



## 2015-16 Annual Report Template

### The Graduate School

#### A. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

Major accomplishments (including student accomplishments) of unit/department/college during the year reported by Academic Affairs Goal.

##### Organizational Changes

To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, the Graduate School implemented several personnel and organizational changes this year. Effective July 1, 2015 the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School position was eliminated and the duties assigned to that position were consolidated. Assistant Dean Katherine Hall-Hertel was promoted to Associate Dean and took on the responsibilities connected with Graduate School Academic Affairs. Associate Dean Hall-Hertel continues in her role as head of Graduate Student Affairs and leads our efforts in implementing *DegreeWorks*. In addition to Graduate Enrollment Management, Associate Dean Watson, now administers our centralized graduate student funding activities. In the summer 2016, Dr. Alan Freitag will assume the role of Assistant Dean of the Graduate School. Dr. Freitag will lead our efforts to support military veterans who return to UNC Charlotte to complete their higher education.

To better serve our internal and external constituents, we created a new position, Director of External Relations. This position proactively engages with community partners to promote the importance of graduate education in enhancing the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of the region and to expand the organizational awareness of the Graduate School to foster and sustain outstanding graduate education. The Director works with the Graduate School's Major Gift Officer to reach our funding goals for the Capital Campaign. We were able to hire the former Graduate School Director of Development, Ms. Mary Ellen Shuntich into this position in November 2015. Additionally Ms. Annette Parks became the Graduate Operations Manager. This position manages the Graduate Faculty appointment operations, Graduate Course Audits, the Graduate School front office and customer service processes and relieves the Dean of many day-to-day managerial tasks. Ms. Christi Skerlak assumed the role of Executive Assistant for the Dean. Ms. Karla Stanchina's position was upgraded to Graduate School Communications Director to better support our branding, marketing, and community outreach projects. Mr. James Birkett was promoted to Associate Director, Graduate Academic Affairs. In the spring of 2016, Dean Tom Reynolds was appointed to the position of Research Integrity Officer for the University. This position is responsible for overseeing, administering, and educating faculty, staff and students on the institution's policies and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in research.

1. **To educate a diverse student body through an integrated academic experience that positions graduates for personal success and civic responsibility in the global environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century:**

Fall 2015 graduate enrollment was 5,251 students, up from **5,022** students in fall 2014. Graduate students comprise **19%** of the total University headcount.

The Graduate School enrolled the most **diverse** graduate class ever: **21%** under-represented ethnic minorities and **26%** international; 66% (3,437) in-state students from 84 N.C. counties; 8% (442) out-of-state students from 39 different states; 26% international from 62 different countries; 55% female; 45% male.



Other graduate enrollment highlights include:

- Enrolled **two new foreign Fulbright students** in fall 2015, one from Egypt to the Master of Science in Electrical Engineering and another from Tunisia in the DSBA, for a total of **five enrolled foreign Fulbright students**; one student graduated in May 2015 from the PhD in Public Policy.
- Enrolled **five** National Science Foundation fellows, and **sixteen** students on two GAANN grants.
- Moved Graduate Admissions to a unique website where a significant increase in analytics was obtained with a record 13,000 average weekly views in January 2016. Created a second (new) Graduate Admissions website in a non-University platform (Word Press) in April 2016.
- Provided leadership to **integrate Graduate Enrollment Management** in the University's new Strategic Plan, annual budget proposal process, and annual reporting; partnered with the academic colleges to incorporate eGEM into the college strategic plans; and collaborated with University partners on the Graduate Enrollment Management Workgroup to identify and support efforts to effectively manage graduate enrollment. Designed and launched [eGEM.uncc.edu](http://eGEM.uncc.edu), a system to support the University's efforts to both establish and meet enrollment and graduation goals; **72%** of graduate programs submitted enrollment and graduation projections in eGEM.
- Increased number of prospects by **13%** in 2015 (29,195) compared to 2014 (25,856).
- Applications Submitted Annually (Jan-Dec) **increased 3%** to **10,296** in 2015, compared to 9,990 in 2014 and 9,007 in 2013.
- Staff processed **11,033 graduate applications, 6.5% more**, from March 1, 2015 to February 28, 2016, compared to **10,356** in 2014-15, **9,524** in 2013-14, and **8,062** in 2012-13,.
- Supported programs that enroll international students. The Institute for International Education's (IIE) 2015 *Open Doors Report* estimates international students contributed over **\$458 million** annually to North Carolina's economy, up from \$416 million in 2014 and \$385 million in 2013. North Carolina ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the number of foreign students enrolled in higher education, and UNC Charlotte **ranks third** among institutions in the state for number of foreign students enrolled, **passing UNC Chapel Hill for the first time ever**. NCSU and Duke rank first and second, respectively.
- Increased access to the philanthropic awards available through the Graduate School by participating in the Scholarship Portal. **225** applications for students in different colleges were received and **8** awards were made.

