

Academic Master Plan – Feedback from University Graduate Education Committee

California State University Fullerton (CSUF) has embarked upon the development of an Academic Master Plan (AMP) that will serve as the long-term framework for defining and meeting the campus's strategic goals, and advancing its mission of being a model comprehensive university. Because undergraduate students make up some 86% of the 38,950 students at CSUF (Fall 2015), in its early planning stages, the AMP has focused largely on issues related to undergraduate programs. The University Graduate Education Committee (GEC) has prepared this document to underscore the essential role of graduate programs in meeting the University's mission, and as the start of a conversation about how issues related to building and maintaining high-caliber graduate programs should be integrated into the AMP.

What is the value of a graduate education?

Post-baccalaureate programs are a key component of a model comprehensive university and a hallmark of the CSU system. A rigorous graduate program benefits the student, the university and broader community, in myriad ways:

For the student:

- Gain specialized content knowledge in an environment that is supportive, convenient and sensitive to the demands of work and home life
- Obtain hands-on training in cutting-edge and traditional techniques
- Develop professional skills, including written and oral communication
- Earn credentials to enter the workforce, or to increase mobility and earning potential for those already working
- Facilitate entry into PhD or specialized professional programs
- Build a network of peers, mentors and professional contacts, including faculty and staff
- Gain personal satisfaction and enrichment and a sense of achievement and self-worth

For the University:

- Increase faculty productivity through the involvement of graduate students in research and creative activities, which supports the pursuit of external grants and contracts and the dissemination of results, and raises the visibility and prestige of the university
- Graduate programs stimulate the creativity of faculty who mentor graduate students and teach graduate courses, which helps in recruiting and retaining high-caliber faculty
- Graduate students serve as role models and near-peer mentors of undergraduates in independent study projects and other high-impact practices, and enrich the classroom learning environment of upper-division undergraduate courses that they take
- Graduate students support the undergraduate teaching mission by working as teaching associates in the classroom and labs, which reduces costs of hiring part-time faculty; thus, they contribute to campus operations as a highly-skilled, convenient, temporary and relatively inexpensive labor force

- Graduate programs help to broaden the international, sociocultural and demographic diversity of campus
- Graduate students contribute to civic engagement as interns and trainees in partnerships and become alumni who work and serve in the community
- Graduate programs generate greater revenue through higher fees compared to undergraduates, and ultimately by expanding the potential alumni donor pool in a system in which terminal degree is critical to alumni identity

For the broader community:

- Grow the human potential of the region by increasing intellectual literacy
- Train skilled and creative leaders and policy-makers who will guide sustainable growth and be responsive to societal and global needs
- Provide a consistent professional workforce in fields of business, communication, creative arts, education, healthcare, and STEM who are prepared to tackle the region's problems
- Build local expertise on pressing regional issues and contribute to the University's function as an intellectual nexus and physical space for community interactions and events

What are particular strengths of CSUF compared to other regional universities?

Recognizing that a graduate education can bring great value to multiple stakeholders, what makes the graduate learning environment at CSUF special and well-positioned to meet the challenges facing its students?

CSUF is committed to:

- providing a high-quality yet very affordable educational experience
- providing access to higher education for students from a broad diversity of cultural and economic backgrounds and whose undergraduate academic records might not be reflective of their potential
- an admissions process that is fair, holistic and transparent
- excellence in programs in applied professional disciplines that translate into meaningful employment opportunities, as well as traditional programs that place students into top PhD and professional programs
- fostering close interactions between students and highly-engaged faculty members in research, scholarly, and creative activities that are difficult to find at larger, research-oriented institutions
- offering on-campus, hybrid and online programs that conveniently serve international, traditional, and non-traditional students who reflect the diversity of the region and its workforce
- providing internships and training opportunities that facilitate transitioning to the workplace
- moving graduate students to timely completion of their degrees through Title V-funded student support and mentoring programs, and access to state-of-the-art technology
- hiring and retaining faculty members and staff committed to teaching, advising, and mentoring graduate students

The Role of Graduate Programs in the Academic Master Plan

The development of the AMP is led by a steering committee and four subcommittees comprised of faculty members, administrators, students, staff, alumni, and community members. Subcommittees are charged with identifying key challenges, strengths and priorities around four main themes (**Subcommittee 1 – Programs, Degrees and Outcomes; Subcommittee 2 – Students; Subcommittee 3 – Faculty and Pedagogy; Subcommittee 4 – Infrastructure and Resources**), guided by a series of focal questions and considerations within each theme.

