

Executive Summary

Blueprint for Academic Excellence

Graduate School

AY2020-2021

Highlights

The Graduate School serves 6000 graduate students from our state, the nation, and the world to promote the importance and value of graduate education. UofSC graduate students study in 64 doctoral, 135 master's, 38 certificates, including 19 dual degree programs and 46 online programs. The Graduate School strives to enrich the graduate student experience, provide administrative services for these programs, and promote and protect academic excellence and integrity. To build on our community of engaged scholars and professionals and to further heighten UofSC's reputation as a top-ranked graduate institution, we also fund strategic fellowship and travel awards and design collaborative initiatives to enhance the professional and academic development of our students.

Mission Statement

The Graduate School at the University of South Carolina is a service unit committed to enhancing the experience of graduate students and the faculty and staff with whom they work. We provide timely, consistent, and accurate information; adapt and enforce meaningful policies to ensure academic integrity; track student success; and build bridges across campus and community as we showcase our diverse and talented graduate student body.

Updated: 01/03/2012

Vision Statement

An innovative, flexible and dynamic organization, the Graduate School at the University of South Carolina seeks to become a collaborative guide celebrated for responsive and efficient service. We strive to provide accessible and trusted leadership to the campus and higher education communities.

Updated: 01/03/2012

Values Statement

Faculty and staff in the Graduate School endorse the tenets of the Carolinian Creed as a statement of values for how we relate with each other and with potential applicants, graduate students, faculty, staff and other constituents.

Updated: 11/01/2019

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Goals - Looking Back

No goals have been entered for this section.

Goals - Real Time

Goals for the current Academic Year.

Goal 1 - Serve the needs of students, applicants and other constituents

Goal Statement Better serve the needs of students, applicants, faculty, staff, and other members of the university community.

Linkage to University Goal

- Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow
- Spurring Knowledge and Creation
- Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities
- Ensuring Institutional Strength, Longevity, and Excellence

Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values Providing services for our graduate students from the initial inquiry, through application all the way to graduation, and to the faculty and staff who support them is our most foundational function.

Status Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)

Action Plan Because this goal involves ongoing services and activities rather than discrete initiatives, many of the achievements reflect our action plan for the year. With staffing changes, we have realigned some responsibilities for better efficiency and equity. As we proceed with full implementation of our expanded CollegeNet, we replace other functions in the old internal GMS system with more current technology. With the new website live but under continued enhancement, we now focus on how we can better support unit-level recruitment activities.

Achievements

Select activities:

- Systematic recruiting on campus and across the southeast, and data collection on the yield of these efforts.
- Continual monitoring of program coordinators for accuracy, timeliness and customer-service approach for processing applications and student paperwork
- Ongoing refinement of internal processes and collaborative efforts with other units including partial implementation of expanded CollegeNet application system
- Continued enhancement of the New Graduate Extravaganza so new students more efficiently access the specific information they seek.
- Realignment of staff responsibilities
- Continued development of Shorelight graduate programs.
- Annual open house for graduate faculty and support staff to facilitate direct interaction and provide a venue for questions and concerns.
- Utilization of Associate/Assistant Graduate Deans Council to facilitate improved communication among colleges and between colleges and the Graduate School
- Engaging Graduate Council to consider policy and substantive issues.

Resources Utilized

Goals - Real Time

Goal 2 - Professional development, academic enrichment, and student services

Goal Statement	Provide meaningful professional development, academic enrichment, and student services to enhance student experience
Linkage to University Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating the Thinkers and Leaders of Tomorrow • Spurring Knowledge and Creation • Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities • Ensuring Institutional Strength, Longevity, and Excellence
Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values	This goal encompasses programs and initiatives to enhance the graduate student experience beyond the administrative processes of application, progression and graduation.
Status	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	Academic enrichment and professional development activities address personal life skills and leadership skills. In particular, we are sensitive to supporting doctoral students who are pursuing non-academic skills. Many activities are designed for particular groups of scholars such as the Presidential Fellows, Bridge Humanities Corps, and Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program. We partner with numerous entities across campus for program for program delivery (see collaborations).
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced presence on social media (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube). • Increased quality and availability of information and training for thesis/dissertation format preparation and submission. • Participation in Discover USC to showcase graduate student scholarship through poster and 3MT presentations. • Participation in the Council of Graduate Schools “PhD Career Pathways” project. • Maintained Presidential Fellows, Graduate Civic Scholars Program, and Bridge Humanities Corps. • Transitioned Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program to Graduate School with enhanced support. • Scaled up professional development offerings to complement discipline-specific offerings. • Graduate student travel program. • Collaborative efforts with an active and engaged Graduate Student Association (e.g., co-sponsored trip to DC to meet SC delegation; co-sponsored presenter for Leadership Week)
Resources Utilized	Personnel; budget for travel, speakers and other related expenses
Goal Continuation	This goal represents the “value added” of the Graduate School for our graduate students, with extracurricular training and experiences beyond the academic requirements of the graduate programs administered in the schools and colleges.

