



UNC CHARLOTTE
The Graduate School

Office of the Associate Provost
For Graduate Programs and Dean of the Graduate School

9210 University City Blvd, Charlotte NC 28223-0001
t/704.687.7246 f/704.687.3279 www.uncc.edu

TO: Provost Joan Lorden
Dr. Christine Haynes, Graduate Council Chair

FROM: Tom Reynolds

RE: Annual Self-Assessment for 2018-19 and Goals for 2019-20

DATE: March 25, 2019

In keeping with the University's processes for the evaluation of administrators, attached is a copy of a self-assessment that I have prepared for the 2018-19 academic year and my goals for the coming year.

In my position as Dean of the Graduate School, I must provide the management and leadership to direct the unit's activities to meet the goals and objectives of our strategic plan. As such, for many of the accomplishments listed here, my role has been to provide advice, encouragement, resources, advocacy, and support to the staff who are moving the work forward. I have also tried to limit the accomplishments to a few programmatic examples rather than detailing all of the routine, yet necessary activities that tend to occupy so much of our time.

I would be happy to discuss either my self-assessment or my new goals with you at your convenience.

Thank you.

Operational and Personnel Changes

It has been a year now since the projected shortfall in our application fee trust fund made it necessary to initiate severe cost-cutting measures including a reduction-in-force for one permanent staff position and not fill an additional six positions that were vacated by resignation, retirement, or non-renewal. Guided by our Business Officer, we were able to reduce spending and move funds out of the application fee account into the general fund. I also had to eliminate or suspend several projects and initiatives that were included in our 2015-20 Strategic Plan including disbanding the Graduate School Advisory Board and closing the international SPRINT program with Brazil. However, we were able to end the year meeting all financial obligations and core functions. We were also able to reallocate resources to fund critical staff positions such as hiring Dr. Jill Huerta as the Director of the Center for Graduate Life and Ms. Sandy Krause as the Assistant Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs. Unfortunately, our Business Officer, Ms. Jennifer Vincent, resigned effective February 11, 2019, to accept a position as the Director of Finance and Personnel in the Belk College of Business. We are currently conducting a search for a new Business Officer which I hope we can hire before May 2019.

While we have been able to manage our operational and financial commitments, I am still looking to find a balance of position funding and operating expenses necessary to meet our administrative and academic demands.

Progress toward 2018-19 Goals

In my self-assessment for 2017-18, I listed the following goals from our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. Within these goals, I noted specific objectives, which are addressed below:

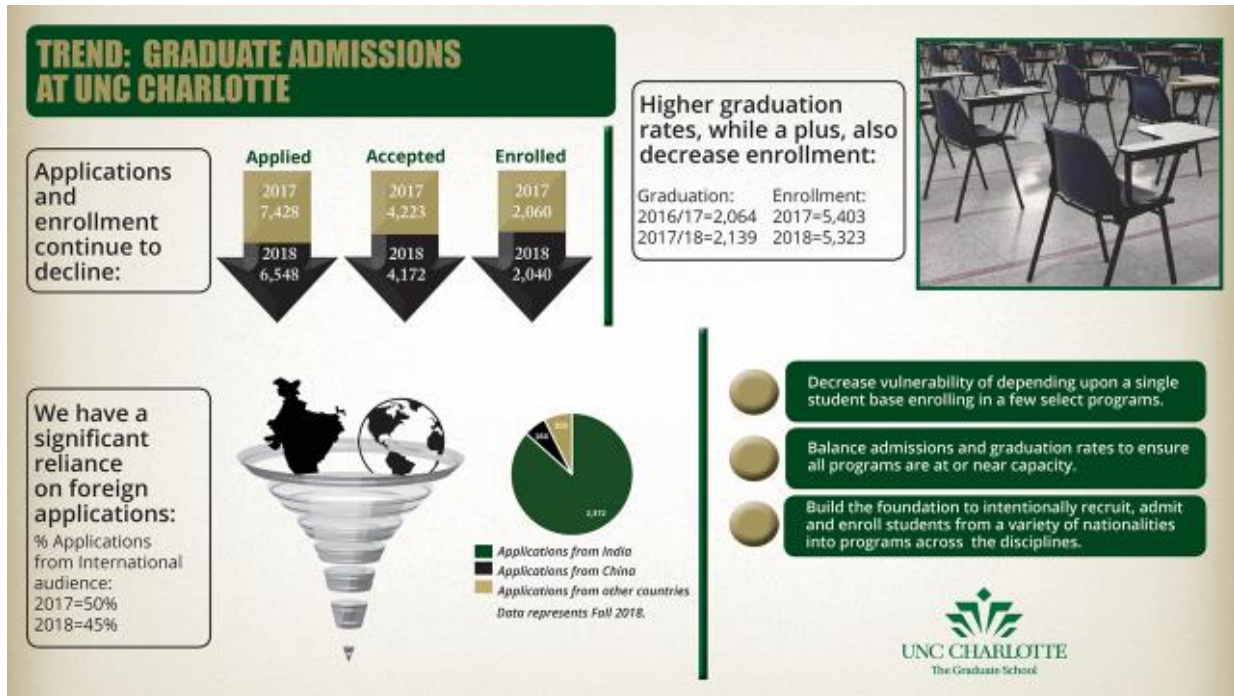
Provide for the effective enrollment management of graduate programming