Subcommittee 1 – Programs, Degrees and Outcomes

What will we teach? Why will we teach what we teach? Where will we teach? What learning goals will guide our work?

Given that we strive for excellence in our programs, what are the characteristics of a high-quality graduate program? This question was the focus of past CSU system-wide discussions, which were summarized in a 2004 Academic Senate report (*Re-thinking Graduate Education in the CSU: Meeting the Needs of the People of California for Graduate Education for the 21st Century*), based in part on earlier recommendations (Dinelli 1989; *Chapter 3 The California State University Master's Degree: Implementation and Quality*). The list of characteristics below, modified from the 2004 report, serves as a useful starting point.

A graduate program of quality has the following characteristics:

1. An institutional infrastructure that provides:
 - appropriate standards and processes for admission, continuation, and graduation
 - a scholarly environment providing such support programs as visiting lecturer series and faculty seminars
 - the involvement of graduate students in the program evaluation process, and the opportunity for graduate students to participate in the intellectual discourse of departments
 - recognition of the need for appropriate teaching loads, resources for research, opportunities to maintain professional and pedagogical currency, and opportunities for renewal for faculty who teach graduate courses
 - appropriately qualified faculty to teach graduate courses or direct graduate research
 - adequate facilities and resources (including library and information technologies) to conduct graduate work and research at an appropriate level and in an appropriate and timely fashion.
2. A personalized learning format that permits greater student-professor contact (instruction, advising, and guidance) than the undergraduate model.
3. A core curriculum in each program (where it applies) which emphasizes integration of knowledge and preparation for specialization and which is designed to assure mastery of requisite knowledge and skills.

4. A curriculum characterized by advanced disciplinary content and intellectual rigor beyond the baccalaureate level which imparts within its scholarly or professional context an appreciation of the intellectual and/or professional contributions of women and minorities, and prepares scholars and practitioners for a diverse society.
5. A teaching faculty with the doctorate (or other appropriate terminal degree) and relevant professional experience where required.... Policies concerning the qualifications of faculty teaching or serving in other roles in graduate programs should be established at each of the campuses.
6. A required demonstration of fundamental knowledge of research methods appropriate to the discipline.
7. A required demonstration of oral and written communication skills.
8. An opportunity to integrate and apply sophisticated knowledge in internships or practica related to the discipline.
9. A required culminating experience (e.g., thesis, project, or comprehensive examination) which demands demonstration of breadth of knowledge in the discipline, depth in specific areas, and the ability to integrate that which has been learned.... The choice of culminating experience should be that which is educationally most appropriate to the student, and to the discipline. Where a project or exam serves as the culminating experience, it should be equivalent in rigor to the thesis.
10. Regular program review and evaluation should be used by each campus to assess the quality of its graduate program. The evaluation design should ensure that the graduate program is given specific attention separate from the other offerings of the department. The program review guidelines now used at each campus should be reviewed and revised to incorporate the specific criteria and indicators of quality.

What do we teach?

Programs

A comprehensive, public institution within the California Master Plan, CSUF offers 51 master's degree programs, although some degrees have multiple concentrations, emphases, specializations, or tracks, bringing the total of unique degree programs to nearly 140. CSUF also offers two applied doctorates: Doctor of Education (EdD) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). Over the past five years (2009-14), CSUF has annually awarded an average of 1,513 master's degrees, and has awarded ~60 doctorates per year since both the EdD and DNP have been offered (2014).

An emphasis among the master's programs is on applied learning, including the degrees Master of Business Administration, Fine Arts, Music, Public Administration, Public Health, and Social Work. Traditional academic degrees include the **Master of Science** in: Accountancy, Biology, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Counseling, Education (with 21 concentrations/emphases), Electrical Engineering, Environmental Studies, Geology, Gerontology,

Information Systems, Kinesiology, Mechanical Engineering, Nursing, Physics, Psychology (Clinical), Statistics, and Taxation; and the **Master of Arts** in: Art, Anthropology, Chemistry, Communications, Communication Studies, Communicative Disorders, Economics, English, Geography, History, Linguistics, Mathematics, Music, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Spanish.