Graduation stats for 2015-16 are as follows:

	Smr I - 2015	Smr II - 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Total
Doctoral	10	20	34	50	114
Masters	77	159	605	720	1561
Certificates	2	18	131	187	338
Total	89	197	770	957	2013

2015 is the tenth year of the Graduate Assistant Support Plan (GASP). GASP was designed to provide multi-year tuition funding to full-time doctoral students who hold an assistantship or qualifying fellowship.

- More than 560 full-time doctoral students will receive GASP funding this year; \$6,015,760 was awarded as GASP this year compared to \$5,773,771 last year. Of this amount \$191,431 came from grant funding and \$300,644 from the Graduate School need-based funding.
- 527 students received health insurance awards totaling \$805,611.
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- The Graduate School Customer Service team handled 13,406 calls from Feb. 2015 to March 2016 and facilitated 3752 walk-in customers with 2065 Graduate Admission related and 1687 Graduate Academic Affairs related.

Other funding highlights include:

- The purpose of the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) is to help ensure the vitality and diversity of the scientific and engineering workforce of the United States. The program recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students who are pursuing research-based masters and doctoral degrees in fields within NSF's mission. The GRFP provides three years of support for the graduate education of individuals who have demonstrated their potential for significant achievements in science and engineering research. Three students received new 2015 NSF GRFP awards, bringing the University's total to 20 NSF GRFP awards. The Graduate School does provide "topping-off" awards to ensure students who have completed the GRFP but not yet graduated, have funding available to complete the degree. Also as a cost-share condition for the NSF grant, the Graduate School provides a full level of funding to support one GRFP (total GS commitment for 2015-16 \$83,826).
- UNC Charlotte ranks #4 in North Carolina for the total number of NSF Graduate Research Fellowship awards.
- 300 master's students received merit-based tuition awards totaling \$686,700 this year. These merit-based awards require students to hold a qualifying assistantship and be enrolled full-time.
- 610 students were awarded \$1,999,060 in Graduate School Tuition Scholarships which are need-based and do not require student to hold an assistantship or enroll full-time.
- 154 graduate students received named fellowships (\$451,035) and 3 students received a Yellow Ribbon match totaling \$13,461
- By the end of this academic year we anticipate that a total of 1,978 students will hold or have held an assistantship totaling \$13,888,298. This is up from 1,798 students (\$12,625,725.83) in AY 2014-15.

In 2015, the Graduate School launched the Veteran Fellowship program. Military veterans entering any masters or doctoral program are eligible to receive a two-year graduate assistantship (Teaching or Research), full tuition support and health insurance if needed. Three students were selected for this fellowship.

In support of the Graduation Initiative, the Graduate School implemented **DegreeWorks**, a tool for graduate student planning and faculty advising, as well as graduation clearance. This initiative facilitated more than **70** curricular changes and offered **17** training sessions to faculty. We also reduced the number of academic suspensions and terminations (**down 12%**) through efforts to identify students in danger of failing a course and communicate to students and faculty proactively. We Increased number of students graduating (**27%**) and facilitated individualize learning for graduate students by approving curricular exceptions via the academic petition tool. Processed **1,440** academic petitions, an increase of 3.2%.

The Center for Graduate Life increased the enrollment in GRAD professional development courses to **368** students.

Other CGL highlights include:

- Established a collaborative partnership with *Communication Across the Curriculum* which supported 40 graduate students, to date, with speaking resources.
- Recognized excellence in graduate student teaching through the Outstanding GTA award. **14** Teaching Assistants were nominated, the highest number to date.
- A new GRAD course for international students who want to teach was established.
- The Graduate Center provided \$10,000 to the Center for Graduate Life to continue funding the development of Professional Skills courses and workshops. While open to full graduate student constituency, they are targeted for students in the PSM programs. "Transferrable Skills" was offered for the second time this fall, and a new 8-week "Workplace Communications" course was offered in spring 2016.



The Graduate Center Highlights:

The Graduate Center is providing summer support of \$2000 for graduate students doing research and mentoring with the Charlotte Teachers' Institute teachers and professors.

Both the Health Informatics and Data Science and Business Analytics programs continue to have strong demand, and diverse cohorts. Referred applications for the HI Program remain stable, the DSBA has seen an increase of over 250% in referred applications. We anticipate fall 2016 enrollment to be roughly 60 students in the HI program and 150 in the DSBA program.

