guarantee success of effort.
- Promoting excellence of programs through a series of conferences, symposia, and other activities and an extended public relations campaign to ensure national and international attention to such activities, especially those that highlight the University of Tennessee’s commitment to interdisciplinary excellence.

Academic Improvement: Funding

- Invest new and existing resources strategically to sustain and promote the highest quality graduate education and research, and collaborate with schools, colleges, programs, and central administration.
- Utilize current, accurate data to inform decision and policymaking.
- Increase size of the graduate student population in a systematic, thoughtful, strategic manner through a series of interdisciplinary competitions for new student among doctoral and masters/specialist students.
- Raise stipends in disciplines where we are at a competitive disadvantage.
- Continue to expand resources available for student research, language acquisition and conference travel.

All of this is aimed at the improvement of the overall quality and visibility of graduate programs. Therefore, we must

- sustain and promote the excellence of graduate education through strategic investment of effort and resources and ensure overall graduate program quality through open collaboration and firm governance.
- innovate programmatically and establish visible partnerships within and outside the university, at home and abroad, to extend research and expand degree-seeking opportunities.

RESEARCH/SCHOLARSHIP/CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT/LIBRARY RESOURCES

We use the term "research" to include all aspects of scholarship and creative activity by graduate students, fully realizing that this covers an array of diverse activities carried out by those pursuing graduate degrees. This component of the strategic plan does not apply to some of the professional degree programs at UT, which do not have a research component. However, the objective is still to incorporate such activities in every graduate degree program, as defined appropriate to the field. Indeed, the inclusion of a research component is perhaps the single most important characteristic that distinguishes undergraduate from graduate education. Although many undergraduate programs include a research component, it is not an expectation for every undergraduate, while it is an expectation for every graduate student.

The opportunities for enhancement of graduate education discussed below emphasize Ph.D. programs and terminal masters programs (e.g., the MFA in some disciplines) rather than the professional degree programs (Vet Med, MBA, MA Public Ed, D. Audiology), which may not require a research component. We consider several different aspects of the graduate programs at UTK as they relate to those opportunities.

International Study

Opportunities in this area should be expected to expand in conjunction with the Ready for the World Initiative. Objectives include: (a) providing sufficient guidance and support for all graduate students whose research efforts depend upon access to and use of resources external to the United States to find funding and time in their program to make use of these resources; (b) encouraging all graduate programs to incorporate intercultural and international experiences in their graduate education; and (c) promoting the advantages of international opportunities to all graduate students. Metrics: Number of graduate students having international experiences, number of students funded for international experience, external funding received to support such initiatives.

Field Research

It is essential to promote and provide methods that allow graduate students to pursue research that requires being away from campus (for brief or extended periods). Objectives include: (a) providing a mechanism for students to spend time away from campus to work on projects without causing them any disadvantage in the pursuit of their degree; (b) enhancing the guidance and support for all graduate students whose research efforts depend upon access to and use of field resources external to UT and to funding and time in their program to make use of these resources; (c) promoting the advantages of field research opportunities to all graduate students; (d) developing collaborative

relationships and linkages with other institutions to foster opportunities for students; and (e) developing UT's own resources for field experiences elsewhere, including additional UT Field Stations. Progress would be measured by the number of graduate students having field experiences, the number of students funded for field experience, and external funding received to support such initiatives.

External Funding

We must promote and expand the variety of potential mechanisms for students to support their graduate training. Objectives include: (a) providing support through mentoring networks and advising by faculty to offer all graduate students the opportunity to develop external support; (b) ensuring that students are not disadvantaged (in terms of lowered support for tuition waivers and/or stipends) when they are successful in obtaining external funding; (c) promoting inclusion in all graduate curricula a component that enhances students knowledge of and ability to obtain external funding for research; (d) promoting the inclusion of graduate support in external funding initiatives carried out by faculty; and (e) promoting the inclusion of graduate support in external funding initiatives carried out by the various UT development programs. Further direction and developments would depend on the number of graduate students obtaining external support, the number of students composing proposals for external funding, and external funding received to support such initiatives

Research Success

Faculty mentors must promote the publication and promulgation of research activities of graduate students. Objectives include: (a) providing support and encouragement to students to publish their research in a very timely manner in appropriate venues of high quality; (b) providing financial support and professional development training to students to publicly present their research at appropriate professional conferences; (c) encouraging all graduate programs to incorporate research success as part of their graduate education initiatives, which may lead to continued funding support from UT; and (d) developing UT's own resources to support publication and promulgation of student research through professional publications and meetings held on our campus. To chart progress we would track the numbers of student publications, the enhanced quality of publications in terms of rankings of journals in which publications appeared, and the numbers of student presentations and level of those presentations (e.g., local, regional, national, and international).

