

**Report of the Task Force on Graduate Education**  
**College of Arts & Sciences**  
**University of West Georgia**  
**Fall 2009**

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## Introduction

The College of Arts and Sciences is the heart of the University of West Georgia (UWG) campus community. The College endeavors to vigorously support the institution's vision of becoming a robust tier destination university as articulated in the [UWG strategic plan](#). In accordance with the responsibility and role of the College, Dr. George Kieh, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, established the College of Arts and Sciences Task Force on Graduate Education in Fall 2009. The [Task Force was charged](#) "*with the overall responsibility of studying and making recommendations to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences about various aspects of graduate education in the College of Arts and Sciences.*" The charge of the Task Force also had two specific requests:

1. Current Graduate Programs:
  - a. What additional resources are needed to support current graduate programs? These resources would include:
    - i. Faculty Positions.
    - ii. Students Awards.
    - iii. Professional Development Support.
  - b. What other issues need to be addressed relevant to current graduate programs?
2. New Graduate Programs:
  - a. Should new graduate programs be created?
  - b. What resources are needed to support new graduate programs?

At time of this report, the [UWG Task Force on Graduate Education](#) has yet to submit its recommendations. The UWG Task Force began its work in Spring 2009, and should submit its final report in Spring 2010. The charge of the Arts and Sciences Task Force is not based on the UWG Task Force. Furthermore, the work of the Arts and Sciences Task Force should serve to supplement and complement the work of UWG Task Force by focusing on issues relevant to Arts and Sciences. The Arts and Sciences Task Force began its work on 10/22/2009 and submitted its final report on 12/15/2009.

Although at this time the College has no strategic plan, the Task Force's recommendations attempt to partly address this fact and provide a general framework for future work. The Task Force used the College of Arts and Sciences' [vision](#) and [mission](#) statements as well as the UWG strategic plan as a basis for its recommendations. The [recommendations](#) provide the foundation for a [vision](#) of graduate education in the College of Arts and Sciences that will help the institution achieve its goal of becoming a robust tier university.

## Current Graduate Programs

The Task Force gathered data on current graduate programs in the College which helped develop a partial composite of current programs. The data includes resources needed by programs, enrollment trends, credit hours production, graduate assistantship funding, etc. [see [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#)]. Some programs are experiencing growing pains, while others are holding a steady pace over the years. In all cases, the data clearly show

that support for graduate education in the College has not been a University priority. In spite of lack of support, some graduate programs have excelled in serving students. This is the result of the dedication of faculty who are interested in promoting graduate education. In many cases, departments shift resources away from undergraduate programs and may overload faculty in order to support graduate programs. Although such dedication and resourcefulness are admirable, continuation of such practices will continue to frustrate and burden dedicated faculty, stifle innovation and growth, and negatively impact research/creative activities.

### **New Graduate Programs**

The Task Force did not receive requests or data for new graduate programs. This is not reflective of the College's goals or the potential for the creation of new graduate programs; rather this is due mainly to the tight timeline for the Task Force to complete its work and the prevailing financial crisis the State of Georgia is facing. New graduate programs require considerable time to plan and develop, and resources to deliver. This report includes recommendations appropriate for new graduate programs if and when they are considered.

### **Recommendations**

The Task Force, over a short period of time, attempted to review the state of graduate education in the College and make recommendations appropriate to the future of the College. The recommendations are meant to provide guidance to streamline and advance graduate education, as well as help inform future strategic planning in the College.

1. Integrate graduate education into all aspects of the College's culture.
  - A. Create and effectively communicate the College's vision and plan for graduate education. The Task Force offers its vision of graduate education in the College as a supplement to this report [see [Appendix D](#)].
  - B. Review and revise the College's mission and vision statements to include graduate education as an important aspect of the College's overall contribution.
  - C. Initiate a process of strategic planning and include graduate education as an element in the College's future strategic plan.
  - D. Promote and publicize graduate education in the College as the key for UWG to reach its goal of becoming a robust tier university and help fulfill UWG's strategic goals.
  - E. Celebrate and reward research accomplishments of graduate Faculty and students.
  - F. Create, through the College's governance process, an Arts and Sciences Council on Graduate Education charged with responsibility for the advancement and coordination of graduate education in the College [see [Appendix C](#)]. If deemed appropriate, such a Council could assist in implementing the Task Force's recommendations.