CSUF is also a leader in applied doctoral education in the CSU system. More than a decade ago, CSUF jointly offered the EdD with UC Irvine, and several years later the EdD on its own. CSUF is the lead campus within the Southern California CSU Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Consortium (with CSULA and CSULB).

More broadly, CSUF's postbaccalaureate education programs also include multiple certificates and credentials, such as teaching credentials and others related to licensure and entry into specific professions. Many certificate programs are administered via University Extended Education, including Analytics, Business, Fiduciary Management, Healthcare, and others. Certificates serve to educate the workforce in career development, but they may also serve as a bridge to master's education, as the certificate coursework can be transferred to master's programs.

Coursework and Culminating Experiences

Most CSUF graduate programs require 30 units of coursework, although several with intensive internship or training components (e.g. MSW, MFA, Counseling, and Nursing) require significant additional units (50-70 units). All graduate programs require the student to complete a culminating experience, i.e. a thesis, project, or comprehensive examination. Although most (53%) master's degree programs require completion of a thesis or a project (i.e. there is no option for an exam), only seven master's (13%) – and both doctorates – have a written thesis as the only option. By definition, a project contains less primary research than a thesis and greater application of the results to the profession. Projects are also an avenue for partnerships with industry. On average, CSUF students complete 148 master's theses each year (2010-15 mean), which represents a small fraction (<10%) of the total number of master's degrees awarded annually. Some 47% of the 51 master's degree programs can be completed solely through coursework and a comprehensive examination and that number is expected to grow. New degree programs and concentrations at CSUF demonstrate this trend away from thesis and toward the project or examination.

Why will we teach what we teach?

Strengths

CSUF is a regional leader in higher education in southern California and much of its graduate studies serves regional educational and workforce needs, and thus contains applied components. This is not only true of the applied master's degrees, but also seen in CSUF's leadership in preparing the region's K-14 teachers. Partnerships with industry including internships and other educational experiences are a key part of many of the master's degrees, for example, MBA, Nursing, Counseling, Social Work, and other disciplines.

In addition, some degrees with the traditional academic title of Master of Arts or Master of Science contain applied learning components for their students such as internships and pedagogy classes.

These degrees include not only the MS in Education and degrees in allied health (MSs in Counseling, Clinical Psychology, and Nursing), but also MAs in American Studies, Communications, Chemistry, History (Oral and Public History) and Sociology.

As a recognized leader in applied doctorate education, CSUF has the potential to offer other applied doctorates when state legislature allows. Moreover, CSUF is well-positioned and sufficiently flexible to respond to educational and workforce developments with expanded graduate education. For example, the accrediting body for Athletic Training recently decided that the minimum education for entry into a career in Athletic Training would move to the master's level, rather than the bachelors. CSUF has already submitted request to the Chancellor's Office to add the MS in Athletic Training to its offerings. Also, CSUF Counseling faculty are among those who note that the new standard for teaching faculty is the EdD in Counseling Education, yet few universities offer the doctorate in that field. In addition a Doctor of Kinesiology might be permitted within the CSU as the University of California campuses transition away from offering such a degree. Moreover, the accrediting body for Speech Pathology recognizes that doctoral education may be a more adequate standard than the masters.

Traditional MA and MS programs also serve to assist the student to pursue the PhD, or enter careers in applied fields such as consulting and industry and employment with local, state, and federal government agencies. CSUF recognizes that its role includes preparing students for doctorates to pursue faculty careers; to that end, CSUF administers three programs for educationally disadvantaged students who are committed to pursuing the doctorate and considering faculty careers in the CSU.

Though CSUF's programs place an emphasis on serving the region, there is commitment to participating in the global community of higher education, both through online programs and by admitting international students, the latter who bring value of diversity and globalization to CSUF.

Where will we teach?

The central space for most teaching and learning is the Fullerton campus, although use of the Irvine campus is expanding. However, teaching and learning occur in other physical spaces as well as in virtual spaces, in recognition of the University's commitment to serving the regional, geographic community as well as being a participant in global educational community. CSUF must remain flexible enough to incorporate new technologies in the delivery of education, including expansion of hybrid and distance learning modalities where appropriate.

