

GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING

**May 18, 2006
3:00pm, MU 212**

Present: Filtz, Francis, Gitelman, Harter, Koenig, McCandless, McMullen, Rettig, Rockey, Sanchez, Tadepalli, Unsworth

Absent: McLain, Proebsting

Guests: Kate Peterson (Enrollment Management), Michele Sandlin (Admissions), Rosemary Garagnani (Admissions), Jim Richman, Bella Bose

1. Report of the External Consultants on Graduate Admissions

Sally Francis (Graduate School) reminded the Council of the task force, chaired by John Westfall, Professor of Chemistry, that examined graduate admission procedures on campus in 2001. The task force report was quite thorough and the Office of Admissions made changes to the graduate admissions process as a result. It was agreed that a follow-up review would take place two to three years later.

To undertake the follow-up review, the Graduate School, Office of Admissions, and Enrollment Management invited two consultants arranged through the Council of Graduate Schools to campus in March 2006. Over the course of two days, the consultants met with key campus offices, held open forums for department heads and staff and met with university administration. The key recommendations made by the consultants were to move the responsibility of graduate admissions to the Graduate School, to stop using paper applications and implement a 100% web-based application process, to stop processing unpaid applications, to eliminate the Faculty Senate's Graduate Admissions Committee and assign that responsibility to the Graduate School, and for the Dean of the Graduate School to work with Graduate Council on all matters of enrollment and admissions.

Francis informed the Council that the consultants' report was discussed at a Provost's Council meeting and that she is now working with Michele Sandlin and Kate Peterson to bring the recommendations before the Graduate Council, the Graduate Admissions Committee, and OSU department chairs. Later, at the request of the Provost, they will prepare an implementation plan to determine what resources would be needed to implement the report's first two recommendations.

Alix Gitelman (College of Science) asked Francis if the Provost would be committed to implementing these recommendations pending the feasibility study. She added that in reading the report she understands that graduate admissions procedures at OSU are inefficient and that outside people are alarmed at our processes. Gitelman stated that the stumbling block to change is usually a lack of resources. If there is no commitment of support from the top then she doesn't see a point to this exercise.

Both Francis and Peterson explained that the Provost is committed to doing something to address the issues. Peterson added that the idea behind the feasibility study was to protect the Graduate School from being saddled with this responsibility without adequate resources to manage it.

Gitelman asked about the consultants' recommendation regarding necessary FTE. Peterson responded that during the consultants' exit interview she understood that the consultants were not being literal about the FTE needed for the transfer but were instead making a statement that it would take significant investment to successfully move the responsibility of admissions to the Graduate School.

Alex Sanchez (College of Education) asked how the transfer of graduate admissions responsibility to the Graduate School would affect a department's admission authority.

Francis responded that individual departments have never had admission authority. For legal reasons, the *University*, not the department, admits students based on the recommendation of admission from the department. Sandlin added that the University would never admit a student into a graduate program without the recommendation of the department or program.

Francis explained how OSU's current hybrid (centralized/decentralized) admissions procedure is currently managed. She added that if graduate admissions moves to the Graduate School, current campus procedures and procedures from other universities will be reviewed to determine the most effective system.

Prasad Tadepalli (College of Engineering) stated that his department (EECS) has invested a lot in a web-based admissions infrastructure and wondered how the transfer would affect his unit. Would they be required to switch to a different system? Tadepalli stated that he wants departments to have the ability to design their own admissions forms.

Peterson responded that the design of any future system has not yet been decided upon but she understands that individual disciplines have different needs and that some flexibility and customization will always be necessary no matter what system is employed.

Francis added that the question of system design is separate from the question of whether or not graduate admissions should be moved to the Graduate School.

