



# The Graduate School

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

### GRADUATE COUNCIL AGENDA

May 23, 2016

To: Graduate Council

Dr. Julia Lopez-Robertson, Chair; Drs. Swann Adams, Jennifer Arns, Drucilla Barker, Bobby Brame, Jr., Heather Brandt, Matt Brown, Nancy Brown, Dirk den Ouden, Kay Edwards, Jerry Hilbish, Lorne Hofseth, Christian Jensen, Caryn Outten, David Tedeschi, Scott White, Susan Yeargin; Brittany Walter, GSA Representative; Jessica Efenbein, Murray Mitchell, Dale Moore (Graduate School: ex officio members).

CC: President Harris Pastides, Provost Joan Gabel, Dr. Kristia Finnigan, Renee Erickson, Deans, Department Chairs, Graduate Directors and Graduate Program Administrators

From: Dr. Lacy Ford, Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

The Graduate Council will meet on Monday, May 23, 2016 at 11:30 A.M. in the Byrnes Building, Room 311 with the following items on the agenda:

1. **Call to Order and Approval of Agenda** (Julia Lopez-Robertson, Chair)
2. **Approval of the [Minutes from April 25, 2016](http://app.gradschool.sc.edu/gradcouncil/minutes.asp)**. Approved actions by Graduate Council become effective 30 days after posting. A copy is available on The Graduate School website at: <http://app.gradschool.sc.edu/gradcouncil/minutes.asp>
3. **Report of the Chair** (Julia Lopez-Robertson)
4. **Report of the Dean of Graduate Studies** (Lacy Ford)
5. **Report of the Secretary of the Graduate Council / Associate Dean** (Murray Mitchell)
6. **Report of the Graduate Student Association Representative** (Brittany Walter)
7. **Report of the Academic Policy and Practices Committee** (Matt Brown)
8. **Report of the 500/600 Level Courses, Distance Education and Special Courses** (Murray Mitchell)

A listing of 500/600 Level Courses is presented to Council for informational purposes only.

### **500/600 Level Courses**

The Faculty Senate Committee considering these courses will not meet again until the fall semester.

### **Distance Education Delivery**

The Faculty Senate Committee considering these courses will not meet again until the fall semester.

### **Special Topics Courses**

- **EMCH 791** (3) Nuclear Analysis using Computer Codes for the Nuclear Industry (Summer 2016)
- **ENGL 738** (3) Topics in American Women Writers: Twentieth Century US Women Writers (Fall 2016)
- **ENGL 840** (3) Studies in American Lit: Blackface Minstrelsy (Fall 2016)
- **ENGL 841** (3) Studies in American Lit: Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the US (Fall 2016)
- **HPEB 792** (3) Mass Incarceration and Public Health (Fall 2016)
- **MKTG 712** (3) Sales: Process, People and Performance (Fall 2016)
- **SLIS 797** (3) Marketing for Libraries (Fall 2016)
- **SMED 729** (3) Science and Engineering Practices for Elementary Grades Science Teachers (Fall 2016)
- **SOWK 768** (3) Motivational Interviewing (Fall 2016)
- **SOWK 768** (1) RCSD School Practicum (Fall 2016)
- **EXSC 555** (3) Fundamentals of Clinical Trials in Exercise Science (Fall 2016)

#### **9. Associate Graduate Faculty Nominations (Murray Mitchell)**

None received

#### **10. Fellowships and Scholarships Committee (Heather Brandt)**

#### **11. Report of Science, Math, and Related Professional Programs Committee (David Tedeschi)**

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Each curricular action can be viewed at this Public Agenda review site: <https://www.sc.edu/programproposal/gradagenda/?id=15>

At this Public Agenda link, the individual proposals are not live-linked, but agenda items are listed in alphabetical order. To view the full proposals, GC members and Committee Chairs still need to go to the Committee Review site, and filter for "Committees", then for the "Committee" called "Added to Grad Council agenda."

