Support Unit Program Review

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Self Study

Fall 2007

Revised 10-15-07
Foreword

The Graduate School Self Study was developed in preparation for the Support Unit Program Review established by the Office of the Provost. This document represents a collaborative effort which involved all members of the Graduate School staff. The Graduate School has a deep appreciation for the value of the review process and welcomes this opportunity for the assessment of its role within the university and its operational effectiveness. The timing of this review comes at a critical juncture in the Graduate School’s strategic planning in that it has been 8 years since our last review (Appendix A), OSU is engaged in a prioritization process, and there are several decisions pending that will significantly affect our future. We are open to suggestions for change and improvement and anticipate that recommendations stemming from this process will add high value to our future direction.

There are specific objectives we hope to accomplish through the review and to that end we have generated a list of review goals for the Review Team’s consideration. These goals are raised throughout the text of the Self Study and have been compiled below for easy reference.

Goals for Review Team Feedback:

1. We would like the team to review Graduate School priorities, within our resource constraints, and provide feedback regarding what we should do less of and what we should do more of.

2. We would like advice regarding the plan to move the graduate admissions function from the Office of Admissions to the Graduate School.

3. We would like insight into what the appropriate enrollment mix should be, as well as recruiting ideas, model selectivity statistics, and goals for yield. Further, we would be interested in guidance regarding what should be the role of the Graduate School in affecting these goals.

4. We would like the team’s feedback on whether the OSU organizational/administrative structure is appropriate to the mission and goals of the Graduate School. Should the name of the unit be “Graduate College”?

5. Assistance in interpreting the campus surveys that were conducted in preparation for this review would be helpful. How should the results be interpreted in the absence of national norms? What response is indicated?

6. We would appreciate feedback on whether our resource base, including physical facilities, is adequate to support our mission.

We would like to express our gratitude to all members of the Review Team for their contributions in making this assessment process helpful and effective in charting the future direction of the Graduate School.
The Graduate School

Introduction

As the state’s land, sea, space, and sun grant institution, Oregon State University offers graduate programs in a broad array of fields, both disciplinary and interdisciplinary, with emphasis fields in natural resources, science, selected social sciences, and engineering. We offer doctoral programs in many fields including 41 fields included in the Taxonomy underlying the National Research Council (NRC) Assessment of the Research Doctorate. The curriculum leads to 79 graduate degree majors with flexibility to allow students to assemble programs suited to their academic and career goals.

Graduate degree programs offered at OSU are related directly to the ability of the University to achieve its mission to promote “…economic, social, cultural and environmental progress for people across Oregon, the nation and the world through our graduates, research, scholarship, outreach, and engagement (http://oregonstate.edu/mission/).” Implicit goals of every graduate program are to foster inquiry, development of expertise in a field of study, and the acquisition of the skills, methods, and theories necessary for scholarship in that field, thus educating the next generation of leaders who will deliver on this important mission.

Mission

The mission of the Graduate School is to provide campus leadership for all aspects of graduate education, thereby contributing to the scholarly mission of OSU as a land, space, sea, and sun grant research university with aspirations to rank among the top 10 land grant universities in the US. Key aspects of this mission include:

- Providing leadership in defining excellence in the graduate experience,
- Promoting an environment that supports and nurtures advanced learning and graduate student scholarship, and
- Advocating for the graduate enterprise.

The Graduate School values the integrity of the graduate degree. We believe that all graduate degrees awarded at OSU should ensure that graduate students are able to demonstrate a) advanced research or professional skills; b) critical thinking ability; and c) advanced mastery of a relevant discipline or field of study. We believe that all graduate programs should strive to produce future leaders and, in doing so, should provide relevant professional development experiences and cultivate strong oral and written communication skills. We value demonstrated excellence in graduate education and research. We value upholding fundamental principles of graduate education while leading innovation and change in curricular and creative settings. We value all forms of diversity including diversity within the graduate student and faculty populations, diversity of thought and perspective, and both disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum. We strive to achieve flexibility, fairness, responsiveness and humanitarianism in our service delivery; data- and reason-based management; and collaborative approaches.

Goals

The 2004-07 Graduate School Strategic Plan (Appendix B) identifies 3 key goals:

1) Provide outstanding graduate programs. The Graduate School addresses this goal through activities such as working with the Graduate Council to enact policy change(s), facilitating curricular changes, and giving leadership to the conduct of graduate program reviews.

2) Provide an excellent teaching and learning environment and achieve student access, persistence and success through graduation and beyond. This goal is addressed through activities such as engaging in diversity initiatives, planning the reengineering of graduate admissions, implementing
electronic submission of theses, establishing funding policies and programs that have positive impact on advanced degree students, and launching a new University award for Excellence in Graduate Mentoring.

3) Increase revenues to support graduate education from fundraising while strengthening our ability to more effectively invest and allocate resources. This goal is addressed through activities such as participating in the development of the Capital Campaign goals, advocating for competitive graduate assistant financial packages, and analyzing the effectiveness of the Graduate School’s student funding programs.

Scope of Operations

Organization
The Graduate School is administered through the Graduate Dean. All graduate students are enrolled in the Graduate School, which certifies their degrees. The leadership team and staff of the Graduate School are shown in Appendix C—Organization Chart. The Graduate School coordinates graduate programs, admission standards, and degree requirements; enforces current regulations; acts on petitions to deviate from existing regulations; and recommends changes in graduate policy to the Graduate Council. The Graduate School at OSU does not administer the research enterprise.

