Organization and Administration of Graduate Education

Council of Graduate Schools
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FOREWORD

This policy statement replaces an earlier document published by the Council of Graduate Schools in 1981 and expanded and revised in 1990. It presents a comprehensive view of how graduate education is organized and administered in the United States. The range of activities represented and the array of structures developed to deal with them present a formidable challenge when attempting to discuss broad concepts of good practice in the administration of graduate education.

This volume deals with that challenge in several ways. First, while acknowledging the differences in structure and organization of universities, it focuses attention on what needs to be done in order to foster good graduate education regardless of setting. Second, by recognizing that graduate education coexists, in almost all cases, with undergraduate and professional education, it defines a strong and central graduate school as one that interacts and counsels widely across the institution. Finally, in describing a graduate school that in all its activities serves the scholarly needs of the graduate students and faculty, it calls for clear and consistent advocacy on the part of the graduate dean for the principles and ideals of graduate education.

Debra W. Stewart, President
Council of Graduate Schools, 2004
INTRODUCTION

Graduate education in the United States has existed for more than 100 years. It is the role of graduate education to explore and advance the limits of knowledge and to define the state of the art in every field. Its purpose is not only to serve society’s needs in specific technical and professional ways but also to serve the need for intellectual expansion. Graduate education is a major source of future intellectual leaders of society and is thus an integral and necessary part of our educational system.

As we confront the challenges of the global society of the twenty-first century, graduate education continues to increase in importance as the engine of economic, social, and intellectual advancement. More baccalaureate students are going on for graduate degrees, more employers are requiring advanced training of their employees, and more disciplines are becoming so specialized that additional study is essential to make a contribution to knowledge.

Today graduate schools need to accommodate more part-time students, more working adults, more women and students from historically underrepresented groups, and more individuals who will not fit the traditional model of a full-time, residential student. There is more demand for programs that are not place-bound and for programs geared to the needs of specific clienteles. Electronic technologies have transformed the ways in which we can respond to those clienteles. Federal research funding remains highly competitive to obtain and comes with new and more stringent accountability requirements and oversight. Also, as tuition and health insurance costs continue to rise, financial aid for graduate students becomes increasingly important.

In the face of these pressures, it is essential that graduate education maintain a strong presence and a place of prominence on college and university campuses if it is to fulfill its purpose of providing the future intellectual leaders of society. Not only must each institution that undertakes to offer graduate education be committed to the enterprise, but the graduate programs must be organized and administered in a way that makes their success possible.

This document contains a set of guidelines for good practice in the organization and administration of graduate education. Although institutional goals, structures, and traditions vary immensely, there are certain elements
and principles that apply broadly and that make for graduate education of high quality.

Discussed in this document are the following: the Role of the Graduate School in the University, the Structural Elements of Graduate Education, the Relationship to Research Administration, and a Compendium of Graduate School Activities. Although there is considerable room for differences of opinion and institutional variation in much of this discussion, one assumption remains clear throughout: given the diversity and decentralized nature of our institutions of higher education, the needs and concerns of graduate education are best served when its administration is carried out through a central university office.
DEFINITIONS

There is considerable variation in the titles and reporting lines of the individuals charged with primary responsibility for graduate education in U.S. universities: Dean of the Graduate School; Dean of Graduate Studies and Research; Vice Chancellor or Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies; Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School; Director of Graduate Studies; and many more. (Appendices A and B, Sample Organizational Charts, describe titles and reporting lines in more detail.) For purposes of this discussion, however, the title of "dean" or "graduate dean" will be used to refer to the chief academic officer responsible for oversight of graduate education. Unless otherwise noted, "graduate" here refers to all postbaccalaureate education in academic, scholarly, or professional fields, although it does not include the basic professional degree in medicine or law; "graduate school" refers to that office or unit with responsibility for central university graduate affairs; and "university" will be used to refer to any institution of higher education.
THE ROLE OF THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
THE UNIVERSITY

The primary purpose of the graduate school in a university is to define
and support excellence in graduate education and the research and
scholarly activities associated with it. The graduate school, as part of
the central administration of the university, is ideally suited to fulfill this
purpose, which is reflected in a wide range of roles. It is the responsibility of
the graduate school to:

ARTICULATE A VISION OF EXCELLENCE FOR
THE GRADUATE COMMUNITY

Academic excellence is a goal to which all universities aspire. The graduate
school should establish and articulate a standard for intellectual excellence
that pervades all discussions and decisions about faculty, students, curricu-
 lum, and research direction. In the face of strong pressures to attend to a
variety of other concerns, each institution needs a unit that is always centered
on academic issues, keeps the campus focused on its primary goal of excel-
 lence, and lays out a vision of how to achieve it.

PROVIDE QUALITY CONTROL FOR ALL
ASPECTS OF GRADUATE EDUCATION

The graduate school establishes, through the faculty, a set of policies that
define good practice in all graduate programs, high quality in curriculum,
excellence in student selection, and rigor in faculty appointments. Although
it is necessary and expected that each academic program will have its own
standards for excellence (curricular requirements, admission standards, etc.),
the graduate school's role is both to provide a mechanism whereby the fac-
ulty of the institution defines the minimum standards acceptable for
postbaccalaureate work and to ensure that both the campuswide and program-specific standards articulated and approved by the faculty are being observed.

**MAINTAIN EQUITABLE STANDARDS ACROSS ALL ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES**

Because the name of the institution is on every graduate degree awarded, its reputation is also at stake in the awarding of that degree. By establishing minimum admission, credit-hour, grade point, and completion requirements, the graduate school ensures that there is some degree of equity in the standards for all master's and doctoral degrees. For the same reason, as the number of graduate certificate programs continues to increase nationwide, the graduate school must have a set of minimum standards in place that applies specifically to those programs. Thus, regardless of discipline, the institution is confident that all students meet generally accepted minimum standards for graduate education.

**DEFINE WHAT GRADUATE EDUCATION IS AND WHAT IT IS NOT**

Institutional administrators and curriculum committees are constantly faced with the question of how to define graduate education. One of the roles of the graduate school is to define what work may lead to a graduate degree at that institution and what may not. Among the tasks involved are clarifying the difference between credit-bearing graduate education and continuing or extended education, which may be noncredit or may not be applicable to a graduate degree; clarifying the difference between graduate and undergraduate education, especially in those senior-level courses that are often used for either; making a distinction between academic, research-oriented course work and course work intended to train individuals for a specific profession; assessing transfer credit for graduate courses taken at other institutions; and defining what course work is required as an integral part of an academic program and what may be required for licensure or certification purposes. The expansion and rising quality of very specialized postbaccalaureate education—including executive education and certificate programs—also must factor into this process. One type of course work is not necessarily superior to another, but courses may be designed for different purposes and set at different levels and should be acknowledged as such.
BRING AN INSTITUTION-WIDE PERSPECTIVE TO ALL POSTBACCALAUREATE ENDEAVORS

Because the graduate dean does not usually have administrative responsibility for any single department or school (other than the graduate school), he/she is in a unique position to represent the interests of the institution as a whole and to view graduate programs from an institution-wide perspective. As such, the graduate dean can serve as the university’s single best broker for overall issues of academic quality and the combined best interests of the intellectual community. Issues of graduate education and leading-edge scholarship cross departmental and school boundaries. It is the graduate dean who articulates the idea of a university as something more than a collection of unrelated departments and schools: as an organic, interdependent whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. In articulating this vision, the graduate dean makes a vital contribution to the work of the academic vice president, the president, and the entire leadership team.

PROVIDE AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE

By their very nature, academic disciplines tend toward specialization and isolation, and yet many of the breakthroughs in the generation of new knowledge occur at the interface between disciplines. As disciplines continue to separate themselves through language barriers, physical isolation, dependence on external funding, and the natural evolution of knowledge, the graduate school becomes increasingly important as a place to bring together faculty from diverse, individual disciplines and to develop new programs for interdisciplinary research and education.

ENHANCE THE INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS AMONG BOTH GRADUATE STUDENTS AND FACULTY

A related role of the graduate school is to promote intellectual communication among and between graduate students and faculty on a range of topics—certainly within each department’s academic discipline but in unfamiliar areas as well. All too often today’s community of scholars consists of individuals throughout the world working on a particular, very narrow research problem, rather than colleagues across campus or down the hall. All academics can benefit from being drawn out of their individual disciplines to a broader base of knowledge and from having their intellectual curiosity heightened by
opportunities to exchange ideas with or hear about research by colleagues in other fields. In this sense, the graduate school has a broad responsibility for the general education of the faculty and graduate students.

**SERVE AS AN ADVOCATE FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION**

Research and graduate education are inextricably linked in most settings because graduate students contribute significantly to the original research of the faculty, and that same research molds and defines the content of graduate course work. The graduate school furthers research interests, but it also serves as an advocate for graduate education if a conflict arises between it and organizational pressures for research productivity and funding.