Post-doctoral Appointments

Excellence in graduate education serves to promote the successful recruitment of high quality post-docs and provide them with the infrastructure necessary to be successful while here. Objectives include: (a) develop sources for external funding of post-docs and

assist faculty in obtaining resources to support post-docs; (b) integrate, as appropriate to the discipline, post-docs into graduate and undergraduate research and education experiences; (c) provide opportunities for post-docs to publish and promulgate their research; and (d) promote appropriate mentoring programs to assist post-docs in career planning and choice of research initiatives. Measures of success would be based on the numbers of post-docs at UTK, the quality of the programs from which post-docs are recruited, the amount of funding received to support post-docs, and the numbers of post-docs who receive appropriate positions upon completion of post-doc.

Library Resources

It is essential to provide efficient and robust access to scholarly collections in all formats and regardless of physical location supporting research in the disciplines and interdisciplinary research relative to UT peers. Objectives include: (a) securing recurring funding to address inflation of scholarly resources, (b) seeking recurring funding to address increases in FTE for databases, (c) seeking funds to build monograph collections and scholarship available in other formats to support research, (d) implementing next generation library system, (e) purchasing tools to manage the enormous scope of scholarship needed for graduate student research, and (f) renovate appropriate and inspiring library spaces for graduate student research and creative endeavors to ensure success in research and for recruitment purposes. Support is needed to enable the University Library to move into the top 30 of all in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL).

The overall goals and strategies for improving research and scholarship are designed to:

- Double the number of post-docs over the next decade
- Double the number of research publications and presentations per graduate student over the next decade
- Double the external funding for graduate students over the next decade
- Double the number of graduate students leaving UT for positions at the top-ranked programs elsewhere
- Double the number of post-docs receiving tenure-track positions at top-ranked institutions over the next decade.

UT STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION

Part II. Goals

Strategic Planning Themes and the Overarching Goals of Graduate Education

- Accessibility: Increase the enrollment and support of high quality graduate students
- Quality: Enhance and develop outstanding graduate programs noted for excellence in teaching, research, and professional development, and increase opportunities for interdisciplinary training and international experiences
- Diversity and Inclusiveness: Strengthen the recruitment and retention of talented, high achieving students from underrepresented groups

Specific Goals within the Graduate School Areas of Responsibility

Graduate School Structure and Administration

- Establish a creative and effective administrative structure to support the functions of the Graduate School and program growth and development (student access, success)
- Increase the national and international visibility of graduate programs and graduate students on the Knoxville campus (student access, success)
- Increase fundraising and strengthen alumni relations (student access, success, outreach)

Admissions

- Improve the admissions process and devise an enrollment management plan that will help to track and manage growth, degree production, and program development (student access, success)
- Enhance recruitment efforts to attract high quality students from diverse domestic and international backgrounds (student access)
- Increase the number of students from underrepresented groups overall, with special attention to targeted areas of study and degree completion for improvement (student access)

Student Life

- Improve funding resources to support higher tuition rates, increase benefits, and help cover living expenses for existing and new students (student access, success)

- Monitor and respond to students' perceptions of the campus and community climate (student success, outreach)
- Provide timely, accurate information about the academic programs and student services programs (student access, success)
- Assist faculty and staff mentors with preparing students for participation in governance and leadership roles in their professions and in the public (student success)

Student and Career Services

- Enhance opportunities for the mentoring and professionalization of students (student success)
- Create initiatives for career development through partnerships with other campus entities, such as the University of Tennessee Libraries and the Office of Research and Engagement (student success, research, outreach)
- Increase opportunities for international/intercultural experiences by supporting development of domestic and international joint degree programs (student access, success, globalization)
- Track and highlight information about the progress and outstanding accomplishments of our students (student success)

Academic Improvement/Curriculum

- Work with programs to set standards for excellence that support a vibrant intellectual community for students and their mentors (student success)
- Support development of interdisciplinary programs and activities (student access, success, research)
- Develop a system for infusing diversity into the graduate curriculum
- Encourage and support program hiring and faculty/student projects that promote innovative interdisciplinary collaboration (student access, success, research)
- Increase opportunities for international experiences and for academic/professional collaboration through domestic and international joint degree programs (student access, success, research, globalization)

Research/Scholarship/Creative Achievement/Library Resources

- Increase external funding and academic achievement awards for graduate students (student access, success, research, economic development)

- Increase student scholarly productivity, based on the number of student peer-reviewed publications and presentations at national and international conferences
- Provide opportunities for research that include international study and collaboration with students and faculty in other countries and other types of field experiences (student access, success, research, globalization)
- In conjunction with the Office of Research and Engagement, assist faculty and graduate students with coordination of academic projects and/or entrepreneurial initiatives that involve campus centers and institutes (student success, research, outreach, economic development)
- Support recruitment and retention of high-quality post-doctoral fellows in partnership with the Office of Research and Engagement (student success, research)
- Increase the number of UTK students who receive post-doctoral appointments at peer and aspirational peer institutions
- Support the library's efforts to provide access to scholarly collections needed for research in the disciplines and in interdisciplinary projects