Oregon State University has a long institutional tradition of strong faculty governance. The Graduate Council is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. Membership, which is composed of one graduate faculty member from each academic college and a graduate student identified by the Associated Students of OSU, is appointed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee without consultation with the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Council formulates the basic policy and requirements relating to all graduate work at OSU, within the general authority granted by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education (Appendix D—Graduate Council Standing Rules).

The Graduate Education Round Table (GERT) was established in 1999 to serve in an advisory capacity to the Graduate Dean. GERT membership of about a dozen individuals includes a diverse mix of academic deans, department heads/chairs, associate deans, faculty members, student leaders, the Chair of the Graduate Council, VP for Research, and a graduate coordinator. GERT played a key role in developing the Graduate School Strategic Plan (Appendix B—Graduate School Strategic Plan 2004-07) but has been inactive in recent years.

The role of academic units is to establish and teach graduate courses, maintain a Graduate Faculty, establish local graduate admission standards and specific degree requirements, make graduate assistant appointments, and provide advice and supervision for their graduate students.

Academic Programs
OSU’s graduate degree programs include research-oriented graduate programs and professionally oriented graduate programs. Seventeen graduate degrees are offered in 79 major fields (Appendix E—Graduate Degrees, Majors, Minors and Certificates). In addition to the disciplinary degrees originating in the academic colleges, 12 interdisciplinary or multi-departmental graduate degrees are offered. Graduate minors are offered, some of which are specialties associated with graduate majors (e.g., sport and exercise psychology) and several are interdisciplinary (e.g., gerontology). Several units offer only minors (e.g., ethnic studies, psychology, women studies). Four graduate certificates are offered. The doctor of veterinary medicine and doctor of pharmacy degrees are considered first professional degrees and are not administered by the Graduate School.

---

1Sally Francis served as Interim Dean from June, 1999, until January, 2002, when she was selected as Dean.
The graduate curriculum evolves as graduate programs are revised, added, suspended, or eliminated. The Graduate School works with the Graduate Council and the Office of Academic Programs in processing curricular changes. Since 1995, several new degrees have been created: Master of Public Health, Master of Software Engineering (later dropped), Master of Fine Arts Creative Writing, Master of Public Policy, Master of Health Physics in Radiation Health Physics, MA in Contemporary Hispanic Studies, PhD in Applied Anthropology, PhD and MS in Materials Science, PhD and MS in Water Resources Science, PhD and MS in Water Resources Engineering, and MS in Water Resources Policy and Management. Authority for the Master of Engineering was added for all degree programs in the College of Engineering, although a Master of Engineering in Manufacturing Engineering (a joint degree with Portland State University) was eliminated. The Master of Business in Information Systems was also added during this time period, but implementation has been deferred. Final approval is pending for an MS and PhD program in Medical Physics, which is to be jointly administered with the Oregon Health and Sciences University. An external site visit will be held this fall. Six majors were eliminated; six majors were renamed; and one major (Scientific and Technical Communication) was suspended. A minor in Earth Information Science and Technology was added, but was later converted to a graduate certificate in Geographic Information Science. The MS in Nutrition and Food Management was approved for delivery at new locations. Guidelines for establishing graduate certificate programs have been established and 4 graduate certificates were approved. The Graduate School oversees regular Graduate Council Program Reviews of all graduate programs (Appendix F—Graduate Council Guidelines for Review of Graduate Programs).

In 2007, 176 doctoral degrees and 684 master’s degrees were awarded. OSU’s graduate enrollment of 3104 in the fall of 2006 is lower than that of peer comparison institutions, where enrollment ranges from about 3,200 to 7,100 students. Appendix G (Graduate School Enrollment Summary) presents fall term enrollment data since 1996; Appendix H (Graduate School Summary of Degrees Awarded) presents OSU graduate degree data since 1995.

**Resources - Personnel**

The Graduate School currently comprises 9.00 FTE core personnel (see Table 1 below), all of whom are extraordinarily skilled and knowledgeable relative to their assignments. The staff is proud of its accomplishments and all members demonstrate dedication to excellence through their responsiveness to the graduate community, their stand for excellence in graduate education, and the substantive quality of the services they provide in support of the graduate enterprise. In 1999, the total FTE was 8.50. An additional classified staff position was added in 2005 as a result of an increased budget allocation for administering several interdisciplinary graduate programs that are housed in the Graduate School (see Function, page 7). With the implementation of a continuous enrollment requirement, several activities were eliminated (see Appendix I) to redeploy staff from those activities. With the transfer of the graduate admissions function to the Graduate School, an additional 4.0 FTE will be required as shown in the column labeled “Reorganized” in Table 1; funding for these positions will be added incrementally over the biennium.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Graduate School Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator Graduate Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant to the Dean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Services Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Interdisciplinary Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compared to peer institutions, this staffing level is extremely lean. For example, the Graduate Division at UC Davis comprises more than 35 FTE. Despite this disadvantage, OSU’s Graduate School delivers a high level of service to the campus in a broad range of functions. Appendix J presents data relative to comparator institutions. Generally, the Graduate School is funded and staffed at a lower level compared to peer institutions but strives to deliver the same or more services. Given the current fiscal environment, the leadership team has conducted several planning exercises with the intention of redeploying our scarce resources to achieve maximum impact and to leverage opportunities. A recent analysis of options to prioritize graduate school activities in the event of increased or reduced funding is available to you on site.