- **MATH 739** (3) Introduction to Complex Geometry II, Arts and Sciences. NCP, Spring 2017
- **NURS Major / Degree Program**, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Nursing. Program Change: Fall 2017
- **NURS Major / Degree Program**, MSN in Family Nurse Practitioner, Nursing, New Program: Fall 2017
- **NURS Major / Degree Program**, MSN Adult Gerontology – Acute Care Nurse Practitioner, Nursing, New Program: Fall 2017
- **NURS Major / Degree Program**, MSN Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner, Nursing, New Program: Fall 2017
- **ZZEN Concentration**, Non-thesis option, Engineering and Computing, Program Change: Fall 2017

**12. Report of the Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, and Related Professional Programs Committee** (Drucilla Barker)

Below is a list of proposals reviewed by the Committee. Each curricular action can be viewed at this Public Agenda review site: <https://www.sc.edu/programproposal/gradagenda/?id=15>  
 At this Public Agenda link, the individual proposals are not live-linked, but agenda items are listed in alphabetical order. To view the full proposals, GC members and Committee Chairs still need to go to the Committee Review site, and filter for “Committees”, then for the “Committee” called “Added to Grad Council agenda.”

- **EDRD 731** (3) Assessment and the Foundations of Reading/Writing, Education. CCP: Fall 2017
- **MKTG 714** (3) Social Media Marketing and Analytics, Business. NCP: Fall 2016
- **MKTG 715** (3) Business to Business Marketing, Business. NCP: Fall 2016
- **PSYC 726** (3) Lifespan Psychopathology and Resilience, Arts and Sciences. CCP: Fall 2017
- **PSYC 825** (3) Introduction to Statistical Mediation Analysis, Arts and Sciences. NCP: Fall 2016
- **SOWK 727** (3) Social Work in an Educational Setting, Social Work. NCP: Summer 2016

- **SOWK 728** (3) Social Work Case Management, Social Work. NCP: Summer 2016
- **SOWK 729** (3) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Social Work. NCP: Summer 2016
- **SOWK 730** (3) Trauma-informed Social Work Practice, Social Work. NCP: Summer 2016

**13. Report of the Grievances, Appeals and Petitions Committee** (Nancy Brown)

**14. Other Committee Reports**

**15. Old Business**

**16. New Business**

**17. Good of the Order**

Attached, please find a copy of the report from the External Deans for further discussion.

Also, please consider this “draft” of the Provost Blue Ribbon Committee priority goals, based on discussion and consideration of the external report:

1. Hire a full-time resident Graduate Dean
2. Welcome the Graduate School to the Council of Academic Deans
3. Enhance Professional Development for graduate students (part time Associate Dean is anticipated to start July 1, 2016)
4. Create an enhanced Graduate Web Portal
5. Implement a Continuous Enrollment policy
6. Improve financial arrangements for graduate students (increase health insurance subsidy and better define fellowships and graduate assistantships)
7. Inspire interdisciplinary: Pilot new thematic efforts based on common interests, 2016-2017

**18. Adjournment**

# **Consultation Report: University of South Carolina Graduate School**

**External Perspective Provided by  
Dr. Maureen Grasso (N.C. State) and Dr. John Z. Kiss (U. Miss.)  
12 April 2016**

## **Introduction**

The Deans of the Graduate School at North Carolina State University and the Graduate School at The University of Mississippi were invited to provide an external perspective on issues affecting Graduate Student Life. These issues include personal aspects of student life, professional development, interdisciplinary collaboration, financial concerns, and structural aspects of the organization of the Graduate School. The overarching goal of this visit was to provide the University of South Carolina Graduate School and Provost Gabel with meaningful recommendations to not only better serve the current 6,500 graduate students (25 percent of the population) but also future students.

While it is true that many universities focus attention and resources on undergraduate populations, it is the graduate population that is the “backbone” of American competitiveness. Graduate students are knowledge creators, drivers of the economic engine, and innovators of tomorrow. In addition, they are the skilled workforce that has the expertise to compete effectively in the knowledge-based global economy. Graduate students provide our nation with a competitive advantage.

It is important to note that the graduate student population at the University of South Carolina (USC) is a strong and significant size warranting full consideration and visibility on campus. Thus, the university is to be commended for appointing the Provost’s Blue Ribbon Committee on Graduate Student Life (hereafter referred to as the Committee) to bring focus to an important segment/population of the university. Graduate students are critical not only in defining a very high research activity institution but also are essential to attract and retain the world-class faculty, and, thus, impact the lives of undergraduates.