Jim Richman (a member of the Graduate Admissions Committee and a faculty member in the College of Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences) discussed the duties of the Graduate Admissions Committee in relation to conditional admission decisions. He informed the Council that GAC members' ideas on what makes an admissible student is extremely varied so there is quite a bit of discussion over these cases in that committee. Richman warned that if the GAC were eliminated a lot of this type of "judgment" work would be transferred to the Graduate School. Francis commented that the Graduate School is quite experienced in handling petitions, exceptions, grievances, and so forth and appreciates the workload issues.

Francis informed the Council that the chair of the GAC, Rakesh Gupta, does not disagree with the consultants' recommendation. However, since the GAC is a Faculty Senate committee, the

Faculty Senate would need to take action by revising its Bylaws to eliminate this committee. The Graduate Council should go on record to either support or reject this recommendation, so that the Faculty Senate can be informed of the Council's position notified. Francis added that members of the GAC should also inform the Faculty Senate of their opinion.

Additional discussion ensued concerning conditional vs. regular admission.

There was also some discussion on the practice of processing applications without a paid fee.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the consultants' recommendation to move the responsibility of graduate admissions to the Graduate School.

The motion was then amended to become

To accept the consultants' recommendation to move the responsibility of graduate admissions to the Graduate School provided that the feasibility study has positive results and that funding for the move is identified. Additionally the Council recommends that all the administrative processing changes suggested on page 8 of the consultant's report be taken seriously even if the transfer does not occur.

All voted in favor. Motion passed.

2. Environmental and Molecular Toxicology Follow-up Review Report

Bella Bose (College of Engineering) presented a follow-up report of the Toxicology Graduate Council Program Review. The original graduate program and CSREES reviews took place September 23, 2002. Bose and Carol Caughey (College of Health and Human Sciences) revisited the department on May 25, 2005. Bose reported that in a meeting with the department head, Larry Curtis, they collected the following information (report appended here):

Follow-up Graduate Program Review Department of Environmental and Molecular Toxicology

Introduction

The follow-up graduate program review of the Department of Environmental and Molecular Toxicology took place on May 25, 2005. The Graduate Council review team members were:

Bella Bose, College of Engineering (School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science)

Carol Caughey, College of Health and Human Sciences (Design and Human Environment)

The team met Dr. Larry Curtis, the department head for about 1 ½ hours and discussed various things – most important being the steps taken by the department on the concerns and recommendations mentioned in the 2002 graduate review. The following report was generated from this discussion.

The department had 15 faculty members in 2005 compared to 17 in 2002. However, the department was planning to hire 4 new faculty – 2 replacements and 2 new. There were 25 graduate students, almost all of them pursuing Ph.D. degree. There were 6 incoming students in Fall 2004, 2 were supported by training grant, 1 on departmental fellowship and 3 on GRA.

2002 Review Concerns and Recommendations and the Steps taken since then:

- CR-1: During our discussion with the graduate students, they noted that some minor improvements in advising could be made. Currently, the department head advises all students who don't have a major professor. Even though the department head is available most of the time to answer their questions the students felt that some sort of orientation program for the incoming students would be very useful. Some students were not sure about the policy and procedures regarding qualifying exam. One student, who is currently in her third year in the program, mentioned that only very recently had she found out the extent of the lab resources available in the department.
Steps taken: At present there is an orientation program for all incoming students at the beginning of Fall term. The department web site has been updated, mentioning the procedures and policies on qualifying and preliminary exams, required courses, and so forth.
- CR-2: Some students felt that it would be useful to have some teaching experience before they graduate. Even though they get some experience through their research seminars they felt it was inadequate. The department is currently in the process of creating an undergraduate degree program in toxicology. Once this happens, the graduate students should get some opportunities to TA in some of the undergraduate classes.
Steps taken: There is an undergraduate minor in toxicology and so the students get chances to teach classes. There are two students, supported by an NIH training grant, teaching for high school teachers. Further, some students are teaching in the chemistry department.
- CR-3: Because of the designed focus on research in the department, some faculty may have fewer demands on teaching and instruction of graduate students. Other faculty may have a greater demand on their time in instruction as compared to time spent in conducting research. It is suggested that a review of teaching loads be conducted to provide feedback as to any levels of inequity of faculty time.
Steps taken: Even though the department gets only one FTE equivalent amount in its budget for teaching the new policy is that every faculty member teaches one course per year.
- CR-4: At present the position descriptions of faculty members do not include teaching. Yet they do teach graduate classes. This was not perceived as a problem currently, but potentially this could have an impact on budgeting and funding. An update of the faculty job descriptions to reflect graduate teaching responsibilities is recommended.
Steps taken: Please see item #3 above.
- CR-5: Office space for graduate students, research assistants, and post-docs, both in ALS and in Weniger Hall, is limited. The need for more office space was mentioned during the review as important. From an occupational safety point of view, offices should not be located in research laboratories.