In addition to staff assigned to the general operation of the Graduate School, four part-time directors of interdisciplinary graduate programs report to the Dean of the Graduate School. Of twelve interdisciplinary or multi-departmental graduate programs on campus, seven have been housed in the Graduate School since their inception. The 7 programs housed in the Graduate School cross both departmental and college boundaries. Thus, centralized administration provides greater neutrality than would departmentally located administration, leading to higher participation among faculty. A recent review of the interdisciplinary program in materials science, housed in the School of Mechanical, Industrial and Manufacturing Engineering, included recommendations regarding the limitations of its administrative model. An initiative to organize all such programs centrally has not been undertaken. On the aggregate, a total of 2.55 funded FTE is dedicated to administering the 7 interdisciplinary programs with reporting lines to the Graduate Dean.

**Resources - Budget**

The budget of the Graduate School comprises 3 major categories: 1) core functions ($692K); 2) interdisciplinary programs ($536K); and 3) tuition remission and scholarship programs ($1.85M). Graduate assistantship resources are decentralized; unlike many of our peers, the OSU Graduate School does not award these funds. The Graduate School operating budget is minimally adequate to cover the cost of essential services, but is insufficient to permit us to offer programs and services such as mentorship training, TA training, ethics education, preparing future professionals programs, skill development workshops, or aggressive recruitment while maintaining current core functions. A serious concern is how we will fund proposed new initiatives including the graduate admissions function, development activities, and expanded external relations.

**Resources - Facilities**

In conjunction with reorganization of space in Kerr Administration Building, remodeling of our existing office space is in process and expected to be completed by Spring 2008. Remodeling is desperately needed, particularly in light of taking on the admissions function. The Graduate School will receive modest additional space, a portion of which will be used to create a small conference room to be shared with the Research Office. We are hopeful that this addition will be sufficient to accommodate expanded personnel and file storage needs associated with taking on the admissions function.

The Graduate School Office is located on the third floor of the Kerr Administration Building, a high-rise building with elevators and air-conditioning. The Graduate School benefits from its close proximity to other administrative service units housed within the building. The current office space is about 2000 square feet, and houses all core personnel and up to 5 student office workers. Some members of the Graduate School leadership team do not have private offices from which to conduct

---

2 On an interim basis, the director of the graduate program in economics also reports to the Graduate Dean.

3 The water resources program comprises 3 separate degrees: Water Resources Engineering, Water Resources Science, and Water Resources Policy & Management. These 3 degrees are overseen by one part-time director.
sensitive activities. The classified staff is housed in office cubicles that provide less than ideal work and storage space. Ambient noise in the central portion of the office can make it difficult to perform detail-oriented work assignments that require mental concentration. Even with the remodeling, there will not be space to accommodate any future growth and current space prohibits housing the interdisciplinary program directors. No conference facility currently exists, making the ongoing task of scheduling meetings arduous and time-consuming; the remodeling project will ameliorate this problem.

Graduate student records continue to be stored in hard copy. Files for all active graduate students and graduate faculty are maintained within the central office. Although document imaging will reduce the need for hard-copy records, in the near term, addition of the admissions function to the Graduate School’s responsibilities will require maintenance of paper copies of graduate admission records for the foreseeable future. Archived records are located off-site in space provided by OSU Archives.

The Kerr Administration Building is accessible. However, beyond the Graduate School reception area, wheelchair access is difficult to negotiate in the current configuration of our space.

All core personnel in the Graduate School Office are equipped with up-to-date computer hardware, software, and network connections. Investment in technology remains a priority within the Graduate School’s limited resources. In the absence of dedicated IT personnel, the Graduate School contracts with the university’s Network Services for workstation access to the community network and for routine maintenance.

A small workroom accommodates shared printing resources and the department photocopier. In addition, this space includes recycling and pulping stations, storage for materials and supplies, temporary retention of theses and dissertations, and graduate faculty file storage. The workroom contains modest kitchen facilities, including a mini-refrigerator, microwave oven, and sink.

**Function**

Historically, the Graduate School has focused its limited resources on policy development and implementation, including centralized monitoring and control. Within OSU’s strong faculty governance culture, the Graduate School has been guided largely by actions and recommendations of the Graduate Council. In addition, the Graduate School has been greatly influenced by the Council of Graduate Schools’ compendium of graduate school activities as outlined in its publication “Organization and Administration of Graduate Education.”

In Fall 2002, changes were made in Graduate School functions in order to release staff time to accommodate oversight of the new Continuous Enrollment Policy (see Resources – Personnel, page 5). Generally, the changes shifted greater control of monitoring graduate student progress to the major professor level and reduced the amount of paperwork moving between faculty/student/Graduate School (Appendix I). The changes were procedural and did not represent changes in policy. We believe that units/programs adapted quickly to these changes and that no adverse consequences in terms of program quality resulted.

Since 2002, we have taken on a number of new activities, many of which are highlighted in the Recent Actions section of this document. The Interdisciplinary Allocation Model (about $571K upon implementation in FY05) permitted the addition of .25 FTE for a Director of Interdisciplinary Programs (currently vacant), centralized funding for directors of three interdisciplinary programs located in the Graduate School, and permitted the addition of 1.00 FTE classified staff to support interdisciplinary programs and the tuition/scholarship function. The full potential of these new resources has yet to be realized.
The Provost has approved a proposal to move the graduate admissions function to the Graduate School (Appendix K). A realistic business plan and sufficient facilities will be key to a successful transition in this area.