Goals - Real Time

Goal Upcoming Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scale up 3MT to use more effectively. Need to consider accessibility accommodations.• Enhance thesis/dissertation workshops for asynchronous and synchronous access and processes to expand options.• Expand accessibility of professional development programming.• Continue to develop effective mechanisms to track and engage graduate students and alumni more effectively and use data for program improvement.• Complete transition of website to the new platform (delayed because of security issues related to GMS)
Resources Needed	Personnel; budget for travel, speakers and other related expenses; sustainable funding for Presidential Fellows, GJMPP, and other scholarly initiatives. Request to Education Foundation for increased support for Presidential Fellows, following conversation of current fellow with President Caslen.
Goal Notes	

Goals - Real Time

Goal 3 - Communication, Marketing and Recruitment

Goal Statement	Establish effective internal and external communication, including enhanced marketing and recruitment material, with prospective and current students, graduate faculty and other stakeholders.
Linkage to University Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities• Ensuring Institutional Strength, Longevity, and Excellence
Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values	As a service unit within the university, we seek to provide effective, open and direct lines of communication to prospective and current students, university faculty, staff and administrators.
Status	Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)
Action Plan	<p>Information about graduate student programs and resources, including accelerated programs to both potential students and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Promote campus resources on website, social media, and through interactive learning experiences.</p> <p>Continued development of website redesign.</p> <p>Using CollegeNet, better communication with prospective students, applicants and newly admitted students.</p> <p>Keep departments informed of transitions as GMS/CollegeNet are upgraded/replaced.</p> <p>Promote vouchers for application fee waivers to select students.</p>

Achievements

Goals - Real Time

Goal 4 - Build awareness of graduate education and advance reputation of UofSC

Goal Statement

Advance the reputation of UofSC as a top ranked research institution by enhancing public and university awareness of the importance and value of graduate education at UofSC.

Linkage to University Goal

- Assembling a World-Class Faculty of Scholars, Teachers, and Practitioners
- Building Inclusive and Inspiring Communities
- Ensuring Institutional Strength, Longevity, and Excellence

Alignment with Mission, Vision, and Values

Creating avenues to promote our graduate programs, our diverse and talented graduate students and Graduate School initiatives will advance the reputation of UofSC graduate education.

Status

Progressing as expected (multi-year goal)

Action Plan

Goals - Looking Ahead

No goals have been entered for this section.

Programs or Initiatives

Effective Programs or Initiatives

List your most effective programs/initiatives toward fulfillment of mission.

Scholarly initiatives - professional development and service activities for participants; promotion of interdisciplinary work.

Student travel program.

Recruitment presence throughout the state and region.

Participation in the PhD Pathways project, through the Council of Graduate Schools, to better understand and enhance the graduate experience.

Offering professional development programming via social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, WordPress), webinar (Go To Webinar platform), and using livestreaming (Facebook Live). Scaled up implementation of professional development commenced in fall 2016 and has increased to date.

Program Launches

List any programs/initiatives that were newly launched during the Academic Year or any programs/initiatives you would like to launch in the coming year(s). Describe the program/initiatives, provide financial requirements (including additional staff), and academic year in which you would launch. What key performance indicators are you utilizing to track the success of this program?

Program Rankings

List any nationally ranked or external recognition during the Academic Year. For each, provide the formal name of the program followed by the name of the organization that issued the ranking, the date of notification, effective date range, and any other relevant information.

US News & World Report January 2019

College of Nursing online programs rank No. 6 overall; No. 3 among public programs.

College of Education online programs, No. 34 in the nation.

Programs or Initiatives

US News & World Report March 2019:

No. 1 International MBA program **[1]**

No. 4 social psychology specialization within sociology

No. 22 part-time MBA program (13th among public universities)

No. 22 criminology program (18th among public universities)

No. 23 public health (12th among public universities)

No. 30 nursing master's program (17th among public universities)

No. 30 speech-language pathology program

Other Rankings

Sport Business International (2018) MSEM ranked #6 in the world and #5 in North America (was ranked #15 in 2017)

Shanghai Rankings (2017) - #1 Sports Science Schools and Departments in the US and #4 in the world (includes the department of Exercise Science, HRSM, and Physical Education and Athletic Training)

*National Academy of Kinesiology (2015)***[2]** - #1 PhD program in Exercise Science

[1] According to the International MBA website at USC, the program has been “ranked among the top three programs in the nation by *US News & World Report* for 25 consecutive years.”