Steps taken: One of the programs supported by USDA had been eliminated. This has freed some space and so space is no longer a problem. ▲

Theresa Filtz (Pharmacy) asked Bose if the new department policy on equitable teaching loads is now reflected in the faculty position descriptions. Bose replied yes and that the equity issue has been solved to the satisfaction of the faculty.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Toxicology Follow-up Review Report. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

3. Minutes from Previous Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of April 20, 2006. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

4. End of Year Issues

Bruce Rettig (Graduate School) asked Council members how they would like to handle the approval of minutes after the final Council meeting of the academic year. After some discussion a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes via e-mail. All voted in favor. Motion passed.

Rettig then asked for a Council volunteer to serve as a back-up evaluator on the CAT II subcommittee over the summer. Hal Koenig (College of Business) agreed to take on the responsibility.

Rettig also warned the Council that if there should be a student grievance filed over the summer Francis would need to convene a special advisory committee to hear the grievance. Council members need to be prepared to serve if called upon.

5. Old Business

Francis informed the Council that she recently had a conversation with the Provost's Council concerning the Graduate Council's recommendation to form a task force to pursue the Council of Graduate Schools' grant funding for training in the Responsible Conduct of Research. Francis told the Council that members of the Provost's Council were supportive and hoped we would take action and submit a grant proposal. Francis added that she is now working on convening a committee to do this.

Meeting adjourned.

Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Consultancy Report

Graduate Admissions Process Review Oregon State University

March 22, 2006

Submitted by:

Daniel J. Bennett, Assistant Dean, Graduate Admissions/Student and Academic Affairs,
Graduate Division, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Robert S. Sowell, Dean of the Graduate School, North Carolina State University (NCSU)

Introduction

This consultancy is part of a formal review of the graduate admissions process conducted at Oregon State University (OSU) in 2005-2006. The current review follows a 2001 Graduate Admissions Task Force review that resulted in the adoption of “the model of a standard, hybrid/centralized admissions process.” Although the stated goals of the task force and the subsequent re-engineering of the graduate admissions process in 2002 were to “(i) increase the efficiency of the admission process for applicants, academic units, and the University administration, and (ii) increase the effectiveness of academic units in meeting their recruitment goals,” it appears that these goals were not met. Therefore, a renewed effort to improve the graduate admissions process was initiated during the current academic year.

Over the course of two days the consultants met with the Graduate School Dean, Associate Dean, and staff, the Director, Office of Admissions, associate directors and staff from the various functional areas of Admissions, the Interim Assistant Provost for Enrollment Management, the Enrollment Management Information Technology Manager, chairs of departmental admissions committees, chairs and admissions staff from departments, members of the Academic Senate’s Graduate Admissions Committee, staff from the International Office, and the Vice Provost for Student Affairs.

It became apparent from the discussion with chairs that several departments wish to grow their graduate programs, some by up to 15 to 20%, and many units wish to raise their national rankings. A faculty member from the College of Engineering expressed the desire for his school to be in the top 15 of engineering schools in the U.S. The consultants have included consideration of these goals in their observations of the graduate admissions process.