Ongoing:

Graduate enrollment declined by 80 students in the fall 2018 (5,323 compared to 5,403 in 2018). Lower enrollment for new and continuing domestic students (3,901 compared to 3,960 in 2018) and continuing international students (1,422 compared to 1,443 in 2018) was responsible for this decline. Graduate applications, both international (down -886 applications) and domestic (down -84) continue to decrease. Nationally the number of international graduate application received by institutions participating in the Council of Graduate Schools International Graduate Admissions Survey declined by -4% (UNC Charlotte declined -21%) between fall 2017 and fall 2018 while nationally first-time graduate enrollment decreased by -1% (UNC Charlotte increased +15%). This shows that we have been successful in enrolling our newly admitted international students; however, as these students graduate, our continuing numbers decline as does our overall enrollment.

In the U.S. most international graduate students come from China; however, UNC Charlotte enrolls a relatively small number of Chinese nationals (<120). There was no change in the number of graduate applications and first-time enrollment from Chinese nationals at institutions participating in the CGS survey, but UNC Charlotte saw a decrease in applications (-14%) and an increase in first-time enrollment (+28%). As shown in the figure below, most of our

international students come from India where applications decreased nationally by -12% (UNC Charlotte -23%).



Several factors are driving the numbers for both domestic and international graduate students including the economy, increased competition for enrolled students by other countries, concerns over the ROI for a graduate degree, and uncertain political climates.

It is clear that in order to sustain meaningful enrollment, and maintain UNC Charlotte as North Carolina's Urban Research University, we must:

- diversify our international applicant pool,
- expand our ability to recruit our own, best undergraduates into graduate degree programs,
- support alternate program delivery methods, to be accessible to working professionals,
- enhance capacity for high demand programs,
- define what constitutes the appropriate mix of graduate students (doctoral and masters), graduate student diversity, and mix of graduate and undergraduate students.

This year we partnered with Academic Affairs to launch the Provost's Master's Enrollment Incentive Funding Program. The goal here was to increase the number of enrolled domestic and international master's students by making funding awards to students earlier in the cycle and focusing on students who would otherwise not receive support (e.g., part-time working professionals). The program was funded as a cost-share between the Graduate School and Academic Affairs.

Through the program, we made 307 new master's funding awards compared to 188 in 2017 and although the total master's enrollment in 2018 was 3,410 compared to 3,439 in 2017 (due to two years of record-setting master's students graduating) we enrolled 390 **new** master's students in fall 2018 compared to 337 in 2017.

Graduate enrollment at UNC Charlotte remains highly diverse: **23%** under-represented ethnic minorities, 69% (3,685) in-state students from 77 N.C. counties, 27% international (1,422) from 61 different countries; 57% women; and 31% (1,642) are between the ages of 25-30.

This year the Graduate Admissions staff developed recruitment initiatives to maintain a pipeline of prospects by continually updating and managing the Graduate Admissions application website and portal. They selectively attended recruitment fairs to recruit a diverse application pool, engaged in social media recruitment, utilized personalized GradConnect outreach throughout the recruitment cycle, worked with GPDs to focus on recruitment initiatives for our best undergraduates through the Early Entry program, and partnered with other offices such as ISSO to promote a consistent and coordinated effort throughout the application and enrollment processes.

As part of our collaboration with colleges to identify underserved populations in North Carolina that might benefit from a UNC Charlotte graduate program, we partnered with faculty in the Cato College of Education to deliver the MEd, MAT, and Graduate Certificates to off-site cohorts in different counties including Cabarrus, Iredell, Rowan, and Mecklenburg. Students were offered tuition incentives, and the programs were delivered at specified locations using a cohort model. Without funding and if required to attend on campus, many of these students likely would not have enrolled in an advanced degree.