Externally sponsored research is necessarily responsive to its own priorities and interests and the priorities of its funding agencies. In some cases, this means it is less directed toward supporting graduate education than toward the efficient production of research results. Specialized research centers, labs, and institutes are often established as separate from or with tenuous ties to academic departments or programs, and graduate students can be employed in those centers and institutes to complete specific research projects—often on extremely narrow topics that may not be closely related to the students’ own academic interests. Students may face the damaging possibility of being treated as technicians in such settings, with little thought given to their future employability and their needs as learners and independent researchers. Similarly, graduate students serve a key service role in undergraduate teaching—one that puts them at risk of being overburdened with teaching work or with repetitive, tedious teaching assignments.

The graduate school must serve as an advocate for the intellectual development of the graduate student as a student, promoting the involvement of graduate students and faculty intellectually and ensuring that faculty are serving their appropriate role as intellectual and professional mentors, not just employers. It must reinforce the importance of having sponsored research projects that contribute to the student’s academic program, rather than detract from it.

**EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF ADEQUATELY TRAINING FUTURE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS**

In their drive to expand and improve research activities, universities can lose sight of the fact that they produce nearly all of the nation’s college and uni-
versity teachers. At the same time that it supports research, the graduate school keeps the university focused on the need to produce high-quality teachers as an integral part of its mission. It advocates and supports programs to train graduate students as teaching assistants and instructors and works to provide students with teaching experiences appropriate to their future careers. Through specialized programs to prepare future faculty, the graduate school strives to create an environment in which graduate student teaching is valued and rewarded and future faculty members leave the institution well prepared for teaching.

DEVELOP WAYS FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND ENHANCE UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

The graduate school shares responsibility for graduate teaching assistants with the academic units and works with those units in training students to teach or assist in undergraduate courses. Also, by creating links between the graduate and undergraduate programs in academic departments, the graduate school attempts to ensure that the results of graduate student and faculty research find their way into the undergraduate curriculum. Because graduate assistants frequently have primary responsibility for some areas of undergraduate instruction, the graduate school promotes undergraduate teaching opportunities for graduate students that complement their research and course work. The graduate school also fosters healthy interaction between faculty who teach in graduate and in undergraduate programs, if they are not the same.

SUPPORT GRADUATE STUDENT SERVICES

In order to succeed at their academic and intellectual goals, graduate students must have support in the nonacademic aspects of their lives. While the primary responsibility for student services may rest with other offices, the graduate school plays a critical role in monitoring these services and ensuring that student support offices are responsive to the needs of graduate students. This is especially important in a system driven primarily by undergraduate interests and definitions. Areas of greatest concern are financial aid, housing, health insurance and health care, counseling, childcare, international student services, and student governance. The graduate school must also work with university career development programs and faculty to promote and heighten students’ awareness of nonacademic job opportunities for recipients of graduate degrees.
In settings where graduate students on assistantships are unionized, the graduate dean must advocate for students in terms of pay and benefits, while at the same time guarding the institution’s autonomy in setting policies and procedures for graduate education in aspects unrelated to its role as employer of graduate assistants. The dual roles preclude the graduate dean from being involved directly in the bargaining process, since the adversarial nature of the process would likely compromise to some extent the role of the graduate dean as student advocate. It is often the responsibility of the graduate dean, however, to advise institutional officers charged with the responsibility of bargaining.

**SERVE AS AN ADVOCATE FOR ISSUES AND CONSTITUENCIES CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

A number of issues affect the atmosphere on every campus and so contribute to the nature of graduate education. Among them are:

1. Integrity in research and scholarship
2. Values and ethics in graduate education and scholarly work
3. Promotion of cultural diversity, inclusiveness, and intellectual collegiality

Problems associated with these areas can include:

1. Scientific fraud and misconduct
2. Plagiarism
3. Discrimination by or against graduate students and special needs of international students, students from underrepresented groups, disabled students, and nontraditional students and scholars

A completely different group of concerns has to do with distance graduate education, economic development and university-industry relationships, and fund-raising. In all of these areas the graduate school serves as an initiator of discussion or advocate for positions and relationships that will maintain and enhance the quality of the graduate enterprise.
STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF GRADUATE EDUCATION

Eight structural elements are critical to the success of graduate education at every university. The exact form that each of these elements takes may vary, but all of the eight should be in place in one way or another. Clearly, at institutions with a very small number of graduate programs, many of these elements may be combined in one office or overlap with existing academic units.

GOVERNING BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION THAT SUPPORT GRADUATE EDUCATION

The institution’s governing board and central administration must be committed to graduate education as a central mission, designed to interact symbiotically and substantively with the other institutional missions of undergraduate or professional instruction, scholarship and research, and public service.

BASIC FACULTY UNITS THAT SUPERVISE GRADUATE STUDY AND RECOMMEND DEGREES

The institution must identify specific academic units, usually associated with a field or discipline and populated by duly appointed faculty, to establish the requirements for each graduate program and recommend the awarding of all degrees. While the program may be wholly contained within a department or a school, it does not have to be. Programs may span departments and even schools, drawing from faculty across academic departments. In this case, that duly appointed faculty group may establish degree requirements and recommend degrees. Where programs are not coterminous with academic departments, clear policies must be established to ensure faculty commitment to (and engagement with) the students in the programs.
FACULTY COMMITTED TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH

There must be a sufficient number of regular, permanent faculty members in each program to administer the curriculum and to guide student research. They must be committed to graduate education, active in research, and dedicated to continuing scholarship and to the intellectual enhancement of their graduate programs and their students. In many institutions, the graduate school oversees whether or not all tenure-track faculty in degree-granting units are entitled to be on the graduate faculty (that is, to teach graduate courses and/or to serve in specified supervisory capacities on graduate student theses or dissertation research projects) and establishes parameters for the roles of adjunct or other non-tenure-track faculty.

CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION

Each university should have a single individual who is the chief academic officer for graduate education. The unique interests of graduate education are not best served when these responsibilities are distributed to individual academic units, for all of the reasons described in the foregoing section, “The Role of the Graduate School in the University.” Thus there is a need for one individual, unaffiliated with any other academic or budgetary unit, to attend to institution-wide graduate issues and to espouse high-quality graduate education throughout the institution. The title of this individual may vary greatly from institution to institution, but the title is less important than the scope of his or her responsibility and the recognition by the central administration and the campus community that he or she indeed has primary responsibility on campus for graduate affairs. In addition, this individual must have sufficient administrative support (staff, office space, computer access, operating funds, etc.) to discharge the roles outlined above. The amount of staff and administrative support will, of course, vary widely with the size and organization of the institution.

SEPARATE DEGREE-GRANTING GRADUATE UNIT

There should be a separate unit within the university that decides on or has veto power over admissions decisions, ensures that the policies set in place by the graduate faculty are being carried out, and has final degree-granting authority for all graduate degrees. This structure fosters equity in standards
across all graduate programs, helps to provide quality control, and stimulates boundary-spanning curriculum development at the graduate level. Typically this unit is called a graduate school or graduate college, but there is wide variation in the actual scope of its authority; it may be responsible only for degrees given in the arts and sciences and others for some or all professional degrees except law and medicine. Appendix C lists the ranges of possible responsibility.

**GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR IN EACH ACADEMIC UNIT**

Each academic department or program should have a faculty member who is the director or coordinator of graduate affairs for that program. This individual, with the assistance of the other graduate faculty in the department, is responsible for the administration of the graduate program(s) in the department or across departments—in the case of cross-departmental programs—and also serves as a liaison with the central graduate school. Such an individual often has responsibility for coordinating a variety of activities, such as academic advising of graduate students, admissions decisions, the allocation of fellowships and assistantships, and the appointment of faculty members to graduate student committees. The graduate program director communicates university-wide policies on graduate programs to the departmental faculty and communicates departmental decisions and recommendations to the graduate school. In some institutions, there is a high turnover rate in these positions. Therefore, it is important for graduate schools to provide opportunities for professional development, including regular information and feedback sessions, and informal seminars for those who fill this important administrative role in graduate education.

**THE GRADUATE COUNCIL**

Each institution should have a group of faculty members, active in graduate programs, who are elected or appointed to a graduate council that has legislative authority over academic matters pertaining to graduate degree programs (e.g., curriculum proposals, university-wide standards for academic conduct of graduate programs, admission of students, creation of new programs, overall policies and procedures for the effective administration of graduate degrees, etc.). The graduate council also can act as an adviser to the dean on administrative issues that pertain to graduate education, such as priorities for resource allocation. Faculty who serve on the council should reflect the range and diversity of disciplines offering graduate degrees, but it is important that
they understand that their responsibility is to represent the interests of graduate education as a whole, not of specific departments or programs.

**GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATION**

It is essential that graduate students be represented in the processes that establish and govern graduate degree programs. They may be elected or appointed directly to the graduate council, may serve on the council as representatives of a separate graduate student organization, or may be constituted as a separate advisory group to the graduate dean. At some universities such students are elected representatives of their academic departments. At others, they are members of a campuswide student organization or senate. Graduate students frequently bring to the table perspectives that differ from those of the faculty and are useful in evaluating the impact of specific graduate school policies on the institution as a whole, as well as the impact of those policies on particular graduate programs. Whatever form the representation of graduate students takes, there must be a mechanism to ensure that they have knowledge of and the ability to influence the programs and policies that govern their academic lives.
RELATIONSHIP TO RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION

Research and graduate education, particularly doctoral education, are fundamentally intertwined. They should be administered so as to support, not conflict with, each other. Graduate students contribute to faculty research through their questions and contributions in graduate seminars and in research settings, and in many fields they support research in very tangible ways as research assistants. In addition, they make their own original contributions to knowledge through their scholarly and research projects, culminating often in master’s theses, doctoral dissertations, and published articles or other original works. At the same time, the quality and content of graduate instruction is closely linked to the faculty’s current research; a good graduate seminar changes content regularly, as new discoveries are made or new modes of thought are introduced into the discipline.

The administration of sponsored research is a complicated and time-consuming activity, and large universities actively involved in research usually appoint individuals to deal with the technical aspects of this function. Whatever the scope of the research activity, some person(s) must discharge the following responsibilities:

- Facilitate efforts by faculty and administrators to attract external funds in support of research
- Serve as liaison with sponsors and governmental units overseeing research
- Develop institutional guidelines and policies for research and related activities, e.g., misconduct in research, conflict of interest, protection of human subjects, patent and intellectual property rights, and protection of graduate students and rights to publish research done in collaboration with the private sector
- Develop effective procedures for grant and contract management
• Comply with federal and other regulations affecting research

• Administer internal funds and, in some cases, cross-departmental programs (e.g., interdisciplinary centers) designed to promote research in the institution

There are two general modes for research administration at universities:

1. An official who is responsible for both research and graduate education. Titles often used are:
   • Dean of Graduate Studies and Research
   • Vice President (or Vice Chancellor) for Research and Graduate Studies
   • Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School

2. A senior official whose sole responsibility is research administration. Titles often used are:
   • Vice President or Vice Chancellor for Research
   • Vice Provost for Research
   • Director of Research

Arguments can be advanced to support either approach, and, in the end, local conditions and institutional prerogatives may be the determining factors. The central issue, regardless of administrative structure, is to ensure that the policies and procedures that govern the research activities of the university are directly responsive to the needs of the institution’s graduate programs. Combining these responsibilities allows for the integration of research and graduate affairs into one administrative unit, creating a greater ability to ensure that research activities of the university are well integrated into the academic spirit represented by graduate education. This model assumes that graduate education will be supported and enhanced by the institution’s research activities and that graduate students’ efforts in support of research will be well coordinated and integrated into their academic programs. Combining graduate education and research under one administrator also makes it easier to see that institutional research funds are used as incentives to encourage the strengthening of graduate programs.

In some cases, however, where the two responsibilities have been combined, the pressures of day-to-day research administration have required full-time attention by the administrator involved, resulting in little or no time available for graduate school matters. Indeed, given the magnitude of the combined responsibilities, there is a danger that one or the other will get
short shrift. A response to this problem, particularly in some large and complex institutions, has been to create two additional positions, one for graduate studies and one for research, both reporting to the chief graduate studies and research officer. This can be effective as long as the individuals involved are considered part of the administrative structure of the entire institution, rather than just the graduate school, and have authority commensurate with their responsibilities.

The other structure is one in which graduate education and research are each represented by typically parallel senior administrators. For this structure to succeed, there needs to be a system of regular, direct communication between the two individuals, so that the policies and procedures that govern the research activities of the university are directly responsive to the needs of the graduate programs. It also is particularly important that both individuals, because of their campuswide responsibilities, be represented on those committees and councils of the central administration that determine university policy.
A Compendium of Graduate School Activities

Graduate schools vary immensely in the specific activities with which they become involved, depending on institutional history, organizational responsibility, and the priorities of the current dean and central administrators. This section provides a list of many common activities of a graduate school or graduate studies office, with a brief description of how each activity is usually handled. While it is not necessary for graduate schools to be involved in or responsible for each of these activities, they are all areas that affect graduate education. Where it is not specifically responsible for an activity that affects graduate education, the graduate school should be involved in the development of policies governing that area. The graduate dean and graduate faculty need to have input into all decisions crucial to the success of graduate programs, regardless of where they are implemented.

The activities listed here are carried out by the graduate dean, the graduate faculty (meeting in committees or as a graduate council), graduate student representatives, and the professional and technical staff of the graduate school. Few of these activities can be carried out by one person or group of persons alone; they require a collaborative effort of faculty, students, and administrators. In determining who takes responsibility for what, the following guidelines for good practice should be noted:

1. The graduate faculty should establish all academic policies governing graduate education, including requirements for students, curriculum, and faculty selection, and should review and comment on the allocation of resources.

2. Graduate students should have the opportunity to comment on all academic policies affecting their graduate programs, including admissions, completion requirements, and program content.
3. The graduate dean should have final authority and responsibility for the quality and well-being of all graduate programs at the institution, as defined by the scope of his or her duties. He or she should endorse all policies pertaining to those programs and have the resources to implement them.

4. The professional and technical staff of the graduate school, in conjunction with the graduate dean, should implement all policies governing graduate education or work with the administrative office responsible for implementing them.

PROGRAM CONTENT

Review of new and revised programs
The graduate school should be responsible for the review and approval (or recommendation for approval) of all new and revised graduate certificate and degree-granting programs. This includes programs offered off campus or in nontraditional formats or settings, which are playing increasingly important roles in graduate education. This may also involve the review of all graduate courses and programs for nondegree candidates at the postbaccalaureate level. Reviews should be conducted by the graduate council or by another representative faculty body. If curriculum reviews are the responsibility of a central university committee not under the direct purview of the graduate school, then the graduate faculty and the graduate dean should be well represented on that committee.

Development of new graduate programs
The development of new graduate courses and programs is primarily the responsibility of the faculty of each academic unit. However, the graduate school should actively encourage new ideas and interdisciplinary cooperative ventures by faculty, providing assistance in proposal development and reviewing new program ideas early on for content and appropriateness to the graduate mission of the institution. A significant part of the graduate dean’s responsibility should be to inspire new intellectual pursuits, not simply to respond to faculty initiatives.

Review of existing graduate programs and departments
Periodic review—preferably external—of existing graduate departments and programs is an important method of quality control. Thus every institution should have a process in place for such review. In many institutions, academic program review is handled in the provost’s or academic vice president’s
office, and entire departments (or similar units), including graduate and undergraduate programs, are reviewed at the same time. There is a definite gain in efficiency and ease for the department in having a single, less frequent review instead of separate reviews for its graduate and undergraduate programs. There is also considerable logic to this approach, since in almost all academic departments, graduate and undergraduate matters interrelate, and faculty, facilities, staff, and other resources are almost always shared.

In addition to periodic program reviews, all institutions have regional accreditation reviews and some programs have specialized accreditation reviews. Program and accreditation reviews are sometimes timed to occur simultaneously, and often the information collected is tailored to serve both purposes.

In other institutions, graduate programs are reviewed separately. This approach has the advantage of allowing more time and attention for the graduate program. Also, it guarantees a review by faculty who are interested in and specifically qualified to examine the graduate program and research emphasis of the enterprise. Otherwise, the graduate portion of a department's activities can easily be overshadowed by the undergraduate program, which is usually larger, and the careful attention to the subtler and more subjective methods needed to assess quality in graduate seminars, laboratories, theses, and dissertations can often be lost. Where graduate programs are reviewed separately, those reviews should be conducted under the purview of the graduate council or similar faculty body.

Whether they are reviewed separately or not, information collected on graduate programs, including faculty research, should be considered by faculty bodies with strong representation from the graduate school. The graduate school also should be involved in each review and in implementing any final recommendations.