In order to frame the discussion in this report, it should be noted that the consultants are the Dean of the Graduate School at North Carolina State University (NCSU) and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Admissions/Student and Academic Affairs of the Graduate Division at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). At NCSU the Graduate School centrally manages the intake of graduate applications (all submitted and paid online through Apply Yourself software) and related material, is moving toward the use of document imaging to electronically transmit the related material documents to departments, and is in the process of implementing of People Soft student systems on campus. At UCLA, the Graduate Division centrally manages the intake of applications (all submitted online through in-house software; 95% are paid online, with the other 5% paid through check/money order) but related material is sent directly by the applicants (self-managed) to the departments. The online application data are made available to departments through mainframe and intranet processes; the latter allows the department a variety of options for printing out an applicant profile. The mainframe admissions and student systems are legacy-based and currently are in the process of a major upgrade (in-house design) that will permit more enhancements for student records processing.

In this report we state our primary findings and recommendations on structural and administrative process changes, and make some concluding remarks about graduate admissions at OSU.

Primary Findings

- There is widespread confusion about and unhappiness with the graduate admissions process among applicants, staff, faculty, and university administrators at OSU.
- The 2001-2002 review of graduate admissions focused on the micromanagement of parts of the admissions process rather than on the larger structural and managerial problems that inhibit a more efficient process.
- Changes that emanated from the 2001-2002 report were not well communicated to or understood by the campus community. In some instances the changes appear to have made things worse rather than better. The lack of follow-up and continuous training to meet the needs of staff and faculty turnover and confusion about the lines of responsibility for graduate admissions have resulted in widespread ignorance about policy and procedure. For example, some faculty believe graduate admissions is run by the Graduate School, and many departments are unaware of or do not know how to use existing Banner and Data Warehouse report functionality to access information (no instruction manual is provided).
- A critical goal of the 2001-2002 re-engineering of graduate admissions – to improve turnaround times through the establishment of service standards for moving documents to departments and processing department decisions – has not been met. Turnaround times on both processes vary widely, depending on how documents are submitted, which varies by applicant because of applicant and department confusion, and on when the applications are submitted. Conflicting deadlines between undergraduate and graduate processing cause delays in processing graduate applications and decisions.
- There is no one individual or unit in charge of graduate admissions at Oregon State University. There is no separate director; responsibility is delegated to the campus admissions director, who also has responsibility for undergraduate admissions, her main priority. The director does not have delegated authority to institute training or make process changes to improve graduate admissions. Responsibility for graduate admissions is spread among the Student Affairs Admissions and Information Technology Offices, the departments, the International Office, the Academic Senate's Graduate Admissions Committee, and minimally, the Graduate Council and the Graduate School.
- Graduate admissions has no campus advocate. It is housed in Admissions in Student Affairs, an office and unit whose primary focus is undergraduate admissions and student welfare. During the walk-through, Admissions staff at all levels clearly expressed that during the crunch time of conflicting deadlines, their priority was undergraduate admissions. A former staff member in Admissions who now works for a graduate program reinforced this position. Admissions conducts twice-a-year training for undergraduate admissions but staff could not remember the last time it was done for graduate admissions (perhaps in 2002 or 2003?).