In fall 2015, the DSBA academic program admitted and enrolled its first Fulbright student. The student is from Tunisia and is considering a research program after he completes the degree in Data Science and Business Analytics. A second Fulbright recipient from Bahrain accepted an offer of admission for the DSBA. She is expected to matriculate fall 2016.

A new Director of Student Services, Carly Mahedy, was hired to manage the administrative functions for both Health Informatics and the DSBA programs. The Student Services Director is responsible for non-academic aspects such as recruitment, application processing, initial advisement, internship placement, and schedule building for both programs.

The HI and DSBA programs provided over **\$36,000** and **\$126,000** respectively to support Teaching and Research assistantships across four colleges and multiple units. These assistantships supported faculty teaching and research, implementation of the SOPHI Data Observatory, and development of custom workshops in collaboration with Project Mosaic. More importantly, these funds provided financial support to recruit and retain some of our best students.

**2. To expand the frontiers of knowledge and leverage discovery for the public benefit through innovative programs that span the disciplines in research, creative activities, and graduate education:**

The Graduate School, through the Center for Graduate Life, trained and supported **191** graduate teaching assistants.

Dr. Judy Krauss gave a teaching strategy workshop for **50** post-docs and faculty at the North Carolina Research Campus.

The Graduate Research Symposium, co-sponsored by the Graduate School, awarded more than \$3,500 in prize monies to 20 presenters. 133 abstracts were submitted and **119 students presented** their work in poster and oral sessions.

The Center for Graduate Life offered three workshops and three review sessions, to help students apply for external fellowships. More than seven faculty members came to the Center for Graduate Life to review more than 15 student applications for **the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship**. Two UNC Charlotte students were awarded the fellowship this year.

The addition of **Dissertation Days** was instrumental in providing support to a variety of students working on dissertations, particularly non-traditional students.

The Graduate School initiated collaboration between the Honors College and CRS to fund UNC Charlotte students to attend the National Conference of Undergraduate Research.



In 2015-2016 the Graduate Center expanded its role to facilitate international partnerships in graduate education. In consultation with the Office of International Programs, the Office of Extended Academic Programs, and

Graduate Admissions, the Graduate Center has developed both a dual degree and a research partnership with the National Institute of Technology in Rourkela, India.

Other activities include:

- The Graduate Center is engaged in exploratory conversations with private and public institutions to develop partnerships in Santiago, Chile and Sarajevo, Bosnia.
- Graduate School Staff have met with representatives from several academic institutions to develop opportunities for dual degree and student exchange programs at the graduate level, and meetings with several government ministries took place in the exploration of possible joint research projects. The Staff also met with EducationUSA, a US State Department initiative to promote recruitment of international students to UNC Charlotte graduate programs.

**3. To engage community partners in mutually beneficial programs that enhance the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of the region:**

The Graduate School Advisory Board has been active and is now composed of 14 external members of the local community. The Board has been energetically engaged in fundraising activities and is involved in the development and implementation of a corporate skills program for graduate students. In the fall 2015, we offered a series of workshops, designed by our Board, to students on different areas of the corporate culture, including leadership, communication, and teamwork. Students may earn a transcript notation by completing a module of three workshops in any one area. This spring (2016) we will prepare a proposal for a new graduate certificate in professional skills and leadership.

The Graduate School is a sponsor for the 2016 KEEPING WATCH on AIR organized by the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute and the College of Arts + Architecture.

Student recognition events hosted by the Graduate School:

- The Graduate School Student Awards Luncheon recognizes the exceptional students who have received Graduate School Fellowships in 2015. This is also an opportunity to show appreciation to the donors who have made these Fellowships possible. Nearly 70 students, Graduate Program Directors, University staff, and donors attended the annual event. The awards luncheon also recognizes the recipients of other prestigious fellowships and scholarships, including the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and the PEO International Peace Scholarships, which provides scholarships for selected women from other countries for graduate study in the United States and Canada.
- The Doctoral Student Commencement Dinners were held at the Student Union prior to the fall and spring commencement ceremonies. The dinners continue to be well received and attended by the graduates, their advisors and guests.
- The Center for Graduate Life set up a tent and invited new graduate students to events for the afternoon of the New Student Convocation in the fall. While the attendance was good, the nature of the day is so undergraduate focused that we will not likely repeat the event.

Graduate Academic Affairs supported the Charlotte Research Scholar's summer program through the recruitment, selection and promotion of the research (159 student applications).

Two graduate students will present their research at the North Carolina Council of Graduate Schools (NCCGS) Graduate Education Day (May 24, 2016) in Raleigh as part of an effort to educate our legislators.