## **Background**

The following materials were reviewed prior to the site visit: the Provost’s Blue Ribbon Committee on Graduate Life Executive Summary; Thirteen questions generated by the Provost’s Blue Ribbon Committee; Summary of Subcommittee Reports; Focus Group Results and Protocol; Executive Summaries from attendees of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools; and Appended information and examples from the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools.

The deans met with Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies Lacy Ford; Senior Associate Dean of The Graduate School Jessica Elfenbein; Selected graduate students from the Committee: Deonna Farr, Robert Greene, Sumi Selvara, Brittany Walter, Shana Watson; Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost and Dean of Students Dennis Pruitt; Associate Vice President for Administration, Student Affairs and Academic Support Stacey Bradley; Deputy Provost Helen Doerphinghaus; Graduate School Staff: Garrick Queen, Dale Moore, Libby Cross, Emily Rendek, Wright Culpepper, Robert Sutherland; Council of Academic Deans; President Harris Pastides; members of the Committee: Heather Brandt, Mark Anthony, Tracey Weldon-Steward, Andrew Graciano; Co-Chairs of the Committee Stacy Fritz and Michael Matthews; Director of Organizational and Professional Development Nathan Strong; Associate Dean of The Graduate School Murray Mitchell; members of the Graduate Council; and members of the Committee.

The format of this report will be organized around the headings of (1) student life, (2) professional development and interdisciplinary collaboration, (3) financial aspects, and (4) structural aspects of the Graduate School. Under each heading, strengths, issues and challenges are identified, followed by recommendations. The appendix to this report will include responses to the thirteen questions generated by the Committee.

## **1. Student Life**

### Strengths

- Students spoke very highly of their faculty mentors.
- Presidential Fellows spoke highly of this program and endorsed the professional development opportunities provided by the Graduate School (Senior Associate Dean is coordinating) and the opportunity to connect with peers from across campus resulting in interdisciplinary research.
- The Graduate School has the ability to bring different groups together and share best practices with directors of graduate programs.
- Graduate School staff members are very professional, service oriented, and committed to serving the graduate community.
- There is a strong and active Graduate Student Association.
- There is a dedicated space (key card access) for graduate students in the library.
- USC is seen as very friendly and welcoming.
- Cost of living is relatively low in Columbia, SC.
- Having an Ombudsman specifically for graduate students is a definite strength as it provides a neutral place for students to seek advice.

### Issues and challenges

- Key university offices (registrar, bursar, student services offices, and career services) focus more on undergraduates and miss key important nuances of the graduate student population who do pay tuition and fees, and represent an important segment of the student population.

- Housing for incoming international graduate students is critical and lacking. While the university is no longer in the “housing” business, international students need access to clean, livable, affordable housing within walking distance of campus as many will not have access to personal transportation.
- Communication and access to information (or lack thereof) is seen as a major problem in graduate student life.
- Policy changes across campus (outside the Graduate School) do not consider the unintended consequences and how the potential change will affect graduate students, and when such changes are made, they are not communicated in an effective manner.
- No formal required Graduate School Orientation is provided for all new incoming students in August.
- The Graduate Student Association is a volunteer organization. None of the officers receive a stipend. Thus, it is common for the President and Vice Present not to be able to commit the time and resources necessary to provide the leadership needed, as they may need to secure employment outside the duties of these offices to provide their living expenses. These students (unlike undergraduates) may not have financial support from their parents and thus may have to drop the responsibilities associated with their leadership position.
- Parking for Teaching Assistants is an issue as these students have difficulty getting to their classes in a timely manner. The looping shuttle does not seem to be efficient to serve this need. As a result there is high frustration among the students.
- Parking is always a prime issue whether it is with faculty, staff, or students. It is a major concern with graduate students.
- There is a great need for affordable day care.
- There is no diversity officer in the graduate school, and faculty suggested that there is a need for this position.
- USC is not seen as friendly with a focus to address the needs of nontraditional graduate students and those who are living below or at the poverty level.
- While there is a focus on services available to undergraduates who are veterans, this is not true for graduate student veterans.

