Materials linked from the October 11, 2012 Graduate Council agenda.

**Prioritized Objectives to Achieve Strategic Plan Goals**

Following approval of the Strategic Plan for the Graduate School by Provost Randhawa, we were asked to develop a list of prioritized goals and objectives that we would begin working on immediately. The following represents the list of 3 goals and 9 objectives that we identified as a high priority following a morning long discussion at our annual Graduate School retreat, a process facilitated by Paul Biwan from Human Resources. Those among the Graduate School Leadership identified to lead each effort were agreed upon during a subsequent leadership meeting. The leads for each objective will consider the proposed Action Items, modify these or add their own as needed, and begin moving forward on their assigned objectives. Assistance from Graduate Council members is most welcome!

**Goal 1: Increase our graduate student population to 25% of total university enrollment through recruitment and retention of high achieving and diverse students.**

**Objective 1.1 -- Effectively recruit high achieving students and ensure representation of under-represented minorities. Leads: Fran, Kim, Rosemary**

**Action Items**

1.1.1: Poll individual programs to identify the extent, types and success of recruitment activities currently occurring at the program and unit levels at OSU.

1.1.2: Identify programs with the capacity (sufficient well-qualified faculty, infrastructure, support mechanisms, etc.) for growth, and develop enrollment growth strategies for each of these programs. Recruitment efforts will focus on these programs.

1.1.3: Develop and disseminate information on best practice guidelines for recruitment and admissions based on findings from 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, and other sources such as the Council of Graduate Schools and the published literature.

1.1.4: During recruiting activities and orientation, provide information to applicants and matriculants on navigating the financial aid, payroll, and human resource systems at OSU with a special focus on the increased use and effectiveness of the MyOSU Portal system.

1.1.5: Create and distribute recruiting information to programs and units that focus on commonalities: Corvallis and its environs, student support services at OSU, Graduate School processes and procedures, interdisciplinary resources, information on fees, books, printing, parking and the cost of living in Corvallis, among others (see Open Forums Findings Report for more information about this identified need).

1.1.6: Provide support to programs in an effort to enhance their recruitment efforts, such as site visits, visits to campus, recruiting information and online recruiting efforts.
1.1.7: Use central resources to represent OSU’s graduate programs at national and international conferences where recruitment of under-represented minorities and international students is a high priority (e.g., SACNAS, ABRCAMS, etc.) and assess effectiveness of these efforts.

1.1.8: Increase support for dual degree options with professional programs, and develop a process for facilitating the transition of high-achieving undergraduates into graduate programs.

**Objective 1.2 -- Increase the efficiency of the application and matriculation process, and improve timely and clear communication with applicants and matriculants.** Leads: John, Rosemary

**Action Items**

1.2.1: Identify and employ software that allows a one-stop application website, including a “progress bar” with estimated time to a decision, and program contacts. All materials for an application, including letters of recommendation and official transcripts, will be submitted and tracked via this site and data will be harvested from the system to populate annual reports back to programs on all aspects of student progress.

1.2.2: Develop mechanisms that allow individual programs to waive application fees if desired in return for compensation to the Graduate School for lost revenue.

**Objective 1.6 -- Improve communication among the Graduate School, graduate students and graduate faculty.** Leads: Courtney, Anita, John, Nagwa, Kim

**Action Items**

1.6.1: Restructure and upgrade the Graduate School website to more effectively provide information to prospective and current students and faculty. Include software that allows visible and consistently updated pages and notices on Graduate School policy and procedural changes for both graduate students and faculty.

1.6.2: Assess the utility of the current use of Facebook and the Grad Connections Newsletter to provide news and information to students. Increase or alter information provided through social media outlets based on findings.

1.6.3: Provide a mechanism annually to gather constructive student and faculty feedback, particularly relating to the progress being made through the implementation of this plan.

