

GRADUATE SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

2007-2008

Mission Statement of the Graduate School [revised 5/2007]

The Graduate Program at the University of West Georgia provides well-qualified students with the opportunity to engage in research, advanced study, creative activities, and personal development to become successful teachers, scholars, and practitioners in their chosen professions. To that end, the Graduate School awards Master's, Educational Specialist and Doctoral degrees in selected programs. Graduate programs result in the creation of new knowledge and information and benefit undergraduate instruction through improved teaching and learning. As our general mission statement says, the University aspires to preeminence in providing educational excellence in a personal environment through an intellectually stimulating and supportive community for its students, faculty, and staff.

Vision:

The Graduate School at the University of West Georgia seeks to become the choice of students in the state and the southern region for superior education in a personal environment. Further, the Graduate School seeks to serve as an advocate for graduate education in the region and state.

Goal I: To Recruit and Retain Highly Qualified Graduate Students [Tied to the USG Strategic Goals #2- #3]

Actions:

- a. Work with BOR Academic Affairs Staff to identify regional and state needs for graduate programs in targeted areas, including on-line and distance education programs (2007-2008)
- b. Conduct survey of current graduate students, potential graduate students and alumni to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for and threats to our graduate programs (2007-2008);
- c. Establish a Graduate Student Advisory Council to work with the Graduate Dean (fall 2007);
- d. Establish a Recruitment Sub-Committee of COGS to work with Graduate Dean to plan recruitment strategies, to identify funding sources, numbers of graduate assistantships and fellowships, etc. (fall 2007);
- e. Work with Admissions, Public Relations, and departments to develop an overall recruitment plan, targeting specific colleges, others (2007-2008);
- f. Develop effective recruitment materials "G-cruit?" (2007-2008);
- g. Conduct an in-house recruitment seminar for faculty to share successful recruitment efforts here and "best practices" elsewhere (spring 2008);
- h. Conduct more on-campus recruitment efforts, including targeting specific departments for efforts (2007-2008);

- i. Hold an on-campus recruiting fair (fall 2007);
- j. Work to expand availability of fellowships and GRAs for graduate students (2007-2008);
- k. Work with other deans to transfer allocation of GRA and GA money to the Graduate Dean's Office to establish criteria for awards and retention of assistantships (2007-2008);
- l. Develop and publish for departments a procedure to identify graduate programs needing additional funding and require assessment of effectiveness of current and potential allocations of GRA funding to maximize recruiting and retention efforts (2007-2008);
- m. Work to provide a supportive on-campus atmosphere for Graduate Students including providing designated parking, meeting space, exploring day-care options, establishing a graduate student website and blog (2007-2008);
- n. Expand opportunities such as the Celebration of Graduate Research for Graduate Students, to become more visible on campus, and reward their efforts adequately (2007-2008);
- o. Investigate sources to recruit qualified minority and international students (spring 2008)
- p. Collect information from departments concerning recruitment efforts and predictions for enrollments based upon data sources (fall 2007).

Goal II: To Recruit and Maintain an Active Graduate Faculty [USG Goal #3]

Actions:

- a. Assist departments in identifying graduate student needs when hiring, which may mean a COGS member from that department on the search committee (on-going);
- b. Work through COGS to continue to develop the Strategic Plan for the Graduate School and keep departments aware of that plan as they hire (on-going);
- c. Refine definition of graduate faculty appointment, re-appointment, and temporary appointment through COGS (spring 2008);
- d. Provide additional funding for research and professional development for graduate faculty (on-going);
- e. Establish an annual Graduate Faculty Award for outstanding scholarly or creative activity in addition to the monthly Graduate Research Luncheons (2008);
- f. Work with Sponsored Operations to increase visibility of that office and to assist faculty to find grant opportunities and help them to write applications for the grants (on-going);

Goal III: To Increase Resources necessary to implement the Graduate School Strategic Plan [USG goal #2-3]

- a. Develop a Graduate School Budget that is linked to the strategic plans of the school and UWG and to make sure that Graduate education is an integral part of UWG's strategic plan;
- b. Work with UWG to develop a business plan that increases support for graduate students at a competitive level with similar institutions (3-5 year goal);
- b. Work with University Advancement to identify and contact graduate alumni who might have an interest in supporting graduate education initiatives (2007-2008);

- c. Work with Departments to identify potential sources of funding, whether from alumni, grants, gifts, or other sources, and develop a database to maintain contacts;
- d. Work to increase travel budget for faculty recruiting efforts (2007-2008);
- e. Increase the efforts to secure partnerships with industries, businesses and other local and regional institutions that support graduate education;
- f. Work with Planning and Facilities to move the Graduate School to the first floor of Cobb Hall as soon as that building is remodeled and make remodeling a priority for UWG; [USG Goal # 2]
- g. Work with our legislative liaison to increase attention to graduate education in the state and to educate legislators as to the benefits of more support for graduate education.
- h. Work with the Georgia Council of Graduate Deans to inform state of benefits of Graduate Education—brochure, individual contacts (fall 2007).

Goal IV: To Maintain and Develop high quality services and procedures that enhance enrollment, matriculation, and progress toward an advanced degree. [Tied to the USG System goal # 6].

Actions:

- a. Develop and improve on-line application and payment procedures (summer 2007);
- b. Work with Health services to make immunization policies and procedures clearer and easier for applicants (summer 2007);
- c. Continue scanning and work with ITS staff to make folders available for departments (summer 2007);
- d. Work with departments to ensure more timely decision-making and notification of accepted applicants (fall 2007);
- e. Review forms, letters, applications for clarity and “customer friendliness (fall 2007);
- f. Conduct a review of job descriptions and responsibilities for Graduate School staff (fall 2007);
- g. Revise website (summer 2007)
- h. Use all forms of information technology that will cut costs and improve services (on-going).

Performance Metrics:

Goal#1: Graduate Recruitment

- **Acceptances/applications**
- **Acceptances/enrolled**
- **GPA's of enrolled students**
- **Percentages of women and underrepresented minorities**
- **Evaluation of survey data and match to programs**
- **Development of list of funding opportunities**
- **Recruitment goals/enrollment by department**
- **Graduate assistantships and recruitment/retention goals**
- **New services for graduate students**

Goal#2: Active Graduate Faculty

- # of searches with Graduate School interests discussed
- # of appointments and re-appointments to graduate faculty
- Grant applications/accepted

Goal #3: Increase Resources

- Donor contacts/gifts, awards
- Budget plan tied to strategic planning
- # of new graduate students supported
- Amount of travel support for faculty recruiting efforts
- Bills in legislature aimed at improving graduate education
- # of industry/other contacts and results
- Cobb Hall remodeling in UWG Master Plan
- UWG support for Graduate Education

Goal #4: “Back Office Services”

- Student applications from peer institutions
- Comparative data over five-year period on enrollments by degree program
- Acceptances/applications
- Acceptances/enrolled
- GPAs of enrolled students
- Percentages of women and underrepresented minorities
- Website hits
- Number of students at open-houses, fairs and luncheon