Internships move the learning beyond the classroom and the University itself to applying learning in the community. Internship sites within community organizations and industry (schools, hospitals, laboratories) provide these extra-classroom learning spaces. The University operates internship sites and physical learning sites including Richmond Center in Fullerton, Cooper Center in Santa Ana, Grand Art Central in Santa Ana, Tucker Wildlife Sanctuary and others.

What learning goals will guide our work?

The GEC recently approved broad learning goals for CSUF graduate students. Individual programs will use these goals to identify program-specific learning outcomes that they can then assess.

Appropriate to the discipline, students shall demonstrate:

- intellectual and professional literacy through the acquisition of advanced knowledge, skills and values, and the development of competence in disciplinary perspectives and interdisciplinary points of view
- the ability to apply appropriate methods and technologies to address a specific problem
- the ability to access, analyze and synthesize complex information from multiple sources
- the ability to work as independent creative artists, researchers and scholars, as well as in collaboration with others to generate scholarship and creative activities within the discipline
- the ability to think creatively and critically, using analytical, qualitative and/or quantitative reasoning, to apply previously learned concepts to new situations, complex challenges and everyday problems, and to situate a specific problem within the broader context of the discipline
- the ability to communicate clearly, effectively, and persuasively, both orally and in writing.

Challenges and Priorities

1. Given the mission of the university and the diversity of the students that we serve, we envision that a model comprehensive university will support a diversity of graduate programs that, collectively, both train individuals seeking transferable skills for immediate entry or improved status in the workforce, as well as provide meaningful experiences for students seeking to compete effectively for entry into additional higher education opportunities, e.g., PhD and professional programs. These dual strengths are reflected in our existing programs and should be maintained as equal, alternative paths that serve the broadest possible range of students. This will require recognition and institutional support of the different demands of each approach in terms of faculty commitments, instructional and research infrastructure, financial support for students, and resources.

2. Departments and programs must be flexible and willing to add applied programs to meet new demands of accreditation bodies, employers and student interest, though they must not overreact to short-term trends or fads. CSUF programs should capitalize upon their strong reputations in evidence-based, translational research to develop new applied doctorate programs that will address regional needs not met by UC programs. This will require programs to establish and maintain community partnerships that allow for distributed specialized teaching via internships and other experiences.

3. To improve the pipeline for master's students seeking to enter PhD programs, we should continue to pursue development of masters-to-doctorate bridging programs with graduate programs at local UC campuses. Such programs will likely reduce the total time and, therefore total cost, required to complete an advanced degree and will help attract high-caliber applicants to our programs, especially

those involving basic research. These initiatives will have the added benefit of prompting a discussion about the rigor of our graduate programs and courses compared to UCs and other target universities. From a program marketing perspective, are there benefits to the student (and prospective employers) of having both a CSU master's and a PhD?

4. Programs should embrace new approaches and technologies for delivering course materials, including simulations that might more effectively convey complex, dynamic processes and systems, or controversial subjects. Moreover, programs should recognize potential benefits of distance-learning modalities and develop online and hybrid programs where sensible and appropriate. However, such endeavors should aim to complement existing courses and programs that underscore the importance of personal, face-to-face interactions between instructors and graduate students, which is a strength of CSUF's programs.

5. We expect that demands on faculty time and institutional resources will increase the number of programs using comprehensive examinations as their culminating experiences. This shift may require re-consideration and strengthening of policies to ensure that the rigor of the comprehensive exam is equivalent to that of a project or thesis.

6. We should revisit the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) for graduate students, including discussion of a need for graduate students to demonstrate higher writing proficiency than that expected of upper-division undergraduates.

7. We should revisit policies for dealing with instances of academic dishonesty, e.g., cheating or plagiarism, specifically for graduate students. General CSUF guidelines related to academic integrity for graduate students are available (<http://www.fullerton.edu/integrity/resources/pdfs/A%20Guide%20for%20Graduate%20Students.pdf>), but do not seem to be widely known or applied across campus.

Subcommittee 2 – Students

Whom will we teach? How many students will we teach?

Whom will we teach?