[2] The NAK’s report is only done once every five years. The previous two reports posted as pdfs on the NAK’s website were unavailable.

Initiatives and Fees

Initiatives

Describe any new initiatives your unit will need for the coming year.

Fees

List any new or changed fees that your unit has implemented or had to take on in the last academic year.

Community Engagement

Community Perceptions

Describe how your unit assesses community perceptions of your engagement, and how the unit assesses the impact of community engagement on students, faculty, community and the institution. Provide specific findings.

Collaborations

Internal Collaborations

List your Unit's most significant internal collaborations and multidisciplinary efforts that are internal to the University. Details should be omitted; list by name only.

Associate/Assistant Graduate Deans Council

Athletics

Black Faculty Caucus

Black Graduate Student Association

Bridges to the Doctorate program

Campus Wellness/Healthy Carolina

Career Center

Center for Teaching Excellence

Council of Academic Diversity Officers

Division of Information Technology

English Program for Internationals

Global Carolina

Graduate Student Association

International Student Services

McNair/TRIO programs

Office for International Scholars

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs

Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Analytics

Office of Multicultural Student Affairs

Office of the Registrar

Collaborations

Office of the Vice President for Research

On Your Time

Organizational Development (Human Resources)

Professional Development Advisory Committee

South Carolina Honors College

Student Success Center

Study Abroad

University Advising Center

University Libraries

Veterans Services

Visitors Center

Writing Center

External Collaborations

List your Unit's most significant external collaborations and multidisciplinary efforts that are external to the University. Details should be omitted; list by name only.

Academic Partnerships

American Association of University Women (AAUW) Start Smart Program

Clemson University

Conference of Southern Graduate Schools

Council of Graduate Schools

Graduate Career Consortium

GSS Survey of Earned Doctorates

My Carolina (USC Alumni Association)

National Association of African American Honors Program

Collaborations

National GEM Consortium

Ronald McNair Scholars Program

Shorelight

South Carolina Graduate Deans Association

Southern Regional Education Board

US ETD Association

Campus Climate and Inclusion

Campus Climate and Inclusion

Activities the unit conducted that were designed to improve Campus, Climate, and Inclusion.

Concluding Remarks

Weaknesses and Plans for Improvement

What is your unit struggling with? What plans do you have to overcome the weakness that you have faced in the next academic year.

Technology and security needs remain a challenge for our website and operational systems. As we decommissioned the old GMS, we accelerated part of the expanded CollegeNet implementation. Full implementation of the expanded CollegeNet will greatly increase our capacity to communicate with prospective students, applicants, and newly admitted students, enhancing our recruitment effectiveness. We continue to implement replacement technologies for GMS. Much of our fellowships and awards processes were handled in GMS. We are currently working on a one-year solution for Spring 2020 with a long-term goal of having a permanent solution via CollegeNET by Spring 2021.

Funding for graduate students is an ongoing challenge for effective student recruitment and retention. While most fellowships and assistantships are provided from the academic units, the Graduate School has some involvement through allocation of campus-level fellowships and provision of a subsidy for graduate assistants who purchase student health insurance. We are requesting additional funding for Presidential Fellowships and for the student health insurance subsidy for all graduate assistantships, in addition to general encouragement for increased financial support.

Key Issues

Identify key issues or potential challenges your unit will encounter this coming year and the steps you plan on initiating.

Quantitative Outcomes

Explain any surprises regarding data provided in the quantitative outcomes modules throughout this report.

Ongoing collaboration with DoIT to address these evolving security requirements.

While substantial progress has been made in reviewing and updating Graduate School/Graduate Academic Bulletin policies for consistency and current best practices, additional work is still needed.

Cool Stuff

Describe innovations, happy accidents, good news, etc. that occurred within your unit not noted elsewhere in your reporting.

The Graduate School will support academic units in efforts to define and enhance policies and practices at that level (e.g., standards for academic progress, appeal process).

We are sensitive to the decline in graduate enrollment across many academic units and hope to facilitate more effective recruitment, using the tools available in CollegeNet and through

Concluding Remarks

better coordination among the college student recruiters.