In 2017-18, we conferred a record 149 doctoral degrees (professional and research), 1,572 master's degrees (2nd highest number on record), and 419 graduate certificates. Of the doctoral degree recipients, 69 (46%), were men along with 763 (49%) master's degree recipients and 109 (26%) certificates.

To improve time-to-degree and graduation rates, the Graduate School has established the Dissertation Completion Fellowship. This program is designed to support students who are or were recently on a grant-funded GRA, and it provides a summer fellowship to give the student time to work on the dissertation. The program also provides an opportunity for an additional semester on the Graduate Assistant Support Plan. This Fellowship not only provides the students with summer funding, it also recognizes the contribution of faculty who have used extramural funding to support their students.

We have made some progress with the Graduation Initiative to broaden the scope of the program to include graduate students. The "student progress report" now being generated from DegreeWorks gives faculty critical information about student progression in the degree including time to degree. In addition, the Doctoral Hooding Ceremony has brought attention to this important academic achievement. In fact we hooded 100 doctoral students in December.

Connecting with and training Graduate Program Directors and Coordinators continues to be an important objective. In addition to group and individual meetings with Program Directors, we continue to add content to GPDnet as a resource to support their efforts.

Associate Dean Katherine Hall-Hertel and Graduate School Faculty Fellow, Lisa Rasmussen, attended a train-the-trainer research mentor and mentee program at the Center for the

Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER) at the University of Madison, Wisconsin this last summer. Completion of this program allowed them to offer the program to faculty on campus and the College of Computing and Informatics volunteered to serve as the pilot program conducted in the fall 2018. More than 20 faculty participated in a three-part mentor workshop. The training focused on Communication, Setting Expectations, and Encouraging Independence. At the end of the training, the faculty and their students were given a survey to rate how effective the training was in improving mentoring skills in specific areas. The faculty's self-rating at the end of training showed improvement across all mentoring skills, and 100% of the participants agreed that the training was a valuable use of their time. This initiative is part of a larger coordinated NIH effort to diversify the biomedical research workforce. We intend to continue and expand this mentor/mentee program over the coming months, including sending two faculty to the train-the-trainer program in Wisconsin over the summer.

Completed:

One of my goals for many years was to establish a Graduate Program Director award to recognize outstanding leadership in graduate education. I am pleased to say that goal has been accomplished with the establishment of the Thomas L. Reynolds Leadership Award in Graduate Education through an endowed gift to the University by my wife, Claudia and me. The first recipient of the award will be announced April 15, 2019.

Not Completed

I have not been able to move the Early Entry portal forward. There are still several administrative issues surrounding this program that must be addressed before we promote it on a wider basis.

Initiate resource innovations that are scalable and maximize the use of existing resources

Ongoing:

The Graduate Student Funding Task Force completed its report in February (available at <https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/deans-office/about-deans-office>). The work to establish priorities and implement recommendations has already begun. I am confident that using the careful and thoughtful approach to student funding detailed in the Report will give us a way to develop a scalable and sustainable plan for graduate student funding. I am very grateful to the members of the Task Force, especially the co-chairs, Associate Dean Johnna Watson, and Associate Dean Rick Tankersley, for their hard work and dedication to this important task.

In response to the Task Force report, the Chancellor provided additional funds to help increase graduate assistantship stipends for FY20. With direction from the Provost, the funds will be used to increase the baseline compensation for the 199 graduate assistantships provided to the colleges by the Graduate School; the increase in compensation will be implemented for the 2019-2020 academic year.

It is anticipated that in FY21, a similar adjustment will be made to assistantship positions held in the colleges. This will be a great start but it's only a start, there's lots of work to be done.

I'm excited about the prospect of launching the new Funding Solution program in 2019. This online portal will allow GPDs to make funding offers to applicants, and monitor all of their award offers and acceptances in real time. This system, in concert with the rollout of the recommendations made in the Graduate Student Funding Task Force report, should enhance the programs' abilities to make funding offers in a timely manner.

This was the second year of the Fellowship Application Incentive Program. In this initiative, the Graduate School staff work with doctoral students to identify and apply for external grants and fellowships. If a student submits an application, they receive a modest incentive grant, and if the application is funded there is an additional award. We awarded \$155,000 incentive grants and as of July 9, 2018, 23 students had been notified that their application had been funded, totaling \$411,117 in extramural money.