### Recommendations

- Implement an Outstanding Graduate Faculty Mentor Award(s) to acknowledge the excellent work of faculty and to provide role models in this important area.
- Define 3 or 4 key issues or needs of the graduate student population and the offices that can or should be able to assist them. Use the Focus Group results from the Committee Report as a starting point to assist in defining these issues.
  - Engage the division of Student Affairs in a discussion about the Focus Group results with an action oriented outcome – what is it we can do differently to address these concerns and how will we know that we have done this? Or, if this is an issue that truly cannot be addressed, educate the Graduate Student Association as to the rationale.
  - Educate key staff members and leaders in offices as to how they are missing the nuances or needs of graduate students. One way this can be

done is through “a day in the life of a graduate student” where staff members or VP assume the role of graduate students with several key scenario problems (financial issues, or payroll issues, or registration issues, or career services issues). As part of the role playing exercise, individuals walk through the different offices and experience first-hand what some students encounter when offices are not talking to one another or addressing the needs of this population. It can be an enlightening experience.

- Either provide housing for incoming international students or have the Student Affairs Division (or whomever is responsible for residential life) contract with local apartments to provide needed housing. Then Student Affairs should provide website linkages with pertinent information (what is a lease, cost, distance from campus, public transportation) so other websites can link to them. For example the Graduate School website and the International Student Offices website can link to the Student Affairs site. In addition this information can be provided during a “campus fair” occurring immediately after a formal Orientation of all graduate students in August.
- It is recommended that a Campus Climate Survey be conducted to include graduate students. Much will be learned about the strengths of the climate of inclusiveness.
- When policy changes are being considered, consultation with the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School can be helpful, as this person is in the day-to-day operations and most closely informed as to how a policy might have undue unintended consequences on this population.
- Develop a mandatory half day (9am -11am) Graduate School Orientation that includes a Campus Fair immediately following the formal part of that orientation. The Campus Fair brings key offices together for one-stop shopping with key staff members to address questions from students (parking, housing, student health, counseling, athletics, international students, recreation, library, dining etc.) The formal part can be modeled after other key orientation programs (University of Georgia, NC State University, University of Mississippi). The afternoon is now available for all programs to build on the Graduate School Orientation and provide more specific information as to how to select your advisor etc. The orientation could occur one day prior to the start of classes (could be a few days before or one week before) and should be posted on the University Calendar and communicated by the Graduate School and Provost to all programs of this “mandatory” orientation. This will assist with retention and time to degree and enhance student life.
- The President and Vice President of the Graduate School Association need a competitive half-time and quarter-time stipend, respectively, (20 hrs/week, 10hrs/week) to provide the type of leadership needed to enhance graduate student life. Financial compensation for officers is a best practice at many peer institutions.
- Parking for Teaching Assistants might be addressed through the use of an express shuttle from a specific offsite parking lot to one or two locations on campus. This shuttle would be primarily for teaching assistants.

- On some campuses, Teaching Assistants with documentation are allowed to purchase parking and pay the same fees as faculty and or staff.
- Another possible parking recommendation is to create an app for cell phones where students will know which lots are full and not available. This would be quite similar to parking lot management systems at airports.
- Another parking possibility is to open the gates to “gated lots or parking decks” at 5pm. Many peer institutions allow for earlier access compared to what is available at USC.
- Another possibility is to allow “park share” where students can buy 20 passes to be used for the academic year to share a space with another graduate student. Emory University was cited as an example of park share.
- Explore further the need and duties of a diversity officer within the Graduate School. Recognize excellence in this area by awards from The Graduate School for Diversity and Inclusion (University of Mississippi has an example).
- Explore options on how better to serve vulnerable populations of graduate students (i.e., information of food pantries/banks; supply banks – paper pencils loan of lap tops; day care; affordable housing).
- Expand the focus of the offices providing services to veterans to include a conscious effort to include graduate students.