1.6.4: Identify groups of students based on 1.6.3 and in consultation with program directors and advising services whose needs require particular attention to ensure retention and success. Develop targeted programs to identify at-risk students early and try to improve persistence in the degree program.

1.6.5: Work with the International Programs office to identify the particular informational needs of international students regarding OSU graduate policies and procedures, and develop materials for graduate program directors, faculty and students addressing the international graduate student experience at OSU.
Indicators of Success for Goal 1

1. Increased total number of applicants to OSU’s graduate programs that have the capacity to grow their graduate student population
2. Increased overall GPA and GRE scores in the matriculant pool
3. Increased yield of matriculating students from accepted applicants
4. Increased number of matriculants from under-represented minorities
5. Reduction in time from a completed application to a decision by the program
6. Reduction in the net cost of the application/enrollment/matriculation process
7. Improved level of satisfaction expressed by students and faculty with regards to the application and matriculation processes
8. Increased student satisfaction with graduate studies at OSU reflected in a variety of annual feedback mechanisms including the Graduate School’s exit surveys
9. Increase in positive responses to questions regarding communication during annual feedback mechanisms (e.g., open forums, online surveys, exit surveys, etc.) from both students and faculty
10. Decrease in the number of inaccurate perceptions by students expressed during annual feedback mechanisms

Goal 2: Continuously Improve Program Quality

Objective 2.2 – Improve quality assessment of graduate programs; Leads: Anita, Marty, Courtney

Action Items

2.2.1: The Graduate School will work with the University Assessment Council, the Graduate Council, Institutional Research, and the Academic Programs, Accreditation, and Assessment (APAA) office to develop a set of metrics for consistent comparison of graduate program quality over time (trends) and with our peer institutions. These data should be collected centrally and reported annually to programs. Additionally, these metrics will form the core of the university accreditation data on graduate programs and the self-study for decadal external graduate program reviews. Because programs are diverse, the Graduate School will work with each program to identify any additional program specific metrics that ensure a meaningful reflection of the program trends and comparisons with programs at peer institutions.

2.2.2: Along with the Assessment Council, help graduate programs to develop effective full-cycle assessment programs that align with accreditation and graduate program review needs of the university, and guide them in effective use and reporting of assessment data.

2.2.3: Annually provide training sessions for graduate program directors to discuss ongoing assessment needs, reporting requirements, new policies and procedures, dissemination of best practice information, and progress in meeting the goals of this strategic plan.

2.2.4: Every fall term, provide an orientation program for new graduate program directors to provide essential information (hard copy and online) on the management of a graduate
program, including OSU Graduate Council rules and policies, best practices, expectations, and support services.

**Objective 2.4 – Grow the number of graduate faculty and their capacity to train students;**

**Lead: Anita**

**Action Items**

2.4.1: Contact all tenured and tenure-track faculty who are not currently a graduate faculty member to discuss and assess their capability to advise graduate students. Encourage them to participate in graduate education. If a faculty member is not interested in becoming a graduate faculty member, determine why and attempt to provide incentives for involvement.

2.4.2: Working with graduate program directors, the Graduate School will contact PhD scientists and scholars in the region who might be qualified to serve as graduate faculty through a courtesy appointment and assess their capability to advise a student. Make special efforts to recruit graduate faculty who are under-represented minorities. Provide direct support efforts to ensure that off-campus graduate faculty have the information, tools, skills and university support necessary to perform well as a graduate advisor.

**Objective 2.5 – Improve and enhance transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary opportunities in graduate education. Leads: Brenda, Marty, Anita, Barb**

**Action Items**

2.5.1: Support opportunities for new transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary collaborations for graduate students by rewarding the contributions of faculty to existing and new interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary programs. Work with the Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning to develop new funding models for interdisciplinary programs.

2.5.2: Work with the Academic Programs, Assessment and Accreditation office (and perhaps the Oregon University System) to streamline the creation of new transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary graduate programs on a trial basis. We suggest a six year trial period before formal Category I applications are required or a decision to terminate is made.