To increase the interest of military veterans in enrolling in a graduate program at UNC Charlotte, we made some changes to the Graduate School Veterans Fellowship. We found that offering the stipend in the form of an assistantship was confusing to some applicants and it limited some programs in being able to utilize the Fellowship in recruiting. So now the scholarship is service-free, with a stipend of \$18,000 for both master's and doctoral students, and is named (Commander F.M. (Mike) Reynolds Scholarship). It continues to be a two-year award and includes health insurance, tuition, and fees as needed.

This was the second year of the Reynolds Graduate Student Research Award, and 12 students received funding to support their individual research projects. I am pleased to say that the award is now fully endowed and we were able to make this many awards compared to three in year one.

Develop a complete infrastructure for graduate education at the University and enhance the graduate culture on campus

We completed a successful search for the new Director for the Center for Graduate Life, housed in the Cone University Center. Dr. Jill Huerta assumed the role in the summer of 2018. Jill received her Ph.D. in History from Michigan State University and was the Associate Director of the MBA program in the Stephan M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan before coming to Charlotte.

Ongoing:

In addition to professional development, the CGL is expanding its educational opportunities. There are now 38 GRAD courses offered for academic credit, and a new certificate in Workplace Competencies will be reviewed by the Graduate Council before the end of the spring term. While the CGL boasts several part-time faculty, it is now searching for its full-time permanent position; an Assistant Professor of Teaching.

We have partnered with the Graduate School at NC State University to offer the Accelerate to Industry (A2i) program. NC State created this program for increasing and enhancing doctoral and postdoctoral industry workforce readiness. With A2i graduate students can explore employment opportunities with companies on the UNC Charlotte campus. We will include a

signature program of A2i, a Summer Immersion to introduce participants to potential careers in the industry through an intensive week-long experience.

Other activities by the CGL included:

- TA training is now a hybrid model, with much of the teaching content offered online to better meet the needs of graduate students with competing demands at the start of the academic year. Approximately 250 TAs went through training in 2018.
- More than 1,200 graduate students attended one of the Graduate School's Orientation sessions in 2018-19.
- The third annual 3MT competition was conducted, and this year the competition was open to master's and doctoral students.
- There is increasing interest among our students to use Individual Development Plans. We would like to continue to expand their use with doctoral students and make them available to master's students. It is possible that IDPs could become part of the Funding Task Force goals to link student progress to funding.

As Lead Principle Investigator, Dr. Lisa Rasmussen led the revision and resubmission of our NSF grant proposal *Fostering a Culture of Openness and Transparency with Institutional Authorship Policies* in Cultivating Cultures in Ethical Stem. Additional PI's include Dr. Katherine Hall Hertel, Dr. George Banks, Dr. Elise Smith, and me. In my role as the University Research Integrity Officer, I have found that so-called authorship disputes are a serious issue. I believe that the work described in the proposal, when implemented, will measurably improve the ethical climate on campus which is associated with a reduction in the likelihood of engaging in detrimental research practices.

I have engaged ITS in a micro-assessment evaluation of plagiarism detection software. Currently, graduate students submitting a thesis or dissertation, as part of the degree requirements, are not required to assess their documents for potential cases of plagiarism prior to final submission. ITS has recommended **iThenticate** as a solution to assist graduate students in avoiding plagiarism and copyright infringement when preparing documents for publication. We have an approved contract from the vendor to roll out iThenticate in a pilot study this fall. Students will be given access to iThenticate when they begin writing their thesis or dissertation and will need to show an evaluation of their document at the time of final submission.

Working with the Office of Assessment and Accreditation, the Graduate School is currently preparing a self-study as a component of our Program Review. We anticipate bringing in three external reviewers this summer and completing our review by the beginning of the fall term. The results of this analysis will help us form our goals and objectives for the 2020-25 strategic plan. Brian White, public relations specialist, is facilitating the self-study for the Graduate School

The second Doctoral Hooding Ceremony was held on December 13 at McKnight Hall in the Cone University Center. We found this venue to be a better accommodation than Halton Arena, but it does require that we limit tickets. I'm hopeful that the new University Hotel and Conference Center may provide an even better venue when it is completed.

Not Completed:

I continue to be unsuccessful in securing new or additional space for the Center for Graduate Life. I am confident, however, that the CGL is a recognized asset for graduate education and as such being given priority consideration whenever suitable space becomes available.