## **2. Professional Development and Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

### Strengths

- Professional development is occurring on campus through individual graduate programs, central offices including the Graduate School, Office of Student Life, Career Center, and Writing Center for Teaching Excellence. These programs can be leveraged to provide a foundation upon which the university community can build.
- The Presidential Fellowship and the Bridge Humanities Teaching Corps programs are currently benefiting from the professional development programs provided by the Graduate School and can serve as models going forward to scale up.
- If funded, the pending NEH Next Gen Implementation Grant: IMPACT: Wide Entry Career Prep will be a great asset to the graduate community and can serve as a benchmark program for other universities to emulate.
- There is potential for partnerships across the campus with respect to developing and delivering professional development offerings for graduate students.
- A new ½ time Associate Dean for Professional Affairs, Career Planning, and Faculty/Staff Development is being hired for Fall 2016.
- Faculty and students are very interested in professional development for their students and ways for them to connect with interdisciplinary centers and institutes. They are beginning to see professional development as a value added asset of the Graduate School.

### Issues and challenges

- There is a lack of awareness of the professional development offerings on campus. It is not clear who is offering what programs, and it is not clear when

- these programs are available. In addition there is no “one stop shopping” or place to search for workshops and opportunities.
- The duties that will be associated with the new ½ time Associate Dean for Professional Affairs, Career Planning, and Faculty/Staff Development are more aligned and appropriate for a full time position.
  - Providing a portal similar to Texas A&M’s G.R.A.D. (see <http://ogaps.tamu.edu/Buttons/Professional-Development-Opportunities>) is a great idea. However, resources will be needed to support key staff to update and maintain a site.
  - Faculty and students are seeking additional information regarding centers and institutes.
  - Graduate students are interested in seeking internships in industry, and there is no place where they can obtain assistance to explore opportunities or how to prepare for internships.

### Recommendations

- Conduct a university wide analysis and compile a list of what professional development workshops/seminars are being offered across the campus including: by whom, for whom, and when. Then, bring key stakeholders together to plan out or provide a 2 year “road map” for professional development for graduate students and post docs.
- Using the Texas A&M’s G.R.A.D. portal as a model, develop a site on the Graduate School website where staff from graduate programs, writing career or counseling centers, and institutes can enter and update their professional development opportunities and indicate whether the professional development is closed registration or open to all graduate students from across campus. This will take resources to be reallocated to the Graduate School to develop the site and buy in from programs and centers to participate.  
See: <http://ogaps.tamu.edu/Buttons/Professional-Development-Opportunities/G-R-A-D-Aggies.aspx>
- It may not be realistic to expect a ½ Associate Dean and ½ Faculty position to serve graduate students, faculty and staff and continue a research agenda and teaching load and do it all well. Consider reducing the work load or increasing the appointment to full time. If you reduce the work load, then have the person focus on graduate students.
- Provide additional information (using a consistent template) such as contact information, project availability, graduate student involvement with respect to research occurring in Centers and Institutes. A link from the Provost page to the Centers and Institutes who would then use that template to provide the additional information could be easily done.
- The Office of Student Life can partner with the Graduate School and tailor the professional develop offerings and services to better meet the needs of graduate students.
- The Graduate School can bring faculty together (directors of graduate programs) to share their best practices on mentoring and enhancing student success and life.

### 3. Financial Aspects

#### Strengths

- It only takes a \$250 Fellowship to be awarded to a student to enable resident tuition.
- Programs set the stipend levels they want.
- Funding support through SPARC Graduate Research Grant program is seen as a real asset and great value to graduate students.  
[http://sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/research/internal\\_funding\\_awards/students/sparc/](http://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/research/internal_funding_awards/students/sparc/)
- A small health insurance subsidy is provided for eligible TAs.