Students in Professional and Applied Fields of Study

In the Fall 2015 census, there were 5,490 students in the 53 CSUF graduate programs. Five colleges had programs with very high enrollments (>750 students), led by ECS, with three degree programs with >200 graduate students each. Interestingly, seven of the nine degree programs with the highest enrollments (>200 students) require either a thesis or project as a culminating experience, which therefore represents a significant investment in faculty time. In contrast, three other colleges (NSM, COMM, ARTS) tend to have much smaller programs (<300 students), typically with 60 or fewer students.

College	Degree Programs	Fall 2015 Census
Engineering and Computer Science (ECS)	7	1445
Education (EDUC)	3	994
Health and Human Development (HHD)	6	898
Business and Economics (MCBE)	6	790
Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS)	14	780
Natural Sciences and Mathematics (NSM)	8	258
Communications (COMM)	4	196
Arts (ARTS)	5	129
Total	53	5490

Thus, the majority of CSUF's graduate students study in applied professional programs and other areas that have some applied emphasis. That said, because of the significant diversity of our students, it is important that CSUF continue to provide a pathway to advanced education in traditional research-intensive settings (e.g., PhD-granting institutions) for students who demonstrate aptitude and interest. For this reason (along with financial needs and professional training as outlined below), CSUF may need to look at developing new models for graduate and teaching assistantships for graduate students.

Regional Diversity

Preliminary AMP documents emphasize the importance of CSUF serving a student body that reflects the diversity of the region surrounding the campus. This is equally true for graduate students, though the term "region" may need to be defined more broadly. Because of the unique and distinguishing features of CSUF's graduate programs, we believe that a larger proportion of graduate students come to the campus from outside its local admission and service areas. Note also that international students are well represented (25% of Fall 2015 census) in our graduate programs.

Student Demographic Profile

CSUF's graduate programs serve a highly diverse population of students. This diversity includes large numbers of international students and students of color (61% of 2009-14 headcount mean), first-generation college students (48% of Fall 2015 census), immigrants, undocumented students, and students from low-income families. Additionally, English is not the native language for a significant proportion of CSUF's graduate students. Reflecting a trend seen in the undergraduate population at CSUF and nationally, only 39% of the graduate student population is male, and women consistently earn most (61%) of the campus's master's and doctorate degrees (2009-14 means). Most students (55%) are between 20-29 years old, but 18% are 40 or older (2012 survey). Most are single (61%) but 32% have children (2012 survey).

Typically, CSUF graduate students work at least part-time, and many work full-time while assuming significant responsibilities with their families. For this reason, a large proportion (40%) of graduate courses are offered during the evening or on weekends and 70% of graduate students do not have a daytime class (courses may be in the evening or online). Many graduate students do not take a break during the summer term; in fact, many graduate programs expect students to complete courses or conduct research during the summer and intersession.

Student Admission Qualifications

Based on admission data from 2009-13, only 28-30% of matriculated graduate students earned their bachelor's degrees at CSUF, indicating that our graduate programs are broadly attractive within and outside the region. Most of our graduate programs utilize a comprehensive approach for evaluating applicants to their programs. Thus, undergraduate grade-point averages and performance on standardized tests often carry less weight in admissions decisions compared to other characteristics such as experience, accomplishments, or potential for contributions to the field. High-demand programs are necessarily more selective.

How many students will we teach?

Proportion of Students

Only 14% of Cal State Fullerton's 38,950 current students are graduate students. We anticipate that this proportion will steadily increase in the coming years. The reasons for this include the growing demand for workers with a graduate-level education, authorizations by the State of California for CSU campuses to offer degrees in new fields, and the growing number of graduate programs delivered through hybrid and online formats.

Access to Success

Cal State Fullerton prides itself for extending broad access to advanced education to the broadest possible population of students. That being said, it will be increasingly important that CSUF ensures not only access to admission, but access to success. This should not be confused with any effort to narrow access to only or primarily those students who "fit" or who are likely to succeed based on the quality of their prior education. Instead, CSUF should ensure that it provides the supports and services necessary to ensure that all student admitted to graduate programs can achieve the highest possible academic outcomes (see **Subcommittee 4**).

Lastly, CSUF must consider not only the demand by prospective students for programs, but also the demand by employers for graduates of those programs. Whereas the sole goal of an education is not securing a job, employability is an important outcome for students who receive a high-quality, comprehensive, and holistic education at CSUF.