- There is widespread sentiment on campus, among department chairs and staff, the International Student Office, and even among Admissions staff, that graduate admissions belongs in the Graduate School.
- The central receipt and processing of graduate admissions materials by the Admissions Office, an initial step that does not involve transcript evaluation (done later when admission is recommended), adds little quality to the process for applicants or departments and causes confusion and delays.
- A number of separate, duplicative graduate admissions processes have been created in departments and colleges to compensate for some of the deficiencies in campus systems and processes. This phenomenon both solves and adds to the problems. Departments try to bypass the central admissions procedures by telling applicants to send duplicate materials directly to them, to not pay their applications until a decision is made, or other mixed-message information. In some instances a separate departmental process facilitates initial application review at the departmental level but later delays the processing of decisions; it almost always causes confusion for everyone involved in the process.
- There is a lack of standardization, integration, and clarity of purpose between all parts of the graduate admissions process on campus.
- The technology serving graduate admissions is not sufficiently robust to provide the type of services needed by applicants, staff, and faculty, and places the University behind the competition.
- The separate, in-house, enhanced technology graduate admissions process created by Enrollment Management IT for the Departments of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science does not appear to fully serve the needs of these departments and their applicants (many service features are lacking) and perhaps even adds to the problems for applicants (for example, Computer Science is asking applicants to list every course taken in Computer Science rather than simply referring to the applicant's transcript; also the second level of specialization information being requested of applicants seems too specific for this point in time). Hence it does not offer a model for the use of other departments in addressing many of the deficiencies in the current process.
- Processing unpaid applications causes problems. These applications are not fully captured in admissions data and hence skew selectivity statistics, making some programs look less selective than they are. They also add to processing confusion, and take time away from processing applications for which fees have been paid, i.e., these applicants are failing to support the enterprise of graduate admission. Further, if an applicant who had not paid the fee were to appeal a denied admission, the appeal would be outside of normal University processes, potentially causing legal concerns.
- International graduate applications and enrollment are dropping and require attention. The International Office staff report confusion among international applicants about

process and indicate they must employ TA's to handle emails from international applicants and to handle problem cases. This office also must intervene on behalf of international applicants who wish to come as sponsored students, because of inadequate advising provided by the Admissions Office. The Admissions Office does not provide a separate email address for international graduate applicant inquiries but instead directs applicants to the undergraduate email address.

- The Graduate School is almost completely out of the loop in regard to graduate admissions. The graduate dean does not receive regular weekly reports on application and admissions data or take a lead role in graduate enrollment management discussions or planning. Other than having the responsibility for loading tapes of GRE/TOEFL test scores into Banner, approving applicants to pursue a second Ph.D., or reviewing those applicants who are OSU employees, in Projection 1000, or are being re-admitted, the Graduate School has little meaningful responsibility for anything connected with graduate admissions.
- The Academic Senate's Graduate Admissions Committee (GAC) as it presently functions serves little useful purpose and is too disconnected from the Graduate School and the Graduate Council.
- The Graduate Council needs to be more engaged in graduate admissions policy and planning issues.

Recommendations

- **Move the graduate admissions operation to the Graduate School.**

It is not possible for graduate admissions at OSU to function in a rational and efficient manner until it is put into the hands of those who have the vested interest in making it a priority. Also, it is not advisable to separate the operation of one of the most important charges of a graduate dean – to assist faculty and departments in the recruitment of top quality graduate students – from the graduate dean's other administrative functions.

The administrative model of housing graduate admissions in a central campus admissions office is little used in public universities in the U.S. and when it is, the problems found at OSU are common. In the latest edition of *An Essential Guide to Graduate Admissions*, published by the Council of Graduate Schools in 2005, the authors note (page 6) "When the processes are centralized within a graduate school rather than combined with undergraduate admissions in a university-wide office, more control is achieved over the entire admissions process. The graduate school often can answer applicants' questions about the institutional requirements and policies and about its array of academic programs more knowledgably than can a university-wide office. Further, graduate applications do not compete for attention with other deadlines (freshman, transfer, or professional applications)."

The primary focus of Student Affairs/Admissions at OSU is undergraduate applicants and students. Graduate admissions is not a priority for this unit and their staff do not have a deep

understanding of graduate admissions concerns. For example, their director of information technology seemed surprised that faculty on graduate admissions committees would prefer to have percentile scores included as part of the database for graduate admissions review. The reviewers were equally surprised that this feature was not available, as percentile scores are far more meaningful than numerical scores when reviewing a specific application cohort. Part of the reason for this lack of understanding is that undergraduate and graduate admissions recruitment, decision-making, and enrollment management are very different in that the former is highly centralized, the latter highly decentralized. A decentralized graduate admissions decision-making process requires a deep understanding on the part of central management of the academic cultures of the graduate departments, and of their needs and values; it also requires continuous communication with and training of departmental staff.