**Essential Functions**

Essential functions performed by the Graduate School are displayed in Table 2 below. Many functions are appropriately performed at both the program and the Graduate School level. Functions that we would like to initiate or enhance are identified in the column titled “New Priorities.” It is our hope that one outcome of the current review process will be assistance in prioritizing existing functions and evaluating which New Priorities may offer greater value to the campus or be more central to our mission as compared to functions we currently perform. Appendix L presents a comprehensive, annotated list of the functions currently performed by the Graduate School. For comparison purposes, Appendix M displays the core functions performed by comparator institutions.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction**

Respondents to the Advanced Degree Recipients Exit Survey indicated that their level of satisfaction with the service provided to them by the Graduate School was 3.81 in 2004 (1=not at all satisfied; 5=completely satisfied) and 3.83 in 2006. Annual visits with the leadership teams of the academic colleges have been very positive. We consider these data to be an indication of satisfaction with our service delivery by both students and faculty.

A campus web-based survey was conducted during December 2006 to measure students’, department chairs/interdisciplinary program leaders’, and administrators’ perceptions of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Graduate School in delivering our mission (Appendix N—Graduate School Effectiveness Survey). Respondents were asked to indicate on a scale of 1 (agree) to 5 (disagree) the extent to which they perceived a list of attributes to be characteristic of the Graduate School. We are aware of no comparable survey at OSU or elsewhere that would provide norms against which to evaluate the present results. Mean scores on nearly all items for all three groups were around 2.2 on a 1-5 scale where a score of 1 indicated a favorable response. We interpret the present results to be quite favorable.

The most positive scores were observed for accessibility (1.4-1.9), supporting the University’s mission and goals (1.7-2.0), and embracing diversity (1.75-2.1). The least positive scores were associated with supporting innovation and change in graduate education (2.3-3.0). We are somewhat puzzled at this last finding in light of initiatives such as introduction of the graduate certificate credential, change in Graduate Admission Committee policies, introduction of new registration requirements, introduction of a policy to limit the number of “slash course” (i.e. courses offered simultaneously at both the senior [4XX] and graduate [5XX] level) credits on programs of study, support for professional science master’s
### Table 2. Essential Graduate School Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compendium of Graduate School Activities</th>
<th>Locus of Control</th>
<th>NEW PRIORITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of new/revised programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of new graduate programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of existing graduate programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic policies for graduate programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowships, traineeships &amp; financial aid</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate teaching and research assistantships</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring student academic progress</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment &amp; approval of faculty committees</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining academic records &amp; degree verification</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis and dissertation approval</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student support services &amp; retention programs</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison with student organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison with administrative offices</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student grievance procedures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of academic progress (periodic review)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic dishonesty or plagiarism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment &amp; review of graduate faculty</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in faculty appointment &amp; P&amp;T</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversight of postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection &amp; dissemination</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison with legal affairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of intellectual collegiality</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in central university decision-making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement of scholarship and research</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in regional &amp; national associations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison with national, state, and provincial legislatures and boards</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of alumni relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of 7 interdisciplinary/multi-departmental programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Council and GAC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

degrees, establishment of a campus-based tuition remission policy, participation in collective bargaining, major revision of program review guidelines, and so forth. Additionally, we are concerned by the apparent lack of graduate student and faculty understanding of the role and functions that the Graduate School performs. The Graduate School would like to understand better what underlies this perception.

**Recent Actions**

The staff of the Graduate School is working at peak capacity to deliver core functions in an effective and efficient manner. As a team, we also see many new opportunities and unmet needs to which we are innately motivated to respond. A challenge for us is to limit the time and energy that we commit to undertaking new initiatives so as to guard against the professional stress and burnout that can result from over-commitment. In this context, the following represents our most important recent actions.

**Relocation of Graduate Admissions**

- The graduate admissions process has been undergoing intense analysis over the past five years. Because of perceived dissatisfaction with the admissions process, a campus-wide review of graduate admissions was conducted in 2000-01 and recommendations for improvement were subsequently implemented. Because of continuing complaints, in March 2006, external consultants were invited to review graduate admissions procedures and make recommendations for change (Appendix O). Based on those recommendations, the Provost has decided to transfer this function to the Graduate School. A new assistant dean will be hired (target date January, 2008) and will have responsibility for leading the transition of the admissions function to our office.

**Changes in Graduate Policies**

- In 2000, a task force was created in response to student concerns that “slash courses” (i.e. courses offered simultaneously at both the senior [4XX] and graduate [5XX] level) often failed to meet student expectations for graduate-level work. The Graduate School worked with the Graduate Council to add a requirement that new proposals to create or change such a course must clearly articulate the graduate-level learning outcomes expected of students registered for the 5XX version of the course, as distinct from the outcomes expected of those registered for the 4XX version of the course. Also, the number of “slash course” credits on a graduate student’s program of study was limited to less than 50% of the credits required for his/her graduate degree.

- In 2002, the Graduate School implemented a continuous enrollment policy. The objectives of the policy change were to: encourage graduate student degree completion; minimize time to degree for graduate students; require registration at any time when University resources, including facilities and faculty time, are used; provide the University with an accurate account of active graduate students; provide the University with an indication of student intent when students break registration; and hold a place for students who intend to resume graduate study following a Leave of Absence. Now in its fifth year, the policy encourages timely degree completion, and calls for a minimum enrollment of 3 credits each term for graduate degree-seeking students. A leave of absence component allows for students to exercise enrollment flexibility while maintaining graduate standing in their designated programs.