2. Expand and support current graduate programs in the College.
  - A. Expand and support current graduate programs with a strong potential for growth and contribution to graduate education consistent with College and UWG vision and plans. This may include programs with potential growth on-campus, off-campus, on-line, as well as contribution to research/creative and extramural funding activities.
  - B. Allocate Graduate Assistantship funds in proportion to enrollment in current graduate programs and/or special needs. Special considerations should be made to newly launched programs over the past three years, as well as the doctoral program in Psychology. Such allocation of funds would necessitate that the College maintains autonomy over its Graduate Assistantship funds so as to allow for maximum flexibility and appropriate planning.
  - C. Develop plans and provide appropriate support to increase enrollment and graduation numbers in all graduate degree programs by 10% over the next 3 years.
3. Institute College and University policies and procedures that support excellence and innovation in graduate education and enhance the students' graduate experience.
  - A. Urge the institution to develop and implement plans to support graduate education and the Graduate School in proportion to the graduate student body enrollment on campus.
  - B. Urge the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) to provide timely feedback to program reviews submitted by various departments. The VPAA must provide constructive feedback and appropriate support as to enable programs to benefit from such periodic reviews [see UWG VPAA [Program Review](#) & USG Academic Affairs Handbook [Section 2.03.05](#)].
  - C. Plan and make funds available to support one of every two graduate students, and the majority of students in doctoral programs. Graduate students' stipends should be made competitive with robust tier institutions to attract outstanding students. When appropriate, graduate students' support should include a summer stipend and travel funds.
  - D. Plan and make funds available to support targeted marketing for graduate programs. The College should encourage specific marketing that targets the niche for which the programs are appropriate rather than broad blanket marketing.
  - E. Develop workload policies that provide flexibility in determining graduate Faculty teaching and research duties and to enable Faculty to dedicate more time to research and innovation. This would include Faculty course buy-outs, summer graduate teaching, reassigned time for development and delivery of new online course/program offerings, etc.
  - F. Revise policies on graduate students' teaching based on SACS recommendations and make them comparable to those at robust tier institutions. Teaching experience is an integral part of graduate education for most disciplines in Arts & Sciences.

4. Develop and implement plans to enhance and build the intellectual capital and the infrastructure needed to achieve excellence in graduate education.
  - A. Recruit/retain Faculty with outstanding scholarly promise/record to support graduate education and engage in obtaining extramural funding. When appropriate, some of the Faculty should be recruited specifically to support graduate programs and to engage in obtaining extramural funding.
  - B. Recruit and support well-prepared students with the potential to support Faculty-led research, creative, and grant-development activities. The College should create and offer competitive fellowships/assistantships to attract exceptional students.
  - C. Provide appropriate funding to create and support a variety of initiatives in order to enhance graduate education through research, creative contribution, and grant-development activities.
  - D. Make research-specific space and graduate Faculty/student office space priorities in any future facilities master plan for the College.
5. Develop and support a variety of new graduate programs emphasizing traditional Arts and Sciences values in order to fulfill the vision of making UWG a robust tier institution and a destination university.
  - A. Make the fulfillment of UWG's vision to be a robust tier institution a priority for the College's graduate education, and support programmatic initiatives accordingly.
  - B. Plan and support the creation of research-intensive graduate programs in the College. This may include master as well as doctoral level programs. Research is the cornerstone of traditional Arts & Sciences' graduate education.
  - C. Make interdisciplinary graduate programs a priority for the College. The College should investigate current programs that are suitable for interdisciplinary collaboration. The College should encourage roundtable meetings to initiate contact between departments for further mutual collaboration and possible development of unique interdisciplinary programs.
  - D. Make graduate programs with the potential of large enrollment, research/creative contributions, and/or successful attainment of extramural funding a priority for the College.
6. Improve support for research and creative activities at all levels.
  - A. Review and improve all the operations of the Office of Sponsored Projects.
  - B. Review and revise policies of the Institutional Review Board in order to make them comparable to those at robust tier institutions.
  - C. Revise UWG indirect cost recovery policy to allow for larger distribution of revenues to colleges and departments.

- D. Increase library funding to acquire targeted research resources for programs with active research agendas, creative contributions, and potential of extramural funding.
- E. Support research and creative initiatives with internal seed funding for programs with active research agendas, creative contributions, and potential for extramural funding.

The Task Force appreciates the effort needed to advance graduate education in the College. The Task Force's recommendations are not meant to address every relevant issue to graduate education in the College; however, they should guide the College's efforts for future work.

### **Supplements:**

**Appendix A:** [Needs of Current Graduate Programs](#)

**Appendix B:** [Programs' Head Count, GRA Funds, Production Hours, and UWG Graduate Trends](#)

**Appendix C:** [Council on Graduate Education](#)

**Appendix D:** [Possible Vision Statement for Graduate Education in the College](#)

### **Additional Resources:**

[Arts & Sciences' Graduate Programs](#)

[Wikipedia – Carnegie Classification](#)

[Carnegie Foundation](#)

[Carnegie Graduate Instructional Program Classification](#)

[UWG Carnegie Classification](#)