At some institutions, the graduate school itself is the object of external review. The issues addressed in such a review are necessarily more focused on process and service to students, faculty, and programs than on the quality of any particular graduate program. For example, one element of graduate school review may be the extent to which partnerships have been established with colleges and with critical administrative offices (provost/academic vice president, financial aid, admissions, career services, etc.) to advance and promote quality graduate education. The role of the graduate school in promoting and assessing quality, however, is a common element of graduate school review. Without adequate resources or a viable role in allocating institutional resources to colleges, departments, and graduate programs, the ability of the graduate school to promote and effect beneficial changes in graduate education are severely limited.
Setting academic policies that govern graduate study

All academic policies governing graduate study should be established by the graduate school, through the graduate council or other representative faculty body. These include policies on admissions standards, minimum course requirements, definition of good academic standing, content and format of master's theses and doctoral dissertations, nature and format of degree-specific examinations, minimum qualifications of graduate faculty, transfer credit, leaves of absence, maximum length of time to degree completion, minimum registration requirements, and many others. Such policies must be consistent with university-wide policies on degree programs and students but are usually more restrictive than those governing undergraduates. They set minimum standards to be applied to all master's and doctoral degrees, regardless of discipline, with the understanding that individual academic departments will and should set more stringent standards in certain cases. Because graduate students are directly affected by all of these policies, they should have an opportunity to comment on and thus influence their final content.

STUDENTS

Admissions—Centralized vs. decentralized

Historically, applications to graduate schools were paper-based. Currently, the Web is becoming a primary medium for applications: many universities accept electronic applications, some exclusively. Whether Web- or paper-based, some unit must be designated to receive the initial application. In many institutions, the entire admissions process takes place in the graduate school, including the processing of all application materials and maintenance of all admissions files. However, the program does the evaluation and makes the recommendation for admission or denial. The major role of the graduate school office is to monitor decisions, ensure that appropriate admissions processes are being used at the department or program level, and maintain the minimal standards established by the graduate faculty. In some institutions, applications are processed by a central or graduate school admissions office and decisions recorded there, though the department makes the actual decision. In still other institutions, graduate admissions are administered entirely by the academic department, including the processing of applications, individual admissions decisions, and notification to prospective students.

Regardless of the process followed, the primary decision to admit or deny admission of a student to a graduate program is the responsibility of the faculty of the relevant academic program or department, assuming that minimum standards established by the graduate school have been met. The key to the quality of any institution's graduate student population is its admission
policies. Although a careful process with high standards for matching the student to the program does not guarantee success in graduate school, a haphazard process with little initial screening almost inevitably guarantees a high rate of attrition and failure. In cases where the graduate school is not required to formally approve each admission action, it should see that standards are being adhered to, either through the review of student files, periodic departmental review, or other such mechanisms. In addition, the decision to admit should be supported by the central admissions office, if any, and/or that of the graduate school in order to maintain minimum university-wide criteria for graduate admission.

**Recruitment**

Recruitment of new graduate students (see CGS publication, *Graduate School and You, 2003*) is primarily the responsibility of each graduate department or program. Unlike most undergraduate students, who choose the institution as a whole, graduate students usually choose the specific academic program in which they want to study and, in some cases, the specific professor with whom they want to work. Individual faculty members will always remain the single best recruiters of graduate students. The graduate school can and should support their efforts by offering funds for faculty to add recruitment onto their professional travel, assisting with the development of Web pages and the publication of brochures describing the program and its faculty, and providing publications that describe the institution in general (location, financial aid, research facilities, application procedures) and speak to its commitment to graduate education. When this is not done by the graduate school directly, it should be done by the general admissions and recruitment office or by the individual academic departments and schools or both. But, in the latter case, the graduate school should still contribute to Web site development and to the content of descriptive and/or promotional publications.

In the last decade, the emergence and increased accessibility of the Internet has dramatically changed the scope of graduate student recruitment, making graduate school Web pages an essential part of the process. Frequently, in our technology-driven age, the Web is the prospective student’s first resource for information about graduate programs—and an enormously influential one. This is particularly true for international students, who frequently don’t have access to the relevant written material produced by graduate schools beyond their home countries. To be effective tools for recruitment, Web sites of graduate departments and programs must be updated regularly, and graduate school Web pages should include such basic information as an online version of the graduate catalog, the names and research interests of faculty, a list of fields of study and degrees offered, and an online application that can
be submitted online or printed, filled out, and mailed in by the prospective student. In some instances, the graduate school has taken responsibility to provide prospective applicants with information that will permit them to make as informed a choice as possible with respect to graduate programs—or even whether or not graduate study is what the student really wants. Such information can include time to degree, percentage of matriculants seeking a graduate degree who actually attain that degree, and types of employment found by degree recipients from specific departments at the university. In this new era for graduate recruitment, institutions have the challenge of determining how to fuse the technology of the Internet with the "human touch," in ways that will best serve both students and faculty.

The graduate school in many institutions also represents all the graduate programs at campuswide professional and graduate school recruitment days or national information/recruitment forums. In these cases, it is impossible for each academic department to be represented, and students often need information about a wide range of disciplines. While a representative of the graduate school often cannot discuss those important specifics about a program that the student needs to make a final decision, enough general information about the program can be provided to interest the student in the university and direct him or her to the right person in the department. A follow-up by telephone or e-mail with the interested student often turns an inquiry into an application. As always, personal contact reaps the best harvest.

The graduate school has a critical responsibility to take the leadership to achieve diversity in graduate programs. This often calls for implementing targeted recruitment programs (see CGS publications, The Inclusiveness Series, 2003). Individual departments have this responsibility as well but all too often focus solely on traditional selection criteria (such as test scores and undergraduate grade point averages) and may not have the information or expertise to find and attract underrepresented students. Many graduate schools have an individual specifically responsible for minority recruitment who attends national recruitment days, visits predominantly and historically minority institutions, and develops contacts with faculty at high schools, junior colleges, and four-year schools in the region and who can interest underrepresented students in graduate education. Such a person can also keep abreast of successful recruitment strategies at other institutions and ensure that the institution has access to national and regional databases of promising minority students and participate in minority student locator services. In this regard, outreach to programs such as MARC (Minority Access to Research Careers) and McNair—nationally known for producing strong candidates for graduate study—is essential. University participation in Summer Research Opportunity programs can be another critical component in the recruitment
of historically underrepresented students, and the graduate school should take a leadership role in providing information about graduate education and services of special interest to minorities. As with all recruitment activities, it is essential to involve faculty, especially minority faculty, in these projects.

**Fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid**

It is impossible to support and foster graduate education without taking an active role in identifying, securing, and distributing funds for graduate student fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid (see CGS publication, *Graduate School and You*, 2003). Fellowships may be institutionally specific or may be portable, moving with the student. Graduate deans are increasingly engaged in private fundraising for graduate fellowships as a key component of university advancement efforts. They also play a role in informing students about portable fellowships for which they might be eligible. Often graduate schools also take leadership in developing proposals for nationally competitive traineeship programs, such as the GAANN program (DOE), the IGERT program (NSF), or NIH training grants. Graduate schools typically use the leverage that fellowships and traineeships provide to improve the quality of graduate programs. Thus, to the extent possible, these programs should be administered, at least in part, through the graduate school.

In addition to fellowship funds, graduate assistantships, whether for teaching or research, constitute an important form of graduate student financial aid. This is discussed in the section on teaching and research assistants.

Other forms of financial aid for graduate students (federal and state loans, work-study funds, institutional grants, etc.) are often administered through a central financial aid office, in conjunction with or parallel to undergraduate aid programs. In such cases, the graduate school should nevertheless take an active role in determining policies about how financial aid for graduate students will be distributed. Special attention should be given to the policies controlling the division of aid funds between graduate and undergraduate students. The graduate school should also be involved in defining graduate student eligibility for aid, based on credit-hour enrollment and satisfactory academic progress, and in establishing average student budgets used by the institution to distribute aid and to certify eligibility of international students.

**Teaching and research assistants**

Most institutions with large undergraduate programs employ graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and many have research assistants (RAs). These individuals perform invaluable services in teaching undergraduate classes and
laboratories and in assisting faculty in research. However, their first priority is to be graduate students and, as such, their assistantship awards must be considered primarily as a form of financial aid to help them complete graduate school, rather than as simple employment.

In some universities, individual departments hold the budget for and appoint all TAs and RAs; in others, the graduate school retains this authority and allocates awards only partly on the basis of instructional or research support needs, also taking into account the quality of the students and of the graduate program in that department. In either case, TA/RA and fellowship budgets should be coordinated to provide an appropriate stipend without requiring excessive service. Generally, it is appropriate to establish minimum stipends. These amounts can be determined by the graduate school in conjunction with the graduate council. In some institutions, stipend levels are covered in a union contract.

In many instances, the graduate school does not appoint individual graduate assistants but sets minimum academic and financial guidelines for such appointments and may review individual awards against these guidelines. Whether or not it appoints graduate TAs and RAs directly, the graduate school should take an active role in establishing policies that govern them, including stipend levels or ranges, average work loads, minimum academic qualifications, appointment and renewal procedures, and a mechanism for resolving grievances. In addition, the graduate school should serve as an advocate for teaching or research assistants, ensuring that they are treated fairly and that their assistantship duties do not interfere unduly with their academic studies but rather contribute to them.