The campus Director of the Admissions Office currently signs letters of admission for graduate admits. This is inappropriate and sends the wrong signal to applicants and departments in regard to the priorities of the campus and its graduate school. The Dean of the Graduate School's name should appear on all letters of graduate admission.

- **The transfer of responsibility for graduate admissions must include: (1) a full FTE for the appointment of a Director of Graduate Admissions; (2) a full FTE for the appointment of a Director of Information Technology services; (3) at least another full or half-time FTE to support admissions processing; and (4) additional physical space, if needed.**

(1) The director should report to the Dean of the Graduate School and be responsible for leadership and management of the admissions process. A graduate school should have a designated official responsible for graduate admissions. This individual ultimately is responsible for a range of functions and activities in relation to graduate admissions. Chief among these responsibilities is the role of the university's compliance officer for university, state, and federal policies and procedures for graduate admissions (e.g., university baseline standards, state privacy regulations, Title VI and Title IX, non-immigrant visa policies, etc.). The lack of a clear chain of accountability at OSU has contributed to a number of problems observed by the consultants. For example, the design of the online application and the admissions database and connected products lacks a number of important features needed by graduate applicants and admissions committees. And there should be a process manual and ongoing training procedures for graduate admissions that are the responsibility of this position. The director should join and participate in the activities of the National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP), the national professional organization devoted to all aspects of graduate admissions administration.

(2) The technology serving graduate admissions is inadequate for the mission of the OSU Graduate School. The lack of contemporary features, such as online letters of recommendation, a fully functional application status screen for applicants, and receipt and posting of GRE and TOEFL scores through an electronic file transfer protocol (FTP), offer a striking contrast to other competitor institutions. Again we quote from *An Essential Guide to Graduate Admissions* (page 5): "Allowing applicants to confirm receipt of documents, check the status of their application, and access admissions decisions through a secure online enrollment management system greatly enhances this process."

James H. Lampley (Service Quality in Higher Education: Expectations versus Experiences of Doctoral Students, *College and University Journal*, Volume 77, Number 2, Fall 2001, page 13) refers to an “increasing sense of consumerism” among graduate students that demands more online information and services. Consumer-oriented applicants also are asking for more services in the admissions process, and for quality assessment information (e.g., average time-to-degree, available levels of financial support, placement information on graduates) for graduate programs under their consideration and universities are supplying it via web sites. OSU needs to move in this direction as well, and this functionality could best be managed by the Graduate School.

If the Banner system is inadequate for the streamlined processing of online applications and for providing the level of online service features needed by applicants and departments, the University should consider purchasing another admissions commercial software package, such as Apply Yourself (used at NCSU) that can streamline processing and provide high level services, and from which application information can be loaded into Banner.

The lack of technology support in the Graduate School hampers its ability to move OSU’s graduate programs to a higher level through better recruitment, institutional research, program review, and support for online student services. The new technology support position can begin with admissions and then actively move on to work on these other areas of concern. Also, the IT Director should work collaboratively with the Student Affairs IT Directors and other units on campus to make sure that the Graduate School’s interests are taken into account in the development and upgrading of all student systems.

(3) While we recommend the cross-training of the Graduate School’s student affairs staff in admissions matters so that they can serve applicants, students, and departments in all admissions and student affairs matters, an administrative model in use at the graduate schools of both consultants, we believe that the slim staffing resources of the OSU Graduate School require augmentation for this concept to work well.

(4) The reviewers were told that a Total Quality Management (TQM) review conducted more than a decade ago at OSU recommended that graduate admissions be moved to the Graduate School but that space was a reason for this recommendation not being implemented. If additional space is needed to accommodate the new FTE, equipment, and files, this should be made part of the transfer process.