Challenges and Priorities

1. We anticipate that enrollments in graduate programs will increase, especially in applied programs that use online or hybrid to offer courses to off-campus students. To the extent that these programs attract international students, programs must consider increased requirements for infrastructure, staff and support services for these students' needs.
2. There will be pressure to increase costs of attendance, which could potentially reduce access to students with fewer resources. CSUF must continue to be affordable and accessible to students across different demographic groups and explore ways to reach groups that are currently under-represented in specific programs and campus-wide.

3. Although many graduate students fulfill breadth or remediation requirements by enrolling in large, upper-division (400-level) undergraduate courses, the close faculty and peer interactions that make graduate education special can often best be achieved in a small-group discussion or seminar setting. This will naturally create tensions between class size, numbers of sections of a small class that can be offered, and faculty workloads, especially considering that, for many departments, undergraduate courses are given higher priority. Program faculty should identify the characteristics that define a graduate-level classroom experience for their discipline, and take steps to ensure that all students have access to enriching experiences.
4. The campus as a whole needs to invest in better tracking of the fates of our graduate students after they complete their programs. Are graduates finding jobs in their chosen field and if not, why? This information is crucial to evaluate the success of programs and adapt to changes in the workplace and society as a whole.

Subcommittee 3 – Faculty and Pedagogy

Who will teach? How will we teach?

Who will teach

Graduate-level courses are usually taught by tenure-track faculty with a terminal doctorate degree, although in some applied disciplines, highly-qualified individuals with specialized skills or expertise from outside the university community contribute significantly to course offerings. CSUF graduate programs typically have an assigned adviser who is a member of the graduate faculty and administers the program; some have staff to provide administrative support. The amount of support for graduate program advisers varies greatly among programs, with some program advisers earning course release time for their duties, while others receive no formal recognition or compensation of the time it takes to administer a graduate program.

Faculty who serve as formal advisers of graduate students are usually tenure-track faculty. The degree of interaction between a graduate student and his/her faculty adviser varies greatly among programs and even among individual faculty members within a department or program. In some programs faculty members are required to advise and mentor graduate students; failure to do so can reduce the likelihood of tenure and promotion. In others, advising graduate students is voluntary and some faculty members rarely interact with graduate students outside of the classroom and may know little about their graduate program. Likewise, in some programs faculty members earn WTUs for advising students, which can be used to offset an individual's teaching load, whereas faculty members in other programs are not compensated for the time they spend advising students. Service on graduate thesis committees is another responsibility of faculty members that is usually voluntary and often shared unequally within a department, contributing to the uneven workload of faculty when it comes to supervising and advising students.

Teaching graduate courses takes away time from teaching undergraduates, which is considered by many to be the primary role of faculty members at CSUF. Few graduate programs have separate or

dedicated funding, which means that departments have limited resources that can be devoted to graduate programs. Most departments must take more undergraduate students to make sure they can “afford” to offer lower-enrolling graduate courses.

In some disciplines the ability to supervise and mentor graduate students is an essential part of an academic position. As described above, many faculty members depend upon graduate students to assist with their research and graduate students play an essential role in helping to teach undergraduate lab courses and to serve as near-peer mentors for undergraduates conducting independent research. A vibrant graduate program can attract and retain faculty members who consider graduate students an indispensable component of their research and scholarly programs.

How will we teach?

Although most graduate courses are taught on campus and in person, nearly a dozen programs or concentrations are offered exclusively or mostly online, serving more than 800 students in Fall 2015. Although most online courses are taken by California residents, increasingly such programs are attractive to out-of-state and international students.

Graduate courses are usually small to maximize interactions among the instructor and students. Because of the great variety among programs, there are no campus-wide policies on what constitutes a graduate-level experience in a class. Is there a limit to the enrollment of a class or how it is delivered that compromises its ability to deliver a high-quality experience? Should graduate courses be taught exclusively by full-time tenure-track faculty with a terminal doctorate? Answers to these questions will necessarily be discipline-specific.