- The Associate Dean has provided leadership to the Graduate Council for several changes in academic policies. The Graduate Council took action to drop the graduate minor requirement for master’s degree programs to provide greater flexibility. The Graduate Council also adopted a policy that permits a candidate for a master’s degree from OSU to apply up to 15 credits, appropriate to both programs, from his or her first master’s degree program to a second master’s degree at OSU within certain limits. In conjunction with the Graduate School’s commitment to advancing the development of professional science master’s degrees (PSM) at OSU, leadership was provided to the Graduate Council that led to adopting a policy to permit internships to serve as capstone experiences for
specified areas of concentration in existing degree programs, with a minimum of 6 credits of internship and a maximum of 12 credits of internship allowed on a 45-credit non-thesis MS degree. The Graduate Council raised the maximum number of thesis, research, and other individually guided credits from 6 to 9 credits on a 45-credit master’s degree program. The minimum number of credits required for a graduate certificate was reduced from 24 to 18 credits. 700 level courses (i.e., professional courses) that are successfully reviewed through the curricular process used to establish new graduate courses (i.e., Category II proposal process) were given approval for use in Programs of Study.

- At the request of the Research Office, the Associate Dean provided leadership to the Graduate Council in adopting a policy whereby the results from studies conducted using human subjects without having first obtained Institutional Review Board approval may not be used to satisfy master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation requirements.
- Since 1999, the Graduate School has increased the number of program reviews from 2 to 3 per year to 5 to 7 per year in order to maintain a regular cycle of timely reviews. In 2003, the Graduate School led a major revision of the Graduate Program Review Guidelines, which were subsequently approved by the Graduate Council and implemented in 2003. Revisions included increased attention to the program outcomes, the addition of an external reviewer from among employers hiring graduates of the reviewed program, the requirement that the department head or program leader develop a plan of action for discussion with the Provost, and the inclusion of a statement on ethics.
- The Graduate Council removed restrictions that were previously imposed on conditionally admitted students regarding graduate assistantship eligibility, holding program committee meetings, and filing graduate programs of study. The Graduate School’s role in regard to this policy is implementation.

Collective Bargaining
- Since the 1999 review of the Graduate School, graduate assistants at OSU have organized. The Collective Bargaining Agreement is included as Supplemental Material to this document. Though the bargaining unit includes only those teaching or research assistants whose appointments involve a minimum of 0.15 FTE “...devoted to service to OSU as an employee, excluding...graduate students with GTA or GRA appointments in their capacity as students who are teaching or performing research primarily to fulfill an advanced degree requirement” (Collective Bargaining Agreement, October 29, 2006 – June 30, 2008, Article 2, page 1), the University has taken the approach of treating all graduate assistants equally in regard to the provisions of the Agreement. Responsibility for labor relations is located in the Office of Human Resources. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School has played an important role in collective bargaining through two full contract negotiations and two reopeners by serving as a member of the bargaining team led by the Office of Human Resources. The Graduate Dean hears Coalition of Graduate Employees (CGE) grievances and works with the Director of Human Resources and others in implementing the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The Graduate School plays an important campus role of communicating with graduate programs about implementation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. A request for additional staffing to support this new responsibility was not approved.

Graduate Student Recruitment
- Recruitment Brochure – During FY03, the Graduate School led an effort to develop and produce a centralized graduate studies brochure, and worked with the Office of Admissions to develop a distribution plan for this recruitment piece. This piece is updated annually and is available in print and on the web (see http://oregonstate.edu/admissions/gradvb/index.html and Appendix P). The full-color print version is used at centralized recruiting events.

5 At OSU, such credits are referred to as “blanket” credits.
• Online Graduate Catalog – In 2003, the Graduate Catalog was converted from a printed publication to an online publication (see http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/Default.aspx?section=Graduate. The online document now provides searchable references and facilitates accurate response to policy inquiries by enabling direct links to relevant materials.

• Vietnam Education Foundation – The Graduate School recently entered into an agreement with VEF for the purpose of recruiting talented Vietnamese nationals to graduate study at OSU and to provide a model of substantial financial support for these students if they choose OSU as their graduate institution.

Graduate Student Financial Support
• Tuition Remission Policy – During 1999-2000, the Graduate School led a task force that developed the current Tuition Remission Policy which was precipitated by the adoption of the budget Resource Allocation Model by the Oregon University System in July 1, 1999.

• Institution Educational Allowance Policy – In 2002, the Graduate School developed an Institution Educational Allowance Policy that benefits graduate students who are the recipients of prestigious national fellowships. The policy calls for full tuition and fee support for select fellows and, where possible, the utilization of a portion of the fellow’s cost of education allowance for the purpose of supporting other educational, research and professional development activities.

• Graduate Assistant Health Insurance – In 2003, Graduate School staff served on a team that was responsible for implementing the new graduate assistant health insurance plan called for in the Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiated between OSU and the Coalition of Graduate Employees (CGE).

• Graduate Assistant Salary Supplement – In 2006, the Graduate School played a lead role in developing implementation guidelines for the new salary supplement established under the CGE bargaining agreement.

• Graduate Student Financial Support Annual Report – In 2005, the Graduate School convened a committee of faculty from a wide range of relevant academic and administrative units to examine the effectiveness of centralized graduate student support programs that are administered by the Graduate School and to make recommendations for change and/or improvement. The results of that study were presented to the Provost, the President’s cabinet and academic department heads and graduate program directors (Appendix Q). In response to committee recommendations, the Graduate School has established an earlier financial support competition schedule as an effort to make a greater impact on graduate student recruitment. In addition, the Graduate School now distributes an annual report that includes not only an analysis of centralized graduate student financial support but also an analysis of comprehensive graduate student financial support from all funding sources.

• Delson Bridge to the Future Fund – In 2005, a fundraising campaign was undertaken to establish a fund for the purpose of assisting students in the final phase of graduate education who are faced with research expenses, publication costs, and other incidentals that stand in the way of completing their degree programs.