The graduate school may also be responsible for providing training in classroom instruction for teaching assistants, especially international teaching assistants. This may involve operation of a central TA training program and special training sessions for international TAs, administering English language tests to non-native English speaking TAs, and providing other special orientation and counseling services, either alone or in conjunction with an instructional development center. Alternatively, it may involve ensuring that individual academic schools or departments conduct such programs and simply providing central resources for them to use. The graduate school cannot leave the training and support of teaching assistants to chance, for graduate students’ experiences as TAs may directly affect their success, both as students and as future faculty members. Recognizing this fact, many graduate schools offer comprehensive programs to prepare future faculty. These programs often provide sequenced teaching experiences, faculty mentoring by master teachers, exposure to a variety of teaching environments, and socialization to the broad range of faculty roles and responsibilities.
The nature and extent of work that research assistants perform should be determined by each student’s faculty adviser or the director of the research project, with the expectation that the student’s research efforts will contribute in a tangible way to his or her academic program. The graduate school serves an important role in ensuring that research assistants are working on projects that contribute to their intellectual growth and degree goals, that they are not being taken advantage of as “inexpensive pairs of hands for faculty,” and that they progress through their programs at a reasonable rate.

**Monitoring student academic progress**

The faculty members in each academic department bear final responsibility for monitoring the progress of graduate students through their academic programs. The graduate school can and should supplement that effort, however, through policies that set guidelines for minimum enrollment or registration requirements, minimum GPA, leaves of absence, maximum time to degree completion, and the examinations and reviews that occur along the way.

In many institutions, the graduate school monitors student academic progress by keeping records on individual students, notifying departments and/or the students themselves when a time limit has been exceeded or one or more milestones have (or have not) been passed successfully. (For students receiving federal loans—Stafford or Perkins—or Federal Work-Study funds, satisfactory academic progress is a federal requirement.) The graduate school should take a very active role in this process to be certain that students know where they stand relative to the completion of degree programs. In most institutions, the graduate school, as the college of record, is responsible for notifying students of official actions relating successes or failures, and it is important that this be done clearly and expeditiously. The graduate school also serves as an information source for academic departments, to let them know how individual students are progressing. It has a responsibility through its graduate council to set policies on student academic progress, to educate graduate advisers as to what those policies are, to resolve any disputes about the policies, and to counsel students who need help in understanding or fulfilling the regulations. The graduate school also is responsible for establishing rules on probationary status, academic dismissal, and leaves of absence.

**Appointment and approval of faculty committees**

Faculty committees that guide students through graduate programs, examine them on their knowledge of the field, and assess the quality of their theses and dissertations are critical to good graduate education. The particular roles of faculty committees are somewhat discipline-specific. Thus such commit-
tees should be composed of the faculty who are best able to judge the student’s work.

Faculty committees in some institutions are appointed by the academic department or program, with the concurrence of the graduate school. In many institutions, the graduate dean appoints the entire committee, upon recommendation from the department or program. Most institutions have at least one member of master’s and doctoral committees who is outside the student’s academic department or program in order to ensure that the quality of the work is consistent with the institution-wide standards for that degree and that the process is a fair and reasonable one. In the case of doctoral dissertations, a faculty member from outside the university may be appointed to the committee or asked to review the final product to provide unique expertise or simply an external assessment.

Working with academic departments, the graduate council should develop guidelines on the makeup of the committees, including the mix between tenured and nontenured faculty, the proportion of faculty from inside the department, and the conditions under which committee membership may change. The council should also establish criteria for faculty eligibility to serve on graduate student committees.

**Maintaining academic records and degree verification**

Some graduate schools maintain all student academic records, including grades and examination results, and provide final verification that a student has completed all requirements for his or her degree. This requires extremely careful record-keeping and extensive knowledge of degree programs and requirements. Many other universities rely on a central registrar’s office to perform these functions, but the graduate school is still involved in verifying final degree completion or the completion of a portion of the student’s degree requirements, e.g., comprehensive examinations, language requirements, and dissertation. When the majority of technical record keeping and verification is done centrally, the graduate school still has an important role to play in ensuring that the registrar’s office understands graduate degree programs and has the trained staff and computer resources to provide accurate information and efficient service to graduate students. These activities should not be left to chance.

**Thesis and dissertation approval**

Many graduate schools have as a part of their office one or more staff members who review and approve the format of theses and dissertations for publication, including those in electronic or multimedia formats.
The publication or thesis office sees that all such final documents are in a consistent style and format, suitable for publication, binding, microfilming, and permanent storage in the institution’s library or a national storage facility. It may also deal with requests by graduate students to have their documents copyrighted and other copyright issues. Many graduate schools also offer workshops for students on topics of thesis style, formatting, and preparing theses for publication. At institutions where these functions are performed by an office outside the graduate school, the graduate dean should still be involved in setting policies governing the format of theses and dissertations and in adjudicating disputes between students and the publications office about such matters.

An increasing number of doctoral candidates are presenting either collaborative or already published materials as part of their final dissertations. The graduate school should establish clear policies on such materials so that graduate students and faculty can maintain consistent expectations across academic disciplines.

**Student support services and retention programs**

In addition to monitoring the quality and academic progress of graduate students, the graduate school plays a critical role in providing the support services necessary to make academic progress possible. This includes counseling students about a range of personal, financial, and academic matters, providing practical and up-to-date information about how to work through the institution’s bureaucracy, and disseminating clear information on degree requirements and graduate school policies and procedures. It also involves student development and enrichment activities such as orientation; sessions on career opportunities, applying for jobs, and using placement services; workshops on getting through the thesis or dissertation; and help in resolving financial aid problems. Many graduate schools offer a comprehensive professional development series, involving workshops on communication, interview preparation, responsible conduct of research, proposal preparation, and other topics.

The graduate school, in its role as advocate, should be the university unit that actively pursues fair and responsible treatment of graduate students in all offices and departments of the university. Because of the significant investment of time and money represented by each admitted graduate student, the university has an obligation to itself and the student to make every effort to keep the student enrolled, assuming he or she is performing satisfactorily. The graduate school should initiate or help departments design strategies for retention of graduate students, particularly (but not exclusively) those from minority and underrepresented groups. These may include special faculty mentoring programs, counselors identified specifically to counsel and
track certain students, ombudspersons and student advocates to help students resolve individual problems, seminars or social events where graduate students have a chance to relate to their peers in other disciplines and feel less isolated, and working closely with faculty members to identify and resolve potential academic problems before they become crises. Every academic program has a primary responsibility for support and retention of its graduate students, but the graduate school can offer individual staff and campuswide programs to make that support more tangible.

Special efforts need to be made to see that underrepresented students and women receive the information and support they need to complete their programs. Specific faculty members who take on the responsibility of monitoring these students, and staff members assigned to follow their progress, can be very helpful in ensuring that unnecessary obstacles are removed from these students’ academic paths. Also, seminar series or forums bringing together underrepresented graduate students in related disciplines, e.g., women in science and engineering, can do a great deal to keep these students active and motivated to complete their programs.

Liaison with student organizations
Graduate student organizations take many shapes and forms on university campuses. In some cases, graduate students are represented formally in the governance system only through representation on a student senate dominated by undergraduates. In other cases, they have their own official association. There may be a graduate school student advisory committee, formal or informal, and there are usually graduate student organizations in most of the large academic departments. However, in some institutions, no formal student organizations exist.

The graduate dean should develop a regular means of communication with graduate students in order to obtain reactions to proposed new policies and regulations and generally to stay attuned to student issues and concerns. Such discussions often serve as an early warning sign of potential problems and keep the dean in touch with the day-to-day life of graduate students. This communication may be accomplished through regular meetings with existing student organizations or informal gatherings of student leaders or selected representatives from various departments. Both are desirable; the formal liaison is critical, but the informal discussions often yield much richer information and develop greater mutual confidence.

Liaison with administrative offices
Graduate students interact with nearly every administrative office on campus, including admissions, financial aid, human resources, the bursar, the
Student grievance procedures
The graduate school should have in place clear policies and procedures for graduate student grievances and appeals, including grievances against a faculty member or other university employee or against a fellow student. Other policies should be in place that address grievances made by undergraduates against graduate students in their role as teaching assistants. These procedures should govern behavioral violations of an agreed-upon code of personal and professional conduct as well as complaints of discrimination or unfair treatment. If these procedures are developed in a student affairs or other office outside of the graduate school, they should be reviewed by graduate school representatives as well to ensure that the unique needs and circumstances of graduate students (e.g., their frequent role as teaching or research assistants) are being addressed.