UT STRATEGIC PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE ON GRADUATE EDUCATION

Part III. Checklist

Graduate School Structure and Administration

Goals

- Establish a creative and effective administrative structure to support the functions of the Graduate School and program growth and development (student access, success)
- Increase the national and international visibility of graduate programs and graduate students on the Knoxville campus (student access, success)
- Increase fundraising and strengthen alumni relations (student access, success, outreach)

Benchmarks

- Proposed model of the Task Force on Structure and peer/aspirational peer administrative models
- Program rankings of AAU schools and other aspirational peers
- Double the amount of fellowship funding, the amount dedicated to quasi-endowments, and develop new resources for multi-year funding

Strategies/Activities

- Build a staff to include an associate dean for academics, an associate dean for administration, an assistant dean for recruitment, two coordinators for special projects, a budget officer, and additional staff support persons for the new positions
- Restructure the Graduate School web site and collaborate with Office of Communications and Public Relations
- Return oversight of the maintenance and updating of the *Graduate Catalog* to the Graduate School
- Strengthen and maintain a collaborative relationship with the Office of Research and Engagement (ongoing)
- Implement a “live” catalog to manage curriculum changes
- Establish a procedure for program revision/reallocation based on program reviews
- Establish a procedure for development of interdisciplinary programs and joint degree programs
- Create an alumni board of advisors and development plan

Resources Required

- Funding for new lines
- Software and maintenance contract for the “live” catalog
- Funding for activities of an alumni board of advisors

Lead Role

Office of the Provost, Dean of the Graduate School, Graduate School staff

Admissions

Goals

- Improve the admissions process to attract and retain more high quality students from diverse backgrounds (student access, success)
- Enhance recruitment efforts to attract high quality students from diverse domestic and international backgrounds (student access)
- Increase the number of students from underrepresented groups overall, with special attention to targeted areas of study and degree completion for improvement (student access)

Benchmarks

- Increased number of applications from talented students from diverse backgrounds
- Increased numbers of admitted students from underrepresented groups
- Matriculation – greater yield of first-choice applicants
- Increase in stipend levels to match peers and aspirational peers
- Double the amount of fellowship funding, the amount dedicated to quasi-endowments, and develop new resources for multi-year funding

Strategies/Activities

- Devise an enrollment management plan that will help to track and manage growth, degree production, and program development
- Improve the online application process and coordination of procedures at the program and Graduate School levels
- Coordinate recruitment efforts across campus
- Host and visit graduate school fairs
- Support special program efforts to recruit underrepresented populations
- Improve data and enrollment management work in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA)
- Revise the process for allocation and administration of assistantships
- Change the manner in which fee waivers are charged for students at different levels of progress

Resources Required

- Funding to hire a Graduate School project/recruitment coordinator
- Funding to support recruitment activities
- Funding to raise stipend minimum levels
- Additional funding for top-off money to recruit first-choice candidates

Lead Role

Office of the Provost, Dean of the Graduate School, College Deans, Development Office

Student Life

Goals

- Improve funding resources to support growing tuition, benefits, and personal expenses for existing and new students (student access, success)
- Monitor and respond to students' perceptions of the campus and community climate (student success, outreach)
- Provide timely, accurate information about the academic programs and student services programs (student access, success)
- Assist faculty and staff mentors with preparing students for participation in governance and leadership roles in their professions and in the public (student success)

Benchmarks

- Student benefits provided by peer and aspirational peers
- Questionnaires and data from instruments in the Graduate Student Survey Repository, Council of Graduate Schools survey instruments
- Governance models for peers and aspirational peers

Strategies/Activities

- Expand the web site to include more information about external grants and awards and create a link to the Office of Research and Engagement site
- In collaboration with the Office of Research and Engagement, include information about post-doctoral opportunities
- Create opportunities for the Graduate Student Senate, Black Graduate and Professional Student Association, and graduate students in the International Student Associations to contribute to the Graduate School Diversity Plan and to collaborate on issues of concern to graduate students
- Develop/select a student satisfaction survey and administer every two years
- Review and expand health and insurance benefits for graduate students
- Develop a policy for graduate student family and medical leave

Resources Required

- Funding from Student Affairs for GSS projects
- Staff support from Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
- Funding from Central Administration for increases in benefits

Lead Role

Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Provost, Office of Finance and Administration