• Diversity Recruitment Bonus/Diversity Advancement Pipeline Fellowship Programs – In 2006, the Graduate School established this program for the purpose of augmenting recruitment-based departmental assistantships and fellowships by offering bonuses to students from underrepresented and/or nontraditional backgrounds. In addition, the Graduate School redesigned its Minority Pipeline Graduate Fellowship by removing all ethno-racial criteria and establishing criteria that advance inclusiveness in graduate education.

• Jesse Bell Memorial Loan Program – In 2006, the Graduate School established eligibility and selection criteria and implementation procedures for this new graduate student loan program. Unlike
most student loan programs, these non-need-based loans are available on a one-time basis to enrolled graduate students to assist with educational and/or research expenses associated with their advanced degrees.

- CGS/UMI Distinguished Dissertation Award/WAGS/UMI Distinguished Master’s Thesis Awards – In 2005, the Graduate School developed a revised approach to the national and regional competitions to increase recognition of OSU’s nominees and provide local, institutional awards to acknowledge excellence in graduate student research.

- The Coordinator of Graduate Services conducts annual seminars on the topic of graduate student financial support as part of the Graduate School’s ongoing brown bag series. The seminars have also been given to PROMISE interns, McNair Scholars, and students involved with Centro Cultural Cesar Chavez. The Coordinator is also an invited speaker for various departmental graduate student seminar series.

**Internship and Visiting Scholar Activities**

- Presidential Management Fellows Internship Program – In 2005, the Graduate School established an institutional selection procedure to facilitate OSU student participation in this federal internship opportunity.

- Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (SYLFF) Fellows Mobility Program – In 2006, the Graduate School developed guidelines for institutional participation in this visiting scholar program. The Tokyo Foundation, sponsor of this program and the SYLFF Graduate Fellowship for International Research, places great emphasis on international networking, and this program is designed to provide research experiences for SYLFF scholars throughout the world. The advantage to OSU as a sending institution is that OSU SYLFF scholars will be accorded the opportunity to visit other SYLFF institutions for the purpose of gaining new insights into their research topics and enriching their overall educational experience. As a receiving institution, OSU graduate programs may benefit from the infusion of new perspectives and approaches to research in SYLFF scholars’ fields and by the increased opportunity for cultural exchange.

**Involvement with National and Regional Associations**

- The Graduate School hosted the 2007 annual meeting of the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS). The Graduate Dean currently serves on the Council of Graduate Schools board as immediate past president of WAGS. The Coordinator of Graduate Services chaired the workshop planning committee for the annual meeting in 2007 and is a member of the 2008 workshop planning committee.

**Service to the Institution**

Members of the Graduate School serve on a vast array of University task forces, councils, and committees and also take responsibility in developing and leading such groups. For example, within the past five years,

- The Graduate Dean has served as a member of the Provost’s Council, the Assessment Council, the Enrollment Planning Group, the Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the International Council.

- The Associate Dean serves as a member of the collective bargaining team that negotiates with the Coalition of Graduate Employees.

- The Coordinator of Graduate Services has served as a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Faculty Consultative Group, and as a Faculty Senator. The Coordinator also served on the Presidential Screening Committee in 2003 and has been a member of the Technology Resource Fee Committee, the International Programs Council, the International Recruitment Council, the
Scholarship Advisory Committee, the Academic Affairs Publications Committee, and the Student of Color Recruitment and Retention Committee.

- The Administrative Manager serves as a member of the University Commencement Committee, the Academic Users Group for IT, the Integration Workgroup for Document Management, the Business Managers’ Group, and the Human Resources Group.

- Graduate School staff members have been involved in many recruiting activities including searches for Vice President for Research, Associate Director for Employee Relations, OSU Registrar, and Fiscal Planning and Analysis Manager for the Budget. In addition, the Assistant to the Dean represented us at OSU Day at the Capitol.

**Professional Development Programs**
The Graduate School has undertaken several new initiatives to respond to changes in customer base, diminishing resources, and other drivers. Most recently, we submitted two proposals for external funding, as described below.

- NSF Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) – In 2006, the Graduate School submitted an inter-institutional proposal to establish an AGEP alliance in the Pacific Northwest. The project will enable OSU to establish several new initiatives for recruiting and mentoring graduate students of color in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. In addition, the proposal will provide inter-institutional networks among student and faculty participants, and offer professional development programs to better prepare minority graduate students for success in graduate education and in training and careers in university teaching and research.

  The AGEP proposal was in the fundable range but not in the "highest priority to fund" category. The participating institutions resubmitted the proposal for consideration in the current funding cycle.

- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) – This proposal was not funded, but OSU has affiliate status with the project.

- An internal proposal to fund a national speaker on ethics was not funded.

- A new University award was created by the Graduate School to recognize excellence in graduate faculty mentorship. Such awards often generate few nominations, but the Excellence in Graduate Faculty Mentoring Award elicited 14 outstanding nominations. The selection committee believed this response reflected a pent up demand for such an award and evidence of its importance at a research university such as OSU. The first recipient was honored at University Day 2006. External funding should be secured to support continuation of this important award.

**Strengths, Weaknesses and Concerns**
The Graduate School routinely examines its policies and procedures and engages staff in process improvements on a continual basis throughout the year. Process modification and enhancement is motivated generally by the overarching goal of providing meaningful, effective, and efficient service to the graduate community.