- **Discontinue the Graduate Admissions Committee and move the process for consideration of exceptions to the University’s baseline standards to the Graduate School.**

The eight-member GAC (plus two support staff) meets approximately 24 times a year to review 100+ applications. Even its own membership now recommends that the Committee no longer review applications with a 2.75 to 2.99 junior/senior grade point average. The exceptions review process should be the responsibility of the Associate Dean, reserving the Dean to review appeal cases only. The responsibility for this review should reside in the Graduate School, as it does in almost all universities with which the consultants are acquainted. Such activity will enrich the

deans' understanding of the types of recommendations and bases for exceptions being made by the academic departments and of the graduate admissions review process. Data on exceptions should be part of an annual report on graduate admissions presented by the Dean to the Graduate Council.

- **The Graduate Dean should fully engage the Graduate Council in graduate admissions enrollment management and policy issues through full and frequent reports on graduate admissions activity.**

Rather than have a separate Senate Graduate Admissions Committee, whose activities are more properly the purview of the Graduate School, the Graduate Council should become more active in discussing graduate admissions enrollment management and policy issues and provide support to the Graduate School for initiatives that will strengthen the plans to improve the graduate applicant pool and reach enrollment management goals. Graduate admissions/enrollment management should be made part of the review of each graduate program, with the Graduate School providing detailed reports on the admissions data for the program under review.

- **Make administrative processing changes in graduate admissions:**
 1. Abolish paper applications and require all applicants to apply and pay online.
 2. Stop processing or considering unpaid applications at the central and department levels.
 3. Consider raising the application fee and establishing a fee differential for international applications (that cost much more to process) to support improvements in admissions processing.
 4. Use Educational Testing Service's (ETS) ScoreLink process, rather than tapes, to receive and post GRE/TOEFL scores. Create an automated job to access and process electronic files that requires minimal staff intervention.
 5. Include and populate GRE/TOEFL percentile score fields in the database to facilitate faculty review of application portfolios.
 6. Either bifurcate the application process, requiring applicants to complete an online application and pay centrally and submit all other materials directly to the department (process used at UCLA), or receive all materials centrally (process used at NCSU) and create central scanning process so that files are received electronically by departments.
 7. The Graduate School should assert full authority to ensure that Graduate School and departmental staff and websites are dispensing consistent and correct information to graduate applicants.
 8. The Graduate School and Student Affairs should collaborate to establish an online process for admitted applicants to submit their statement of intention to register and deposit.

Conclusion

The current fragmentation of the administration of the graduate admissions process at OSU essentially means that no one can be held accountable for its failure to establish a mission or meet goals. The Graduate School is the most logical place to house this responsibility and authority, as is demonstrated by best practices elsewhere and is outlined in the professional literature. It simply makes good academic and administrative sense to include graduate admissions as part of the Graduate School's functional responsibilities.

The consultants recognize that this and the other recommendations in the report require a major structural change in graduate admissions processing at OSU and the transfer of responsibility for graduate admissions to the Graduate School requires the assignment of new resources, including skilled staff, equipment, and space. This level of change and commitment of resources is essential for OSU to improve its graduate admissions process through modern and efficient enrollment management technology, and to recruit more and better graduate students and raise the rankings of its graduate programs.

Although a great deal of dissatisfaction with the current graduate admissions process at OSU was expressed by every group and individual with whom the consultants met, we also heard expressions of goodwill toward each other among all of these same groups and individuals. They understand that it is the structure and processes involved, especially the lack of a clear line of administrative accountability linked to the Graduate School, that has led to many of the existing problems. Many individuals with whom the consultants spoke expressed strong confidence in the Graduate Dean, Associate Dean, and graduate school staff, and indicated their belief that they should have full responsibility for graduate admissions. We believe that given the appropriate administrative authority and necessary resources, the OSU Graduate School can vastly improve the graduate admissions process for the campus and provide a basis for growing quality graduate enrollment for the University in the years to come.