Graduate Student Affairs collaborated with CRI and the Charlotte Venture Challenge to offer a workshop on Evidence-Based Entrepreneurship for graduate students.



The Graduate School has prepared a curriculum proposal for a professional skills certificate that we plan to offer in the spring 2017.

The Graduate Center continues its collaboration with UNC Charlotte's College of Education and Teach for America to deliver an innovative and high quality program to serve this unique population of teachers. This year, for the second summer, 90 TFA Teacher Corp members are participating in the program. We will host TFA's Induction Training. We see this as an opportunity to showcase the campus and recruit highly qualified Teach for America Corp members to our graduate programs.

New relationships with industry partners were cultivated including Hendrick Motorsports, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, PMMC, Peak 10, and Ernst & Young. Ongoing partnerships have been strengthened through successful internship placement of DSBA & HI students with companies including Novant Health, McKesson, Cardinal Innovations, Premiere and Deloitte. Open house and networking events were hosted as an extra level of service to partners of Deloitte and PWC. We see this as a way to personalize the process and make every effort to create a direct hiring pipeline for employers to reach our students.

The Data Science Initiative hosted the first annual Analytic Frontiers Conference on March 30th, 2016 for **450+** senior executives, professional analysts, data scientists and business leaders. Prominent keynote speakers included Tom Davenport and David Kiron. Over 30 panelists and speakers led break-out sessions with topics spanning retail, healthcare, energy and financial service analytics. Both the HI and DSBA academic programs were promoted at this event. The conference showcased the City of Charlotte as a national hub for big data and the university as a research leader.

Dr. Daniel Janies, UNC Charlotte Carol Grotnes Belk Distinguished Professor of Bioinformatics and Genomics, and Director of Global Research Collaborations for the Graduate School, welcomed visiting graduate student Denis Jacob Machado from the University of São Paulo (USP), Brazil who joins his team this spring for a one-year research term. Machado and his advisor at USP, Dr. Taran Grant, are the recipients of a "BEPE" (Bolsa Estágio de Pesquisa no Exterior) Research Internship Abroad award supporting the student exchange from the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP). Machado and Grant want to identify genes that allow amphibians to resist their own poisons. Their organisms of interest include Brazil's Maldonado Redbelly Toad, South American poison dart frogs and the North American rough-skin newt. In partnering with Janies, their objectives require the acquisition of specialized knowledge on comparative genomics, animal evolution, and bioinformatic analysis of large DNA data sets that are available at UNC Charlotte.

## **B. EXAMPLES OF DATA-BASED IMPROVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR**

Describe 3 examples of how the unit/department/college has used assessment data for the purpose of improvement during the year.

Graduate Enrollment Management collects data at the program and aggregate levels routinely, to determine enrollment projections and environmental factors (both internal and external to the University) that may impact enrollment. Persistence data, application and admit data, and financial aid data are regularly reviewed. This information is made available to the programs and college administrators to help them make informed decisions in meeting enrollment goals.

Satisfaction surveys found that graduate students felt a need for greater help in developing communication skills particularly in public speaking. As such, staff from the Center for Graduate Life partnered with the Department of Communication Studies and the Speaking Resource Center director, to sponsor a consultant to work with graduate students to improve these skills. The program is open to both undergraduate and graduate students. Consistent with our evidence for the need, the Speaking Resource Center has been booked almost exclusively with graduate students since it opened in March.



Consistent concerns have been heard over the years regarding the English proficiency of international teaching assistants (TAs). In order to make time to better prepare students for teaching in the classroom, we are working with the Center for Teaching and Learning to move the legal and policy education online. We will require new TAs to complete an online learning module, with quiz questions, to learn about relevant laws and policies. The rationale for the online component is both to add time for in-person training, and also to ensure that students truly become familiar with important laws, policies and resources. These modules will be ready to launch for Fall Orientation and TA training. The Center for Graduate Life (CGL) is now offering a new course GRAD 6011/8011 Teaching at American Colleges and Universities: Perspectives for International Students to support the effectiveness of international TAs in the classroom.

## REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS TO 2015-16 ANNUAL REPORT

### 1. ANNUAL PROGRESS ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES FOR 2015-2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

**GOALS:** After completing sections III H and III I of your 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, attach the entire 2015-2020 Strategic Plan to the annual report.

### 2. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT DATA:

Attach a 2015 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan and Report for each undergraduate and graduate degree program and certificate program, stand-alone minor, and distance education program offered online only by each department. **Colleges that do not submit the required *Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plans and Reports* will be contacted by the Office of Academic Affairs.**

### 3. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REPORT ASSESSMENT FINDINGS:

Attach the 2015-16 Institutional Effectiveness Report template with assessment findings.