Challenges and Priorities

1. Currently there is no campus-wide policy of compensation (reduced course load, WTUs, financial compensation) for graduate program advisers and for faculty who advise and mentor students or serve on thesis committees. Given the variability among programs, it may be difficult to set a campus-wide standard, but these topics should be discussed.
2. There should be more effective communication within departments about the mission and goals of their graduate programs. This will be particularly important in programs where advising graduate students is voluntary because individual faculty members who do not advise students may know little about the program and therefore cannot promote it effectively.
3. The campus must provide incentives to attract diverse, skilled faculty to come to CSUF and stay. For many prospective faculty members, this includes the ability to compete for outstanding students by providing students a competitive offer (including tuition and fee waivers, access to teaching and graduate assistantships), a commitment to allowing faculty to regularly teach small, graduate classes as part of their workload, and formal recognition of and accounting for time that faculty spend mentoring

graduate students, i.e. through release time, direct compensation, or by accommodating different measures of scholarship in RTP criteria.

4. To be effective mentors and career advisers for both graduate and undergraduate students, faculty need to remain current in their respective fields. This is accomplished by being actively engaged in research, scholarly and creative activities, however that may be defined by a given discipline. CSUF must provide a productive research environment, including state-of-the-art laboratory or studio space, a generous intramural grants program to provide seed money for the pursuit of extramural funds and to support graduate research, travel funds to present research results and accompany students to professional meetings, funds for publication costs, and access to technology.

5. To what extent should CSUF master's programs try to compete with for-profit programs elsewhere? Should more programs be online to accomplish this, and how would it affect quality? Are there some topics or programs that would not work well online at the graduate level?

Subcommittee 4 – Infrastructure and Resources

What is a “model public comprehensive university”? What are the challenges we face? What policies/procedures/practices/facilities would we need to have/change/adjust/modify to support/maintain/sustain the AMP?

From the standpoint of graduate programs, a “model” public comprehensive university values graduate education as much as undergraduate education, and provides infrastructure and resources necessary to maintain rigorous master's and applied doctorate programs that train students for the current and future workforce and to help them transition into other advanced professional programs. We believe that the most important obstacles for our graduate students stem from the lack of financial resources on a number of levels, as well as the need for more physical space to support graduate student research and teaching.

Funding Streams

Most programs are supported by traditional state funding streams, but six (Business Administration MBA, Economics MA, Taxation MS, Software Engineering MS, Counseling MS, MSW, EdD) have options that are funded through self-support. Calls for use of self-supporting mechanisms are expected to grow.

Funding for Students

The Office of Graduate Studies (OGS), through grants such as EPOCHS and SOAR, regularly offers scholarships and fellowships (e.g., Elevar Scholars Program, Graduate Equity Program, Giles T. Brown Travel Award) for graduate students. These also include the California Pre-Doctoral and the Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Programs, which help master's students identify doctoral programs that best suit their interests and needs. OGS also administers the Giles T. Brown Thesis Scholarship, which recognizes one outstanding thesis each year with an award of \$1000, and maintains a list of campus-wide scholarships that can support and recognize accomplishments of graduate students.

Some graduate students also apply for scholarships within their home college or department, although many receive few applicants, possibly because awards are automatically applied to a student's financial aid package. In most cases, these scholarships are relatively small, i.e. \$1000 or less.

In addition, OGS administers the Non-Resident Tuition and Fee Waiver (NRTFW) Program, which waives out-of-state tuition and fees to a small number (100) of exceptional applicants for up to two years. OGS makes these available to college deans, who distribute them among their programs. NRTFWs are intended to serve as a recruitment tool, i.e. to help make a competitive offer to a highly-qualified out-of-state applicant who might not be able to afford out-of-state tuition to attend CSUF.

In some departments, graduate students work as teaching associates (TAs) or graduate assistants (GAs), who assist with teaching of undergraduates by teaching laboratory or discussion sections, preparing materials for labs, or grading or proctoring. These are limited to a maximum of 20 hours of work per week and wages are low, but these assistantships are often the sole source of income for a student already living in a location with a high cost of living. Lastly, some graduate students are hired part-time by departments and colleges to assist with administration, or by individual faculty members to work on research projects funded by intramural or external grants.