Staff and other institutional stakeholders concerned with the Graduate School’s role and effective administration have considered its structure, mission, values, goals, and functions. These re-visioning efforts have taken many forms. To illustrate, under a comprehensive review of the unit that was conducted in 1999, the administrative structure and reporting line was reaffirmed and several recommendations for improvement and change were made. These recommendations coincided with a search for a new graduate dean and guided the initial efforts of the Graduate School under that new
leadership. In 2002, campus redesign activities associated with OSU 2007 resulted in the development of a Graduate Education Strategic Plan. Throughout the following few years, the Graduate School leadership team engaged in conversations with the leadership teams of each unit on campus to gain an understanding of the issues and challenges they face. To address primary concerns that emerged from those conversations, specific goals and strategies were identified, some of which became the basis for development of the current Graduate School Strategic Plan. A Graduate School Diversity Plan was developed to align with OSU’s diversity goals. Annual reports are routinely prepared to reflect on recent accomplishments, to identify tasks for the coming year, and to assure continual realignment with the Graduate School Strategic and Diversity Plans and current institutional initiatives. In addition, Graduate School staff has engaged in extensive introspection through several budget prioritization exercises in which we have reconsidered unit functions.

In September 2006, the Graduate School leadership team participated in a departmental retreat for the purpose of re-examining our mission and values. What follows is our discussion of Graduate School strengths, weaknesses, and concerns informed by the leadership retreat, results of a campus-wide web survey, and subsequent conversations involving all members of the Graduate School.

**Strengths**

One of the greatest strengths of the Graduate School is our centrality to the OSU graduate community. We serve as a clearinghouse of information for a variety of campus sources that impact graduate programs and their students, faculty, and staff. The Graduate School fills a crucial niche by maintaining expertise and knowledge of relevant policy issues and a deep understanding of how the convergence of those policies may affect the graduate enterprise. The graduate faculty depends on us to implement and interpret policies with equity, flexibility, and compassion. There is strong evidence that faculty expect to continue to be supported in this way, especially given the increased demands on their time and the larger number of advisees for whom they may be responsible.

The Graduate School recognizes the university’s long history of strong faculty governance. We work closely with the Graduate Council and graduate faculty, academic deans, and the Provost to develop policy specific to graduate education, to implement and interpret those policies and procedures for the graduate community, to respond to appeals, and to facilitate the activities of a dynamic graduate enterprise within these basic parameters. Our campus culture of governance adds strength to OSU and its graduate programs. Curricula and policies benefit from the creativity, drive and vision of the graduate faculty. Graduate School collaboration within the governance structure and engagement through the consultative process serve to strengthen the graduate enterprise, build consensus, and improve outcomes.

The Graduate School’s talented and experienced classified staff, professional faculty, and professorial faculty fulfill a broad range of functions, and act as dedicated advocates of quality and equity within the graduate experience. We work collaboratively with program leaders and graduate faculty to monitor student progress and develop plans to assist them when difficulties arise. Through our commitment to excellence, we willingly accept responsibility for taking necessary and appropriate action to implement policies uniformly, resolve grievances, ensure due process, and, when warranted, initiate student terminations. We approach these complex and often uncomfortable situations with sensitivity and compassion, and maintain a professional, humane approach to service delivery. We work hard to meet many high-priority deadlines while maintaining the daily responsibilities of our jobs. We take great pride in our accomplishments and our ability to maintain a rapid response delivery. We stand for excellence in graduate education and achieve excellence in our work. We embrace changes and take on new projects with enthusiasm, professionalism and ambition.

Additional strength comes from our long-term experience with the graduate program review process. Through this process, the Graduate School leadership team gains program-specific insight and an
objective, comprehensive perspective on all OSU graduate programs. Participation in program reviews highlights the similarities and differences that exist among graduate programs and provides an insider’s view to each program’s strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

Our collaborative approach is also a strength. As the Graduate School guides and counsels the campus community on matters concerning graduate education, strong connections and collaborations are established with department heads/heads, graduate program coordinators, and program faculty and staff. Graduate School staff plays a critical liaison role with other administrative units such as the Registrar’s Office, Admissions Office, Financial Aid and Scholarships, Business Affairs, Payroll, Human Resources, and the Valley Library. Additionally, the Graduate Dean serves on the Provost’s Council and the Associate Dean facilitates and assists in the activities of the Graduate Council and Graduate Admissions Committee. The Associate Dean of the Graduate School brings Graduate School strength as a member of the bargaining team, and his knowledge, expertise, and participation in the collective bargaining process has added great value to that process. These effective relationships and roles are critical in achieving success in the Graduate School’s mission and goals.

In addition to our broad campus involvement, members of the Graduate School leadership team have a strong role at the national and regional levels through our associations with the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) and the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS). Through these connections, the Graduate School stays abreast of important national and global trends and maintains a keen eye toward increased innovation and best practices.

Weaknesses
The Graduate School mission and function appear to be often misunderstood by the campus community, as revealed by the results of the campus web survey (Appendix N) and by our own observations. As an example, the graduate admissions function is not currently in our purview, but is widely misunderstood to be so by faculty, students, and staff alike. Other misconceptions include the common belief that graduate academic policies are established by the Graduate School rather than by the graduate faculty, or that graduate assistantship stipend resources and appointments are centrally administered and disbursed by the Graduate School. In the web survey, many student respondents comment that they were unaware of the mission of the Graduate School and were unclear about the role the Graduate School played in their educational experience. The Graduate School may not be visible in a significant way to graduate students as they progress through their programs. Still others perceive the function of the Graduate School as redundant and not adding value to that which is already provided by their academic programs. When survey respondents were asked to rate the Graduate School on delivering functions that are core to its mission, administrators and program leaders had a mean score of 2.2 , and graduate students had a mean score of 2.1 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the most favorable.