#### Issues and challenges

- It only takes a \$250 Fellowship to be awarded to a student to enable resident tuition, and thus many students are not fully funded. Many times students are offered this fellowship only for their first year. While this may appear to be a good idea from the faculty, it does not reflect well on the university brand.
- Graduate student funding is not competitive and thus it is difficult to recruit top students. Faculty are able to recruit “good” students but not able to attract the top 20%.
- Stipends are low (in many programs), making them not competitive with peer institutions, and there are no cost of living adjustments to multi-year funding packages as is the practice with other institutions.
- While it appears that programs set stipends, levels vary considerably even within a program. At times, some faculty members within a program are not consistent with their offers such that they are competing for the same prospective student with different offers. In addition, it is not clear that programs are adding cost of living raises when they can.
- It not clear that the university has an understanding or knowledge of what stipend levels are college by college. Many peer institutions do have this information. Some universities have this data, and the university through the Provost and Graduate School do set minimum levels and cost of living raises. It is difficult to have a conversation about this important topic when the data are not readily available.
- No standardized “floor” level to be eligible to receive resident tuition.
- The complex fee structure and “hidden or surprise” fees make it very difficult for students to be fully aware of the cost of their education, and thus they cannot plan and budget accordingly.
- The Graduate School does not have a centralized role where it could work collaboratively with colleges in funding decisions. For example, the Provost’s Office at University of Tennessee recently collected data from graduate schools to benchmark their stipend levels. They in turn were able to use this information to make the case for setting minimum levels of stipends.
- USC’s contribution to the Health Insurance premium is at 19% and much lower than either Clemson University, SEC institutions, Peer, or Peer Aspirants. For

example, the University of Mississippi provides a contribution of 70%, and NC State University provides 100%. The current situation reflects poorly on a flagship institution and negatively affects the recruitment of the top 20% students. It is understood that the State only provides seven percent of the total budget for the university and that these financial constraints are a major issue to resolving this issue.

#### Recommendations

- Stipends need to increase and be consistent with respect to a “floor” to be eligible for health insurance and tuition remission or tuition waiver. Programs can add to the minimum stipend level given market demands.
- Provide one location on the web – a “Clearing House for Graduate Assistants” where offices can list funding opportunities. If an office is looking to hire a graduate assistant, they can list this opportunity on that web site so graduate students will have one location to look for potential funding. This clearing house site can be communicated to the Graduate Student Association, to students during the Graduate School Orientation, and to directors of graduate programs.
- The Provost with the Graduate School should examine the current practice and policy regarding minimum stipend levels required for assistantships and for in-state tuition waivers. For example, one university through the Provost’s Office sets the minimum stipend levels required for assistantships and for in-state tuition waivers. The College Deans then set their annual and academic rates above that minimum and share that information with the Graduate School.
- It is recommended that the university explore every possible means to raise the health insurance contribution to at least the amount contributed by Clemson University and ultimately to that of Peer Institutions.
- Provide some “summer” funding to the Graduate School to allocate in a competitive way to graduate students. For example, \$40,000 can be used competitively to support students who served as TAs and do not have summer funding. It can be used to provide a small grant competition for students in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences to enable them to collect data or conduct their research. Small (\$1,000) grants can make a significant difference in aiding these students to complete their degrees.

#### **4. Structural Aspects of the Graduate School**

The Graduate School and the academic leader of that unit have a unique role within the university to uphold and support excellence in graduate education, thereby upholding the value of the degrees awarded and enhancing the brand of the university. No other unit on the campus has the knowledge of or an institutional-wide perspective of all programs, or can objectively assess quality and excellence, or bring forth best practices for all to engage.

The Graduate Dean is an Academic Dean, and unlike other deans, has the responsibility to provide vision, leadership, and oversight at the highest level for quality and excellence

for all graduate programs. The Graduate Dean, and thus the Graduate School, “articulates a vision of excellence for the graduate community, provides quality control for all aspects of graduate education, maintains equitable standards across all academic disciplines, and defines what graduate education is and what it is not” (Council of Graduate Schools 2004). Most importantly, the Graduate Dean serves as an advocate for graduate education, for graduate students, and for issues critical to the success of graduate programs.

The Council of Graduate Schools (2004), which is known for best practices in graduate education states, “Each university should have a single individual who is the chief academic officer for graduate education. The unique interests of graduate education are not best served when these responsibilities are distributed to individual academic units...”. It is clear that the scope of work matters more than the title. The individual whose sole responsibility is graduate education should have the recognition that he or she has primary responsibility on campus for graduate affairs. When the individual has two primary responsibilities that compete for the individual’s full attention and ability to advocate, or there is tension between the competing scopes of work, neither unit is well served.