Review of academic progress
Similarly, policies and procedures for periodic review of academic progress should be clearly delineated, both at the departmental and graduate school levels. The graduate faculty should make all decisions on the quality of a graduate student's work; however, it is the responsibility of the graduate school to see that the criteria used for evaluation are clear, appropriate, and made known to all students in advance and that the process of review is a fair and equitable one, based solely on the student's academic and professional performance.

Further, the graduate school should put in place a mechanism for the student to appeal academic decisions, should he or she believe the decision was made on an inappropriate basis or the process was unfair. It is the responsibility of the graduate school to ensure that both the student and the academic department are protected from unfair treatment, harassment, or discrimination, so that the necessary academic decisions can be made strictly on their merits.
Academic dishonesty or plagiarism
The graduate school should establish policies and procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty and plagiarism. In some cases, these will be developed in conjunction with the research office or the office of academic affairs. Institutional policies governing these matters often need to be adapted to accommodate the special circumstances of graduate students and the unique collaborative relationship they have with their faculty advisers and fellow graduate students, especially on shared research projects. It is in such cases, increasingly, that intellectual property disputes can arise between students and faculty. This is but one area that illustrates the need for the graduate school to take a proactive role in providing training in professional ethics and responsible conduct of research.

In all cases where disputes are involved, it is essential that policies and procedures developed by the graduate school ensure due process to all concerned.

FACULTY

Appointment and review of graduate faculty
Since graduate programs are only as good as the faculty who offer them, appointment of the graduate faculty is crucial to the quality of the school. The graduate faculty includes those eligible to teach graduate courses, direct graduate student research, design the graduate curriculum, and serve on master’s and doctoral student committees. In some universities, the graduate faculty is defined as all faculty members who hold certain academic ranks, e.g., all tenure-track faculty with the rank of assistant professor or higher. In these cases, the regular faculty appointment and promotion process doubles as the appointment process for the graduate faculty, and the graduate school accepts whatever faculty the academic unit has duly appointed.

In other institutions, the graduate faculty is a subset of the entire tenure-track faculty, selected through a special review process conducted by the graduate school. In this system, faculty members must apply, usually through their departments, for membership in the graduate faculty. If accepted, they are often reviewed periodically for continued eligibility, which usually involves remaining active in the graduate program as a teacher and adviser of students and demonstrating continued involvement in scholarship and research. The graduate council or a similar faculty advisory body is usually charged with this review. Faculty members who are not tenure-track but who have special expertise to offer graduate students, e.g., research, clinical, or adjunct faculty, may be appointed as members of the graduate faculty as well, and
may, in some cases, serve as co-directors of graduate student committees, along with a regular faculty member.

The advantage of identifying a separate graduate faculty is that it provides a specific review process aimed at ensuring that only well-qualified, active faculty members are involved in graduate programs. This is particularly important in institutions where some faculty, particularly in professional schools, may not be trained for involvement in graduate programs. A major drawback is that the process can be an extremely political one and runs the risk of creating two classes of faculty members. Many institutions utilize a periodic review or reapplication process to provide an incentive for faculty to stay current in their fields and active in research and to assure graduate students that the faculty have been judged by peers to be productive scholars capable of involvement in graduate programs.

The advantage of utilizing an established faculty appointment process, of course, is that there is only one review. This system avoids the need to conduct two parallel appointment and review processes and avoids the political and personal conflicts of a special selection. It presumes that the criteria for appointment to the tenure-track faculty of the institution are the same as those for appointment to the graduate faculty. It does not, of course, allow for any later review process, outside of the normal promotion and tenure process, especially for faculty who are no longer actively engaged in scholarship or research.

A special issue that arises in both systems is how to advantageously utilize qualified professionals outside the institution (i.e., from other universities, national laboratories, or business, government and nonprofit agencies or organizations) in graduate education. Such individuals may add a valuable perspective that regular faculty cannot provide. They may provide unique knowledge and experience through courses that they may teach or to a graduate research project and they can serve important networking roles for both faculty and students. The common procedure for welcoming the enrichment that these professionals bring to graduate education is for the graduate school to appoint them to term appointments as graduate faculty (a semester or a year to teach courses; up to three years or more to serve on a thesis/research committee), with renewal appointments possible.

Whatever system the institution chooses, the graduate school should be involved in establishing criteria for the qualifications of those faculty who will be teaching and directing research in graduate programs. Without this involvement, it is impossible to give assurances about the quality of the university's programs of graduate education.
Participation in faculty appointment and promotion decisions

Given the need to review and/or establish policies for the graduate faculty, the graduate dean should have direct involvement in the institution’s decision-making process for faculty appointment, promotion, and tenure. This typically involves interviewing candidates for tenured faculty positions or chairs, reviewing individual promotion and tenure dossiers, and serving on a campuswide committee charged with making the promotion and tenure decision or advising the chief academic officer on the final decision. The graduate dean has a unique role to play as an advocate for scholarly excellence: because of his or her broad knowledge of graduate education and unique information about the problems and potential of each academic department, he or she has much of value to contribute to these deliberations. Decisions about faculty appointments and promotion are not just decisions about individuals but about the future direction of academic programs, and the graduate dean—an individual with an institution-wide perspective—should be integral to that planning process.

Faculty development

Graduate schools have a duty to encourage faculty to explore new scholarly directions and develop the research potential of the institution in a way that can serve the needs of graduate education. New interdisciplinary educational initiatives, for example, often begin in the graduate school, since the best students demand training at the frontiers of scholarship in their areas of interest. Accordingly, many graduate deans are involved in faculty development programs whose purposes include such encouragement of faculty, research development, or the identification of new opportunities for scholarship and professional activity. These programs often include workshops and seminars to learn about grant writing and research funding, sessions to develop new curricula, or release time to expand knowledge and renew scholarship. The graduate dean is involved in these efforts because they are central to maintaining high-quality graduate programs and because he or she typically has access to funds or development opportunities not accessible to individual departments. When such programs are administered by a separate faculty development office or the academic vice president’s office, the graduate dean should still participate in the programs.

Another aspect of faculty development that is unequivocally the responsibility of the graduate school is educating new and continuing faculty about the graduate education mission of the institution and the policies and procedures that serve to further that mission. Faculty members come to an institution with a set of policies in mind and an approach to graduate education that was the one in place at their previous teaching institution or at the institution
where they were graduate students themselves. The graduate school should provide orientation sufficient to see that new faculty understand local practices and policies, that they are giving correct information to their graduate students, and that they know what sources of assistance and support are available to them. Graduate schools also need to provide sessions to orient new directors of graduate studies to established policies and procedures, as well as to permit sharing of best practices (in recruiting, mentoring, etc.) among all directors of graduate studies.

Oversight of postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars
Many institutions have research personnel on campus who are neither faculty, students, nor staff; some of these individuals are postdoctoral fellows on federal or private grants or visiting scholars from other countries. The number of fields in which postdoctoral study is both available and expected is increasing rapidly, and the length of the typical postdoctoral experience has increased dramatically in the past decade. Consequently, graduate schools are increasingly responsible for recommending institutional policy for postdoctoral appointments and for providing some oversight to postdoctoral fellows. Unless there is a specific office responsible for these individuals, the graduate school should set institutional policy and practice for their appointment and relationship to the university. In effect, the graduate school often serves as the administrative home for individuals who enrich the diversity and quality of research and scholarship in the university.

The most common issues to be resolved for postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars are qualifications and procedures for appointment; employee and tax status; term of appointment; access to libraries, computer time, laboratories, and other university resources; faculty sponsorship; and access to health insurance and other benefits. There is a growing movement in all fields for a regularization of postdoctoral status across institutions. Clearly, these issues must be resolved in cooperation with many other offices on campus.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Data collection and dissemination
Acquiring and maintaining good information on graduate students and graduate programs is essential for any institution. The graduate school is often the repository of basic demographic and academic data on all graduate students and provides this information to graduate programs, departments, and other university offices. Such information includes kinds and numbers of degrees awarded, program requirements, numbers and characteristics of students en-
rolled, time to completion of degree, and attrition rates. In addition to allowing the graduate school to make informed decisions on academic investment policies and trends, these data are often developed into annual graduate school reports, which can be extremely valuable to the faculty and administrators in making program decisions and setting priorities for the future, as well as in determining the effectiveness of current academic policies and permitting comparisons between an institution’s graduate programs (showing trends over time). These annual reports can be used in reviews of individual academic programs or larger accreditation reviews and can serve as evidence of the need for additional financial support for critical programs. Decisions as to the size of and support for individual graduate programs, as well as faculty appointment decisions, should be made, at least in part, on the basis of rational criteria that are based on demographic and academic data that are collected and disseminated by the graduate school. Such criteria might include:

- Number and quality of applicants
- Number and quality characteristics of students enrolled
- Ability to graduate the students in high proportion and in a timely fashion
- Ability to place graduates in jobs that make suitable use of their graduate training
- Number of faculty able to teach and direct research in fields that are attractive to applicants
- Ability to attract a diverse student population
- Ability of a department to leverage institutional funds to attract external support for its graduate students

The graduate school should be a repository of data that are provided as part of the process of academic review of departments and programs and for management of graduate resources. Good data on graduate students and graduate programs are essential to effective oversight of the graduate enterprise on campus. Decisions about curriculum changes, future academic planning, the use of fellowship and assistantship resources and tuition waivers, and the academic quality of individual programs cannot be made effectively without reliable statistics. If these data are not collected and maintained by the graduate school, the individuals who design and maintain the institution’s central student and program information systems must be responsive to the graduate school to guarantee that data are recorded accurately and are easily retrievable. Setting the definitions and categories for how the data will be stored
and how reports will be provided is critical, and a representative from the graduate school should participate with system designers in establishing those definitions.

