Creating Climates Where We All Can Thrive

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Takeaways from this Presentation

• Diversity and inclusion are preconditions to graduate program excellence
• Despite progress, there still is a long way to go
• Focused attention must be given to
  • Nurturing future graduate students
  • Mentoring current students, and
  • Improving student well-being
In Fall 2018, the share of U.S. domestic URM first-time enrollment at Southern graduate schools was similar to the national figure.

Data Source: Council of Graduate Schools/Graduate Record Examination, Survey of Graduate Enrollment & Degrees (GE&D Survey), Fall 2018.
Nurturing Interest in and Preparation for Graduate School

• Undergraduate mentoring and research matters

...but what about prospective master's students and returning adults
Admitting a Diverse Graduate Student Body

“A process by which programs consider a broad range of characteristics, including noncognitive and personal attributes, when reviewing applications for admission.” (CGS, 2016)
Qualities Deserving More Attention – Doctoral Admissions

Source: CGS Student Life Cycle Survey

- Critical thinking
- Research, Work Experience
- Fit with program
- Writing ability

Graduate School Staff
Faculty and Staff outside the Graduate School

Source: CGS Student Life Cycle
Qualities Deserving More Attention – Master’s Admissions

Source: CGS Student Life Cycle Survey

- Past academics
- Critical thinking ability
- Fit with program
- Writing Ability

Grad school staff
Faculty and Staff outside the graduate school

Source: CGS Student Life Cycle Survey
Letters of recommendations and personal statements are used to weigh a wide range of cognitive and non-cognitive attributes in application processes.
Yet, few graduate schools offer guidelines/rubrics for reviewing LoR or PS, and 30% master’s programs have no formal guideline.

Given this emphasis on past performance, how can we ensure that students from less privileged backgrounds are not left out?
Selected Promising Practices

• Gather and analyze **department-specific data** on graduate admissions.

• Provide faculty members who make admissions decisions with the **context** needed to evaluate students appropriately.

• Provide faculty with information on the appropriate use of the **Graduate Record Exam (GRE)**.

• Offer guidance on the optimal **sequence** for reviewing application materials.

• Provide faculty with **rubrics** for evaluating applicants so that admissions criteria are more transparent and consistently applied.
What do we know about Degree Completion

• Ten-year completion rate: 54%

• In STEM Masters programs, 64% of white students complete in four years; only 55% and 60% of African American and Latinx students do so

• Median time to attrition: ~24 months

• Career uncertainty and the “discouraged dissertator”
As URM students progress in their doctoral studies, they become more skeptical.

Yet, fewer doctoral programs focus their efforts for latter stages (e.g., dissertation phase).

And, even fewer doctoral programs offer mentoring/advising resources for faculty members.

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<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant faculty mentoring awards</td>
<td>19%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide faculty record of advisees' success in program to students</td>
<td>23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offer new faculty advising/mentoring workshops</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide targeted mentoring for ABD students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide web-based mentoring resource for faculty</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct annual student evaluations (preferably written)</td>
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<td>Offer a clear process for selection/assignment of advisors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide graduate handbook to students</td>
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<td>Assign designated advisor upon enrollment</td>
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<td>Provide information on changing advisors</td>
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<td>Use early research experiences as mentoring tools</td>
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<td>Provide peer mentoring program</td>
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Good mentoring should help students navigate differences & take advantage of the benefits of diversity.
STEM doctoral degree recipient from a research university in Florida

“Really doesn’t acknowledge that minority students are minority. I wasn’t discriminated against, but I wasn’t acknowledged either. You aren’t going to offend minority students because you acknowledge their background. Don’t treat them differently, but acknowledge them. I felt like the program was color blind...but a color acceptance model might be a better fit for minority students.”
Promising Practices for Degree Completion and Student Success

• New orientation models
• Mentoring
• Preparation for diverse careers
URM students in later stages also feel more isolated and concerned of their mental/physical health.

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<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Pre-candidates</th>
<th>Candidates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worried about your mental or physical health</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolated from other students</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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Supporting Graduate Student Mental Health and Well-Being

Supported by:
The Fall 2019 Data Collection Cycle for CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment & Degrees is still open. If your institution has not completed the survey, please contact surveys@cgs.nche.edu.
Resources

Preparing Future Faculty: A Framework for Program Design and Evaluation at the University Level
by Jill Hennes, John Banks, and Anna Brown

PHD COMPLETION AND ATTENTION:
Policies and Practices to Promote Student Success

IMAGINE PHD
A CAREER PLANNING AND EXPLORATION TOOL FOR HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
presented by the graduate career consortium

PHD Career Pathways
Closing Gaps in our Knowledge of
Closing Gaps in our Knowledge of
Closing Gaps in our Knowledge of PhD
Career Pathways: Job Changing of PhD Graduates After Earning Their Degree
CGS Research Brief, July 2019

Increasing the Participation of Students of Color in Graduate Education: It’s About Faculty Mentorship
Engage with CGS

We hope to see you in Boston in July!