#### Strengths

- There is a formal Graduate School.
- There is a strong and able leader in the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School.
- The reorganization and hiring of key individuals (Since the External Perspective review provided by Drs. Grasso and Mellott in 2012) has contributed to making the Graduate School a strong more efficient unit.
- The recent USC “Next Gen Humanities Ph.D. Implementation” Grant Proposal to NEH when implemented will be a great strength.
- The partnership between Nathan Strong and the Graduate School is exemplary.

#### Issues and challenges

- It was clear from our meetings with different groups on campus that the Graduate School does not have a clear identity on campus.
- According to conversations with the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, he serves only 20% of his time on graduate education and the remainder of his time is focused on faculty issues especially around P&T. There were clear examples when having responsibilities for both areas (faculty and graduate studies) that there is not a clear advocate or voice for graduate studies.
- USC is missing a strategic opportunity for branding and increased visibility in the national arena of graduate education by not having a full time Dean of the Graduate School. There are opportunities to serve on the national board of the Council of Graduate Schools, and they tend to look to Deans to serve in that capacity.
- USC is missing out on the opportunity to connect with alumni and friends and fundraising by not having a full time position as Dean. This type of organization is no longer an option but a standard aspect of many graduate deans’

- responsibilities across the nation. Alumni and friends of the institution do give money to support and endow fellowships for graduate students or support for travel funds for graduate students. UNC Chapel Hill, University of Georgia, Cornell University, University of Michigan, Michigan State, NC State University, Ohio State University are just a few that come to mind.
- It was unclear whether the Graduate School was invited to participate during the implementation of the Banner Student System. As a result, key data definitions may not have been accurately defined with respect to twenty-five percent of the student population.
  - The inability to pull data in a meaningful way from the Banner Student Information System came through loud and clear from faculty, deans, and key staff members. Thus, USC does not have the ability to pull together critical pieces of data on graduate students needed for federal funding proposals as well as reports for NSF and NIH.
  - A missing best practice is a Continuous Enrollment Policy for all graduate students that enhances degree completion and reduces time to degree.

### Recommendations

- Keep a central Graduate School with strong leadership to bring national and international issues to the attention and focus of the campus (i.e., Health Insurance Subsidy issue), as well as best practices.
- The current position of Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies has worked to assist the Graduate School to move forward to where it is now with the strong leadership of the Senior Associate Dean. It is clear that the Graduate School is ready for a full time Dean of the Graduate School. Whether USC sees fit to promote the Senior Associate Dean to that position or whether USC chooses to conduct a national search, it is clear from our observations that the Graduate School is ready for a full time position to serve as Graduate Dean. This will enhance communication, reduce confusion, and build enhanced collaboration across campus.
- The Dean of the Graduate School needs to “sit” and be an active participant advocating for and representing the issues and concerns of graduate education at the Deans’ Council.
- A Graduate School “Retreat” or “Summit” where key speakers can be brought in and key faculty can participate as well as Associate Deans from across campus to discuss issues facing graduate education was recommended by several individuals (faculty and deans) outside the Graduate School.
- There is an opportunity for the Dean of the Graduate School to bring together (once a month) the Associate Deans from across campus (whose responsibility is graduate education) to talk about issues, concerns, and to share best practices.
- A team including key members of the Graduate School need to discuss about how key variables are defined and how data are collected and reported out in Banner.
- An additional one to two key programmers are needed in the Graduate School to assist with critical data reporting and developing queries that are essential for reporting of data. These data are essential for faculty when writing training grants, for directors of graduate programs to know which students are not performing

academically well, as well as for the institution to report key data to federal and state agencies. The current arrangement of lack of data reporting and lack of responsiveness to the needs of the Graduate School is not in the best interest of the university. Having a central depository and access to data on graduate students is a best practice at many Graduate Schools nationwide.

- Examine other Continuous Enrollment Policies currently a best practice at other graduate schools and develop one appropriate for USC.

### **Appendix – Responses to thirteen questions generated by the Committee**

Council of Graduate Schools (2004). Organization and Administration of Graduate Education. Washington, D.C.: Author