Most institutions find that a combination of data maintained in the graduate school and data maintained centrally is the most practical and efficient use of resources. This avoids the graduate school’s becoming an administrative processing and data collection center but still allows it to benefit from availability and local control of relevant parts of the information systems.

The Council of Graduate Schools has developed the capacity to bring information on graduate enrollments and degree production together from across the membership, analyze it, and offer its members reliable national data for use on their individual campuses. In cooperation with the Graduate Record Examinations Program, the Council conducts an annual national Survey of Graduate Enrollment that provides data on graduate enrollment and degrees. Results of each year’s survey become part of a longitudinal database on graduate education and are made available to members through annual publications, articles in the CGS *Communicator*, and presentations at national and regional meetings.

**Liaison with legal affairs**

The graduate school must maintain a good relationship with and rely regularly on other central administrative offices, such as legal affairs. And the academic world, like the rest of society, is litigious and the graduate school is inevitably drawn into legal disputes. Ambiguous policies in the catalog, vague academic advising, and unfair treatment (real or imagined) by faculty or staff can all lead to at least the threat of a lawsuit by an aggrieved student, including an undergraduate against a teaching assistant. In these cases, it is essential that the graduate school turn to appeals procedures and legal counsel for help, preferably having already established a good working relationship and an understanding of the relevant laws. Particularly important is the development of a clear understanding of due process and the assurance that this is provided to those with grievances.

While the legal affairs office or outside legal counsel can be very helpful in adjudicating threatened legal actions and resolving disputes before they get to that point, such offices are only advisory. The graduate dean and his or her faculty advisory bodies should not relinquish final decision-making authority to legal advisers, nor should they mistakenly defer to or consult with legal counsel on essentially academic matters. All academic decisions concerning individual graduate students must remain with the graduate faculty, with oversight by the graduate dean.

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UNIVERSITY-WIDE ACTIVITIES

Promotion of intellectual collegiality
One of the important roles of the graduate school is to support and further intellectual collegiality on campus. This support often involves sponsoring special campuswide symposia, seminars, guest lectures, and events recognizing scholarly accomplishments by the faculty. Such activities promote and encourage intellectual exchange among graduate students and faculty of different disciplines and keep them abreast of new research developments in other fields. It is the existence of a community of scholars that distinguishes a university from a collection of isolated teaching centers or research institutes, and the graduate dean, with his or her central place in the institution, is ideally suited to foster this sense of community.

In addition to learning about exciting work in other disciplines, faculty and graduate students who attend these activities develop a stronger sense of the concerns of the graduate enterprise and the different forms that excellence at the graduate level may take. This is essential if individual graduate programs are to remain strong and comparable in quality to similar programs elsewhere on campus and throughout the country. Such activities also expand the horizons of faculty and students who work in what are increasingly narrow and specialized fields of inquiry and give them an opportunity to exercise their intellects on problems outside their own disciplines. This can lead to exciting new collaborations among faculty in different disciplines or to the realization that others across campus are actually working on very similar problems. New research activities develop partly through efforts such as these.

Participation in central university decision making
As a leader with university-wide perspective and responsibilities, the graduate dean can and should participate in the institution’s central decision-making processes. Any institution that has made a commitment to graduate education must ensure the graduate dean’s voice is heard in many of the major academic and financial decisions that shape the institution. This usually involves membership on councils or groups of senior administrators that advise the president, chancellor, and/or chief academic officer of the university and includes decisions on academic planning, new administrative or academic priorities, and the allocation of budget resources to individual schools and departments.

As the chief academic officer for graduate education, the graduate dean can contribute much to these deliberations through his or her working knowledge of individual departments and the academic and financial conditions of each. He or she also has an overview of the institution as a whole and a sense
of desirable academic directions—a viewpoint that can be difficult to duplicate on today’s decentralized, specialized, and financially driven campuses.

**Enhancement of scholarship and research**
The graduate dean should play a strong role in enhancing the quality and quantity of scholarship and research by faculty and graduate students in order to preserve and improve the quality of graduate education. This always includes promoting interdisciplinary interactions among students and faculty. Often it includes providing grants to faculty to initiate or complete specific research projects, to “buy” release time in the summer, or to pursue other kinds of professional development.

Research support should also include “fill-in” funding for deserving graduate students to attend professional meetings, to attend workshops to learn new research methods, or to pursue research interests not funded through a department’s or school’s normal channels. Such support for students is especially important, since it often gets lost in the individual school among faculty needs for research and travel support. The graduate dean has a special responsibility to see to the intellectual welfare of graduate students across the campus, which includes finding funds for support where no other sources are available. Graduate student organizations sometimes use a portion of their resources to support competitive travel grant programs for their members as well.

**EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

**Involvement in regional and national associations**
In addition to significant responsibilities on campus, the graduate dean also has responsibility to participate actively in regional, national, and international associations concerned with graduate education. In the press of daily affairs, it is difficult to find time for professional activities, but they are essential if the graduate dean and his or her staff are to fulfill their larger obligation to graduate education broadly defined and to maintain the skills and information necessary to do their jobs at home. It is impossible to keep up-to-date on best practices in graduate education, recent research findings on student success, federal budget proposals, changes in the tax laws, and research funding levels without a steady stream of information from external associations and a network of contacts with other graduate deans. In addition, the wisdom and knowledge of colleagues at other institutions experienced with graduate education offer an invaluable resource to both the new and long-term graduate administrator. The environment for graduate education is chang-
ing constantly as demands increase to prepare the knowledge workforce essential to a thriving economy and society. Disciplines reformat themselves as new questions force more study at the boundaries of fields. In addition, pervasive concerns about promoting diversity in academe, with particular emphasis on the nature of the student and faculty population, make it imperative that graduate deans know what is happening beyond the gates of their own campuses. Effective graduate deans must take the lead on many of these issues, rather than respond to the initiatives of others. They cannot do this without a view of the issues that is broader than that of their own institution.

Professional associations and colleagues at comparable institutions also provide an excellent sounding board for trying out ideas for new policies or procedures and getting advice on managing specific problems. They offer a small antidote to the traditional academic tendency to “reinvent the wheel.” They also provide both the graduate dean and the graduate faculty with a sense of what the national or international norm may be on a specific issue or at least the varieties of good practice.

A number of important professional associations in graduate education serve these purposes. The Council of Graduate Schools is the leading comprehensive organization of graduate schools in the United States and Canada, with approximately 450 member institutions. For over four decades, CGS has been the only national association dedicated solely to representing the interests of graduate education. Its mission is to improve and advance graduate education through advocacy in the federal policy arena, innovative research, and the development and dissemination of best practices. There are also other organizations that meet annually or semiannually to discuss graduate issues. The Association of Graduate Schools, an affiliate of the Association of American Universities, is an organization of the graduate deans at the sixty-three AAU institutions, all of which are CGS members. The Canadian Association of Graduate Schools is the primary association for graduate schools in Canada. In addition, the Council on Research Policy and Graduate Education of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges provides an opportunity for deans and research administrators at those institutions to exchange views.

There are four regional affiliates of CGS in the United States: Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools (NAGS), Conference of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS), Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools (MAGS), and Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS), and there are similar associations in some provinces of Canada. Finally, individual states or higher education systems have in some cases established formal organizations or informal consortia of graduate deans in order to coordinate activities and provide mutual information and support.
These associations provide data on graduate students and graduate programs, work to establish nationally accepted policies, represent the interests of graduate education to the federal government, and provide professional development opportunities. They also offer individual deans a powerful way to influence national policy, funding, and legislation affecting graduate students and research.

Professional disciplinary associations or societies are also important national venues for consideration and promotion of graduate education issues. Increasingly, these associations have worked collaboratively with CGS and other organizations to encourage various reforms in graduate education and therefore represent a significant liaison between the graduate dean and the faculty of individual graduate programs.