Student and Career Services

Goals

- Enhance opportunities for the mentoring and professionalization of students (student success)
- Create initiatives for career development through partnerships with other campus entities, such as the University of Tennessee Libraries and the Office of Research and Engagement, and other institutions (student success, research, outreach)
- Increase opportunities for international/intercultural experiences by supporting development of domestic and international joint degree programs (student access, success, globalization)
- Track and highlight information about the progress and outstanding accomplishments of our students (student success)

Benchmarks

- Number of partnerships that generate research and teaching opportunities for students
- Data from existing student satisfaction surveys (nationally and at peer institutions)
- Placement data for peer and aspirational peer institutions
- Support services for international students at peer and aspirational peer institutions
- Data for existing joint degree programs of peers and aspirational peers

Strategies/Activities

- Develop/select a student satisfaction survey and administer every two years
- Develop/select a student exit survey and administer to every student at the completion of the degree program (master's and doctoral levels)
- Conduct a periodic review of all graduate student handbooks (ever five years) and work with graduate directors to monitor ongoing changes
- Create a database to track student academic accomplishments (e.g., fellowships, grants, publications, editorial service)
- Create a placement database
- Provide support to international students for English language improvement
- Establish an Office of Mentoring and Training
- Create internal graduate student research awards

Resources Required

- Staff support from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
- Funding for a lecturer/coordinator to monitor/and instruct language development of international students who fail the SPEAK Test
- Funding for a full-time associate dean and one staff support person; budget for program development associated with that office (in collaboration with the Office of Research and Engagement)

Lead Role

Office of the Provost, Dean of the Graduate School, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement

Academic Improvement/Curriculum

Goals

- Work with programs to set standards for excellence that support a vibrant intellectual community for students and their mentors (student success)
- Support development of interdisciplinary programs (student access, success, research)
- Develop a system for infusing diversity throughout the graduate curriculum
- Encourage and support program hiring and faculty/student projects that promote innovative interdisciplinary collaboration (student access, success, research)
- Increase opportunities for international experiences and for academic/professional collaboration through developments of domestic and international joint degree programs and interdisciplinary programs and activities (student access, success, research, globalization)

Benchmarks

- Number of interdisciplinary projects; number of interdisciplinary programs/degrees
- Data/inventory of courses and initiatives with a strong focus on diversity
- Number of faculty involved in interdisciplinary projects
- Number of students involved in interdisciplinary projects
- Number of students involved in international study, teaching, or research

Strategies/Activities

- Support student interdisciplinary projects and develop guidelines for interdisciplinary work/degrees
- Develop joint degree programs
- Sponsor national/international conferences and symposia with emphasis on and/or organized by) graduate students
- Support student teaching across areas/disciplines
- Increase available funding for student international travel to conferences, seminars, or for course study

Resources Required

- Additional funding for the Graduate Student Travel Awards
- Funding to support conferences/symposia (jointly cost-shared by several campus entities)

Lead Role

Office of the Provost, Dean of the Graduate School, Graduate Council, Student Affairs

Research/Scholarship/Creative Achievement/Library Resources

Goals

- Increase external funding and academic achievement awards for graduate students (student access, success, research, economic development)
- Provide opportunities for research that include international study and collaboration with students and faculty in other countries and other types of field experiences (student access, success, research, globalization)
- In conjunction with the Office of Research and Engagement, assist faculty and graduate students with coordination of academic projects and/or entrepreneurial initiatives that involve campus centers and institutes (student success, research, outreach, economic development)
- Support recruitment and retention of high-quality post-doctoral fellows in partnership with the Office of Research and Engagement (student success, research)
- Increase student scholarly productivity, based on the number of student peer-reviewed publications and presentations at national and international conferences
- Increase the number of UTK students who receive post-doctoral appointments at peer and aspirational peer institutions
- Support the library's efforts to provide access to scholarly collections needed for research in the disciplines and in interdisciplinary projects

Benchmarks

- Number of students involved in international study, teaching, research, and other types of field experiences
- Number of students receiving internal or external funding for international and other field experiences
- Number of student publications in peer-reviewed journals
- Number of student presentation at national and international conferences
- Number of and venues for access to scholarly resources in comparison to peers and aspirational peers

Strategies/Activities

- Collaborate with the Office of Research and Engagement to identify opportunities and provide grant-writing assistance
- Provide increased funding to support student international experiences and for domestic and international conference participation

- Secure funding to establish more post-doctoral appointments
- Provide annually funding to build the library collection and update the system technology
- Support the library's effort to provide robust scholarly collections in all formats with accompanying tools and appropriate library spaces supporting graduate student research needs

Resources Required

- External funding to establish postdoctoral fellowships
- Increase in funding available for student travel to conferences or for participation in research projects
- Move the ranking of the University Libraries into the top 30 Association of Research Libraries

Lead Role

Office of the Provost, Dean of the Graduate School, Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, Office of Finance and Administration