Communications and Community Outreach*Ongoing:*

Reluctantly this year, I disbanded the Graduate School Advisory Board. While the members of the Board remained energized and engaged, I found it increasingly difficult to find the time to support the Board in a way that was meaningful to them and the Graduate School. We have tried to keep some of the members engaged in our work serving as panel members, mentors, instructors, and community advisors.

Dr. William (Bill) Kennedy was a faculty member in the Belk College of Business who left a gift to the University to endow scholarships. The William Kennedy Graduate Scholarship is used to help recruit exceptionally talented full-time graduate students who are enrolled in a doctoral degree program at UNC Charlotte. As recognition and tribute to Dr. Kennedy's generosity, we officially dedicated the William Kennedy Graduate School Conference room on October 3, 2018.

The Graduate School Student Awards luncheon recognizes the exceptional students who received Graduate School Fellowships in 2018 and shows appreciation to the donors who made those Fellowships possible. On October 19, student award recipients, donors, alumni, and faculty came together for lunch at the Harris Alumni House to celebrate the achievements of these students.

To date, the Graduate School has raised more than \$2.5 million through the Capital Campaign. While we have already exceeded our goal, I anticipate that we can top the 3 million dollar mark.

Professional Service

- Support and manage the annual competitions for the First Citizens Bank Scholars Award (Dr. Steven Rogelberg 2019 recipient) and the Harshini de Silva Graduate Mentor Award (Dr. Richard Lambert, 2019 recipient).
- Search committee members for the Associate Vice Chancellor for University Communications position formally held by Stephan Ward.
- Invited speaker for a conference entitled *The Role of Research Integrity in Promoting Excellence: Tools for College and University Leaders* sponsored by the U.S. Office of Research Integrity (ORI) and the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) on May 22-23, 2019 at Northwestern University.
- Dissertation committee member for Ms. Nejra Cekic, a doctoral student, in the Public Policy Ph.D. program.
- Faculty judge at the 2018 Graduate Research Symposium on April 6, 2018.
- Attended the Research Integrity Officer's conference, *Plagiarism: The Identification, Processing, Prevention, and Cultural Context of Plagiarism*, April 3-5, 2018 at Indiana University.
- Re-appointed to serve as UNC Charlotte's Research Integrity Officer April 30, 2018

- Presented on Graduate Enrollment at Chancellor's Cabinet Retreat July 11, 2018, Arlington VA.
- Attended Research Integrity Officer Boot Camp, sponsored by U.S. Office of Research Integrity (ORI) August 15-17, 2018 at DePaul University.
- UNC System Graduate Council
- National Association of Research Integrity Officers.
- Bosnian-Herzegovina American Academy of Arts and Science, Honorary member
- Consultant for the International Atomic Energy Agency and Food and Agricultural Organization (agencies of the United Nations) 1999-present.

Goals for 2019-20

I will focus my efforts in the coming year on four priorities. However, each priority has multiple goals and objectives which are sure to keep me busy.

- In light of the declines in applications and enrollment for both new domestic and international students, my number one priority this coming year will be to work with the colleges and Academic Affairs to prepare and implement strategies to diversify our international applicant pool and strengthen our ability to attract domestic students.

To do this, we have to identify our target audience and provide the human capital, fiscal support, and system infrastructure to do meaningful recruitment. We also have to identify programs to build institutional awareness which drives external awareness. One example is to use our brand as a research university to spotlight programs to recruit both graduate and undergraduate students. We will need promotional channels that diversify our graduate student populations and use data and technology through social media platforms to shape and improve recruitment efforts. These efforts require time, talent, and money but doing nothing different may be detrimental to the University's growth and stability.

- With the release of the Funding Task Force Report, my priority will be to, along with the Provost and college deans, assess the recommendations in context of the Task Force's findings to develop a sustainable and scalable plan for graduate student funding. This is clearly a long term initiative, and I'm pleased that the Chancellor allocated new funds for FY20 to increase the stipends for the centralized graduate assistantships. These positions cross each of the colleges and will include a stipend, health insurance, and resident tuition award.
- Complete our Program Review and begin to use these finding to develop our 2020-25 Strategic Plan.
- Expand the Graduate School's role as the "moral authority" and leader for graduate education on campus. To do this, I will build on the success of the Center for Graduate Life in providing educational and professional development for our students. We will continue the work in the mentor-training program and building a culture of ethics in research and scholarship through responsible conduct of research. I will add at least one new Graduate Student Fellowship opportunity to our inventory.