As a member of the national and international graduate community, the graduate dean has a responsibility to participate in that community and to work for meaningful change. It is not enough to be concerned solely with local issues, because the nature of graduate education ensures that national and international issues will affect graduate programs everywhere.

**Liaison with national, state, and provincial legislatures and boards**

In the same vein, graduate deans should develop and maintain effective relationships with officials responsible for or involved with graduate education in national and state governments. This includes, where appropriate, elected officials who represent the area in which the university is located, as well as those with specific interests in education and research; staffs of funding agencies or councils; state or provincial higher education associations; and governing or coordinating boards and other organizations charged with responsibility to provide funds for support of students, programs, and research facilities. There is a need to increase awareness among such individuals and organizations of the importance of graduate education to meet national and regional workforce needs. In addition, it is particularly important that graduate deans are in close contact with units of government that establish laws or regulations governing graduate students and faculty.

In many institutions, these liaison responsibilities are handled primarily by the president, vice president, or an external relations officer. However, the graduate dean often has access to specialized information provided by the professional associations listed previously or through other sources. At public universities, the graduate dean may be asked to monitor legislation dealing with graduate education. This places the dean in an excellent position to provide information on and serve as an advocate for graduate programs at his or her institution before appropriate political decision makers. Obviously, such contacts should be coordinated with the efforts of other uni-
versity officials charged with external responsibilities, but it is important that the graduate dean be a part of any discussions involving graduate education. Relationships should be established early and cultivated regularly through visits to campus and to legislative or administrative offices, so that political support and understanding of graduate education is already in place when a specific issue arises.

Development of alumni relations
Developing good relations with university and especially graduate school alumni is becoming more and more central to the activity of the graduate school. Alumni can offer both financial and political support to graduate education; they can be called upon to help evaluate and offer suggestions for improvement in graduate programs, and they can be used individually or in groups to speak out to legislators on behalf of graduate issues. Finally, they can be an excellent source of funds for graduate student fellowships, research support, and other financial needs of graduate departments.

In cultivating alumni, graduate deans need to be careful to coordinate their efforts with the efforts of the university alumni association as well as the deans of other schools, since alumni are usually seen or see themselves as graduates of a specific school or department as well as the graduate school. However, there is room for support of both enterprises, depending on an individual’s interest, or of one through the other. Those who have completed graduate programs themselves, or whose children have, are often the most sympathetic to the need for funds for student fellowships, research equipment, and travel grants.

Fund-raising
As the financial need of graduate students continues to grow and the competition for the strongest students becomes more intense, nearly all graduate deans will need to devote some time to fund-raising. Support for fellowships and other graduate program initiatives are increasingly sought from private donors. Developing good relations with alumni and cultivating existing relationships with friends of the university are important strategies for raising funds, but donors need not have a history of association with the graduate school or even the university. Many graduate schools have established external advisory boards that provide valuable leadership in private funding. Private individuals, corporations, and foundations are all good potential sources of funds. Exemplary and articulate graduate students and faculty should be included in the solicitation process, and all efforts should be coordinated with the institution’s development office.
Given the limited time and expertise of graduate deans in this area, a successful fund-raising effort for graduate education requires the public commitment and support of the institution's central administration. Graduate deans need not become development officers, but they do need to initiate and be involved in the fund-raising process every step of the way. In some settings, the strategy is to convince the provost and president to place support for graduate programs and students high on the list of institutional development priorities. In other settings, graduate schools maintain their own development staff and, working with an external advisory board, directly solicit support. Sources of funding for graduate traineeship and other university-wide programmatic initiatives include the federal government, private foundations, and associations. To secure this support, graduate deans lead efforts on campus to convene the appropriate cross-disciplinary team to develop a proposal organized around an interdisciplinary theme or a cross-discipline issue. Examples of the former would be the dean convening a group of faculty across physical sciences and engineering disciplines to develop a proposal for a training grant to the IGERT (Integrated Graduate Education and Research Training) program at the NSF. An example of the latter would be a dean convening a set of graduate faculty to propose the development of a new interdisciplinary professional master's curriculum to the CGS professional master's grants programs.

**RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION**

A significant number of graduate deans also have responsibility for research administration. While it is beyond the scope of this document to describe in detail all of the activities that this responsibility entails, the following provides a partial list:

- Setting a climate for excellence in scholarship and research
- Advising administration/faculty on national research trends
- Providing information on research activities across campus to promote potential new proposals
- Providing information on sponsored funding opportunities for research and encouraging faculty to pursue them
- Assisting faculty in obtaining external research grants
- Monitoring the use of sponsored research funds
- Establishing policies governing sponsored program activity
• Participating in negotiations on indirect cost rates
• Monitoring the use of human subjects and live animals in research
• Developing and administering policies on patents, copyright, and intellectual property
• Preventing and investigating fraud and misconduct in research
• Monitoring situations of potential conflict of interest in research
• Developing industry-university relations, including promotion of transfer of technology developed by university faculty
• Developing and administering policies that govern the university's relationships with industrial partners, including protection of the interests of graduate students
• Establishing policies for and/or administering organized research units (centers, institutes, etc.) that lay outside the purview of individual schools
• Creating procedures for the disposal of hazardous waste and other research-related threats to health and safety
• Allocating a portion of institutional faculty research funds to strengthen the research capability of the institution

Whether a graduate dean has specific responsibility for research administration or not, the graduate school is responsible for ensuring that research assistants and teaching assistants receive training in such issues as disclosure, compliance, intellectual property, human subject training, and the responsible conduct of research. In cases where research administration and graduate school responsibilities do not reside in the same individual, collaboration between the two administrative units facilitates the effectiveness of the graduate dean in ensuring that graduate students receive appropriate training in these areas.
CONCLUSIONS

No two universities are exactly alike, and the same is true for graduate schools. While the Council of Graduate Schools does not advocate any one method of organization, there are certain critical elements and principles of good practice that must be in place in any institution to maintain quality graduate programs. In addition, there are certain basic activities in which all graduate schools should participate, if only to set academic policy, tone, and direction. Rather than set forth a prescriptive model for the organization and administration of graduate education, this document has attempted to describe the range of ways in which graduate education is organized and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

The chief academic officer for graduate education plays a critical role in every institution. He or she focuses on advanced study, helping to create a community of scholars and professionals and setting a standard of excellence that transcends the perspective of any one discipline. He or she may have any one of many different titles, have a variety of responsibilities, and organize the graduate office functions in many different ways. But there is room in graduate education for this variety, so long as whatever structure is chosen effectively promotes quality and academic excellence. This document describes some of the most effective structures and functions for ensuring that quality and excellence are achieved.
APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

Sample Organizational Charts: The University

A.

President

Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dean of the Graduate School

Graduate Council

Graduate Faculty

School I

School II

B.

President

Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Associate Vice President/Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and Research

Graduate Council

Graduate Faculty

School I

School II

School III

C.

President

Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies

Graduate Council

Graduate Faculty

Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

School I

School II
APPENDIX B
Sample Organizational Charts: The Graduate School

A.
Dean of Graduate Studies

Associate Dean Academic Affairs
Assoc. Dean Student Affairs
Asst. Dean Admissions
Asst. to Dean for Information Services

B.
Dean of the Graduate School

Associate Dean Arts & Humanities
Assoc. Dean Science & Engineering
Assoc. Dean Social Sciences
Coordinator of Admissions

C.
Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and Research

Associate Provost for Graduate Studies
Associate Provost for Research
APPENDIX C

Scope of Responsibility of Graduate Schools (by Degree Programs)
Graduate schools vary significantly in the scope of their responsibility for postbaccalaureate degree programs; some have responsibility for degrees in arts and sciences disciplines only, while others have responsibility for all postbaccalaureate degrees at the institution. The majority of graduate schools fall somewhere in between. The chart below describes the range of responsibility possible, from least inclusive to most inclusive. There is, of course, no single recommended model; the responsibility of any given graduate school should be determined by the institution, taking into consideration its history, organizational structure, and mission. In those cases where the graduate dean does not have direct academic responsibility for professional degrees, however, he or she should have indirect responsibility through the graduate council or vice president for academic affairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Inclusive</th>
<th>Master’s Degrees</th>
<th>Doctoral Degrees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic master’s (M.A./M.S.) in the arts and sciences</td>
<td>Research doctorates (Ph.D.) in the arts and sciences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic master’s (M.A./M.S.) in professional schools</td>
<td>Research doctorates (Ph.D.) in professional schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some professional master’s (e.g., M.S.W., M.P.A., M.F.A.)</td>
<td>Some professional doctorates (e.g., Ed.D., D.P.A., D.V.M.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Inclusive</td>
<td>All professional master’s (including M.B.A., M.Engin.)</td>
<td>All professional doctorates (including J.D., M.D.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>