**Feedback Requested:** Assistance in interpreting the campus surveys that were conducted in preparation for this review would be helpful. How should the results be interpreted in the absence of national norms? What response is indicated?

In general, the Graduate School staffing level reflects that there is insufficient budget and personnel to accomplish all that is required within our broad array of roles and responsibilities at a level appropriate to a major research university. Core functions consume most of our limited resources and limit our ability to take on new initiatives. Challenged to maintain core, routine activities while engaging in innovation, we may be at the point of being stretched beyond a sustainable level. This situation may explain the recent web survey results relative to the Graduate School’s perceived effectiveness (2.2-2.6) and efficiency (2.3-2.7). Again, in the absence of norms, we are limited in our ability to interpret these results and may perceive them as more or less critical than they really are.
FEEDBACK REQUESTED: Of current functions, we would like the team’s perspective regarding their criticality to our core mission and to the goals of the University, considering our campus culture.

We wonder if our current stature on campus and our level of autonomy position us to serve the graduate community and OSU in the most optimal way. While the Graduate School may be perceived as having a high level of autonomy, it is also important to consider the implications that faculty governance has on our ability to promote change and respond nimbly and with independence to novel ideas and evolving issues.

FEEDBACK REQUESTED: Is the OSU organizational/administrative structure appropriate to the mission and goals of the University and those of the Graduate School? Should the name of the unit be “Graduate College?”

The graduate community often expects the Graduate School to have autonomy in graduate enrollment management, including the identification of enrollment targets and strategies for recruiting to achieve a specific demographic mix within the graduate student body. Recognizing that graduate recruitment and admissions are decentralized activities at OSU, the Graduate School questions how, or if, it can impact graduate student selectivity and application yield at the local level.

FEEDBACK REQUESTED: We would like insight into what the appropriate enrollment mix should be, as well as recruiting ideas, model selectivity statistics, and goals for yield. Further, we would be interested in guidance regarding what should be the role of the Graduate School in affecting these goals.

In general, limited financial resources are fundamental to many of the challenges faced by the Graduate School. In the current fiscal environment, the Graduate School is limited in its ability to supply sufficient financial support for interdisciplinary graduate programs. And with limited stipend resources at its disposal, it is greatly restricted in its ability to provide adequate financial support for graduate students. Moreover, there is no development base and no available resources from which to launch a development effort. Attempts to secure external funding to support graduate student and faculty professional development programs have met with limited success. Consequently, there is a gap in our delivery of GTA training and other professional development programs. When compared to graduate schools nationally, OSU falls short of fulfilling its objective of preparing students for their future roles as professionals in their fields and as members of the new professoriate. Professional development programs are common among our peers, and their absence at OSU is a significant concern. We have made great strides in implementing technological advances (e.g. document imaging, loading GRE scores into Banner electronically, automating continuous enrollment, refining statistical reports). However, graduate student and faculty data require the ability to cross the boundaries of more data modules than is true for most units. Yet our technology needs, specifically for management information systems, are often given lower priority among administrative units vying for the same scarce resources.

FEEDBACK REQUESTED: Is our resource base, including physical facilities and technology, adequate to support our mission?

Concerns

The lack of financial resources is among our greatest concerns. Financial constraints prevent us from funding initiatives deemed central to our core. As at other institutions, revenue availability drives some policies and limits some benefits that could otherwise be provided to students (e.g., full health insurance coverage or childbirth leave for graduate students).
Some members of the Graduate School express concern regarding the aspirations articulated in the Graduate School Strategic Plan when compared to the reality of the circumstances within which we function. The constant tension between centralization and decentralization consumes many of our planning activities.

In view of the decision to shift the graduate admissions function from the Admissions Office to the Graduate School, there is significant concern that insufficient resources will be allocated to meet the added responsibility, placing us at risk for failure from the onset. Without adequate funding, the change to a team model approach as outlined in the proposal may be difficult to achieve.

**FEEDBACK REQUESTED:** We would like feedback regarding the proposal to move the graduate admissions function from the Office of Admissions to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School faces significant space constraints, with inadequate workstations and the absence of a conference room. We look forward to completion of the remodel to allay further erosion of conditions within the office and avoid potential inefficiencies.

As the Graduate School considers how we might reshape our unit to better align with institutional and national priorities and advance toward a more modern Graduate School design and function, focus is turned toward the full range of student monitoring activities that we currently perform. Many of these activities may be better performed in a decentralized fashion, and indeed, may already be accomplished in this way by select graduate programs at OSU. However, there is significant tension concerning where these functions should reside, and departments and programs have varying ability to provide oversight at the program level. This tension delays action, and has a potentially paralytic effect on the unit.

Members of the Graduate School leadership team have submitted proposals to secure external resources for the purpose of offering a broader spectrum of development activities for students and faculty. Examples include the NSF Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate and the Responsible Conduct of Research proposals submitted this year. We are aware that any successful proposal will require changing existing oversight functions so that we can deliver on the new initiatives.

**Self Recommendations**

We spend considerable energy in self reflection. There are consistent themes that emerge as we consider ways we could add value to the graduate enterprise. While we have considered the recommendations listed below, we are challenged to isolate the time and resources necessary to develop and implement these ideas and initiatives.

- We should increase our efforts at developing strong connections and collaborations with various entities on campus, particularly graduate programs.
- We should strive to assume a more proactive stance rather than working primarily in a responsive mode.
- The Graduate School should assume a stronger educational role by offering workshops and other types of training sessions on relevant topics, targeted to groups including graduate students, graduate coordinators, and Graduate Faculty members.