Student Support Services

In addition to support services available to all students, e.g. Career Center, CAPS, OGS provides programs specifically aimed to assist graduate students. These include workshops in writing, statistical analysis and thesis preparation, advisement from a graduate advisor, as well as one-on-one advice with learning specialists. OGS regularly organizes new student orientation and other events to help promote the campus support programs and help new students feel welcome and informed. The new Graduate Student Success Center, established by OGS in 2016 with the aid of external funding, provides a physical space that will be a nexus for many of student success initiatives and a focus for building communities among graduate students.

Challenges and Priorities

1. In order for us to compete with other regional and national institutions, CSUF needs to be able to provide a more competitive financial offer of support to recruit outstanding applicants, including from other states and countries. This could include more scholarships that cover a large fraction of the actual cost of attendance, on-campus employment opportunities, such as TAs or GAs, and NRTFWs. Programs currently without TA or GA positions should consider how to provide this type of support to graduate students. Endowments and private-public partnerships are other possible ways of obtaining additional support for graduate students.
2. As is the case at several other CSU campuses, graduate students who work a 20-hour load as a TA or GA should have in-state tuition and fees waived.
3. It would also be helpful if graduate students were given more priority in all areas concerning financial aid. They often need help determining what options are available to them, as their needs may be different than those of undergraduate students. Financial aid, monetary awards and NRTFWs must

also be awarded and dispersed in a timely manner. For example, priority decisions for financial aid for the coming academic year are made by 1 March, with most applicants preferring state grants over loans. However, most graduate programs take in the bulk of their students in fall semester and accept applications well into the spring. This means that many incoming graduate students who were admitted into a program after 1 March may only have access to loans, putting them at a disadvantage.

4. At CSUF graduate student success depends upon adequate support for faculty to conduct research or undertake creative activities. The lack of physical space for research laboratories or studios is a serious concern and a significant constraint on the ability of some graduate programs to grow. Many campus buildings were built in the 1960s and lack upgrades necessary to support state-of-the-art research space. Models such as shared research space and multi-use scheduling should be considered, but not at the expense of providing students with the research space and equipment that they need to be successful. In addition, faculty need access to sufficient startup and intramural research funds to be able to support research expenses of their current students and to attract highly qualified new ones. There should be a consistent policy of supporting publication costs for research involving students, and both faculty and students should have funding for travel to at least one meeting each year to present their research.

5. Likewise, for online and hybrid distance learning we need more modern teaching facilities with technology and support, as well as plans for keeping up with advances in remote-access technology, including hardware, software and technical support.

6. Several graduate programs on campus have very large enrollments (>750 students), and the potential for growth in these and other programs is great as distance-learning capabilities increase. These large programs will require additional administrative, advising and technical support staff to operate effectively and ensure that a quality experience is maintained.

7. Student services and support programs need to be tailored to the unique needs of the students admitted to its graduate programs. For example, given the large number of students for whom English is a second language, not to mention students who graduated from non-writing intensive undergraduate programs, it will be critical that CSUF provide comprehensive writing support for students. This could be accomplished through establishment of a centralized location for writing assistance, e.g. at OGS, or by locating discipline-specific writing resources within particular colleges or units. For example, whereas we see significant value in CSUF's recent efforts to strengthen its Resource Centers for African American, Asian Pacific American, Chicana/o, and Dreamer students; its support for International Students and Scholars; and its support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer students, there are few services tailored to meet the unique needs of CSUF's growing population of graduate students of Middle Eastern heritage.

8. Additional professional development is needed for all staff working in important service areas outside these offices of support (financial aid, financial services, admissions and registration, advising, counseling and psychological services, etc.). We emphasize that access to success for graduate students may require different types of services than for undergraduates. Compared to undergraduates, graduate students often require services that are more discipline specific. For

example, when identifying tutors for students in general education courses, one can often draw from students in a variety of majors because of the nature of general education. As students progress into their major, they typically need tutors who come from that major because of the more narrow focus of the courses. This is even more the case for graduate students. This is not to say that some services (e.g., support for writing, statistics help) cannot be centralized, but it requires recognition that many service offerings may need to be decentralized and tied to specific graduate programs or areas.

9. Extramurally-funded programs, services, and centers that have proven successful at increasing retention and graduation rates and enhancing the graduate student environment at CSUF should be high priorities for institutional support when external funding ends.

10. How can we create or expand incentives for off-campus partners to become involved, via internships, etc., in the training of our graduate students?

*Source: University Graduate Education Committee
19 February 2016*