2.5.3: In collaboration with the Research Office, sponsor workshops to facilitate idea development and support proposal writing for new NSF IGERT programs and other interdisciplinary training grants.

2.5.4: Explore potential funding sources, possibly from the private sector, to support new interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary graduate programs including “IGERT-like“ programs.

**Indicators of Success for Goal 2**

1. Increase in OSU’s scores on the NRC criteria for rankings of graduate programs
2. Increased satisfaction and employment-in-their-field of masters and doctoral alumni
3. Development of effective full-cycle assessment programs, and implementation of changes to achieve improvement based on assessment results
4. Development and use of consistent metrics for meaningful comparisons with peer institutions
5. Improvements in quality and delivery of internal program metrics over a five-year time span
6. Increase in the percentage of the total student body that is graduate students
11. Increase in the number of graduate faculty qualified to advise doctoral and masters students
12. Improvement in student assessment of faculty mentoring and advising
13. Increased number of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary graduate programs
14. Increased enrollment in and graduation from interdisciplinary degree programs
15. Increased faculty participation in interdisciplinary programs
16. More IGERT and “IGERT-like” proposals submitted and funded, with a goal of being awarded up to one per year for the next three years, and then an additional three programs in the following two years

GOAL 3: Grow and invest resources to enhance graduate education opportunities

**Objective 3.1 -- Create new or restructured graduate programs where there is capacity. Leads:** Brenda, Anita

**Action Items**

3.1.1: Consult with the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Business to explore the possibilities of developing new graduate programs with a focus on doctoral program development, and support efforts as needed.

3.1.2: Explore the restructuring of existing programs or development of new programs that contribute to our signature areas of excellence in other colleges as well (see Objective 2.1).

**Objective 3.2 -- Create endowments for graduate fellowships** Leads: Brenda, Anita

**Action Item**

3.2.1: Establish a greater number of OSU Graduate Fellowships by working with the OSU Foundation and the academic deans to identify private and industry donors and by raising the priority of graduate student funding at the college and university levels.

**Objective 3.3 -- Incentivize assistantship opportunities for graduate students Leads: Marty, Anita, Fran, Brenda**

**Action Items**

3.3.1: Provide training and incentives for expanded GTA positions to ensure that increases in GTA positions follow increases in undergraduate enrollment in each college. Work to identify those undergraduate programs targeted for increases in enrollment, and work with college deans to encourage them to invest in GTA positions to meet the needs of the undergraduate program while also improving and investing in graduate education.

3.3.2: Finalize development of a Certificate in University Teaching that will provide an 18-credit opportunity for advanced training in university teaching in an effort to provide a high level of training for those students planning a career in academia.
3.3.3: In collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning, develop workshops that provide training for new GTAs.

3.3.4: Work with programs to ensure that GTA positions available within departments, but not filled within departments, are advertised broadly.

3.3.5: Incentivize the hiring of graduate research assistants (GRAs) by allocating a limited number of tuition remissions to GRAs based on university research agenda and strategic enrollment goals.

Indicators of Success for Goal 3

1. Increased number of graduate students
2. Addition of new graduate programs in Colleges of Business and Liberal Arts
3. Increase in total dollars raised per year in support of graduate fellowships, scholarships, and other forms of support for our graduate students within the Graduate School and among colleges
4. Increase in number of graduate students recruited to serve as GRAs on research projects addressing the OSU Research Agenda
5. Increase in the number of GTA FTE within each college proportional to the number of undergraduates
6. Assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the Certificate in University Teaching and other teaching workshops for employment success through Graduate School exit surveys and alumni surveys
7. Improved GRA/GTA salary competitiveness and equity across programs
8. Increased number of graduate scholarship and fellowship awardees
9. Increased number of GTAs assigned to Ecampus courses.
10. Number of students completing the optional Certificate in University Teaching each year
11. Improvement in achieving goals articulated for each scholarship and fellowship program