

Graduate College

Mission

The Graduate College enhances graduate education and research by providing services that support student recruitment, admission, retention, and graduation, and by promoting diversity and excellence in graduate students and programs.

Vision

The Graduate College will:

- Be recognized for facilitating an intellectual environment in which graduate students and faculty work together to maximize the creation, acquisition, and dissemination of knowledge;
- Enhance its national and international reputation for being a model of quality and diversity in its programs and students; and,
- Be a leader and catalyst in promoting and monitoring the quality of graduate education.

Core Values

Excellence – We seek excellence in all our endeavors, and we are committed to continuous improvement.

Intellectual Freedom – We believe in ethical and scholarly questioning in an environment that respects the rights of all to freely pursue knowledge.

Integrity – We are committed to the principles of truth and honesty, and we will be equitable, ethical, and professional.

Service – We believe that serving others is a noble and worthy endeavor.

Diversity – We respect others and value diversity of opinion, freedom of expression, and other ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Stewardship of Resources – We are dedicated to the efficient and effective use of resources. We accept the responsibility of the public's trust and are accountable for our actions.

Goals, Critical Success Factors, Objectives, and Strategies

Goal 1. Support graduate student recruitment and increase graduate student enrollment.

Critical Success Factors:

- Enrollment of 3133 students in master's programs (10% increase from 2003)
- Enrollment of 1410 students in doctoral programs (10% increase from 2003)
- Enrollment of 20 students in graduate certificate programs (25% increase from 2003)
- Increase international enrollments by 5% of the enrollments in fall, 2004

Objectives:

Objective 1.1: Recruit an increasing number of high quality graduate students into Oklahoma State University graduate programs.

Strategies:

- Provide support to departments for on-campus recruiting visits by prospective students.
- Work with the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing and with departments to develop support for, as well as a unified look to, graduate program promotional materials.
- Highlight alumni with national prominence in recruitment information.
- Work with central administration to increase graduate assistantship stipends to a level competitive with peer institutions.
- Work with the OSU Foundation and the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer to increase scholarships and fellowships for graduate students.
- Manage the tuition-waiver program for graduate students to best serve the goals of supporting graduate student recruitment and increasing graduate student enrollment.
- Provide additional financial incentives to encourage the best applicants to choose OSU for their graduate education.
- Participate in conferences (e.g. Career Services recruitment fairs) that bring large numbers of potential graduate students to campus.
- Update information posted on existing marketing services (GradSchools.com and Peterson's) and subscribe to new electronic marketing services.
- Market to domestic students who submit Graduate Record Examination scores but have not submitted applications.
- When on recruiting trips, team with the Alumni Office to host an alumni event for alumni in the area (at the event make a presentation about graduate education and research at Oklahoma State University).
- Establish relationships with colleges and universities that can serve as "feeder institutions" for OSU graduate programs.
- Develop and disseminate a model offer letter template that departments can adapt and utilize when making offers of admission to their graduate programs.

- Document all recruitment activities and evaluate the yield in terms of applications and enrollments resulting from those activities.

Objective 1.2: Expand relationships between the Graduate College and other segments of the university, including organizations of under-represented groups.

Strategies:

- Work with the Honors College to encourage students to enroll in graduate programs.
- Collaborate with the Freshman Research Scholars Program in hosting presentations at the annual Research Symposium.
- Conduct presentations on applying to graduate school for undergraduate student clubs and organizations.
- Cultivate relationships between the Graduate College and McNair programs both in-state and in surrounding states.
- Collaborate with the Louis Stokes-Oklahoma Alliance for Minority Participation.
- Create a mechanism for graduate students to serve as mentors for undergraduate students from under-represented groups, in order to support their interest in pursuing and preparing for a graduate education.
- Work with campus, state, and national organizations that serve under-represented domestic students to present workshops on applying to graduate school.

Objective 1.3: Increase the number of international graduate students.

Strategies:

- Work with campus and national student organizations that serve international students.
- Target recruitment efforts in geographical areas that have been under-represented in OSU's graduate student population.
- Utilize services provided by organizations and/or corporations that assist in the identification and recruitment of international students qualified for admission to OSU graduate programs.
- Develop relationships with universities in other countries that can serve as "feeder institutions" for OSU graduate programs.
- Engage in outreach efforts that lead to agreements between OSU and select international universities to offer OSU graduate programs and courses on their campuses.

Goal 2. Continue developing efficiency in the admissions process

Critical Success Factors:

- Three day average time for completed paper applications to be referred to departments for an admissions recommendation
- At least eighty percent of graduate applications submitted online
- All student Graduate Record Examination scores added to the Student Information System
- Favorable ratings on all questions about the admissions process in the graduate student satisfaction survey
- Favorable ratings on annual surveys of graduate coordinators and department heads on Graduate College efficiency in processing applications for admission

Objectives:

Objective 2.1: Make effective use of the latest technology in order to facilitate the admissions function of the Graduate College.

Strategies:

- Attend national seminars about the latest innovations in technology relating to admissions.
- Provide all forms in a downloadable format via the web.
- Take full advantage of electronic forms of applications, including automatic upload of the applicant's data into the Student Information System; credit card payment of application fees over the web; and downloading of department/program specific materials provided directly from the web.
- Devise a web based system for checking an applicant's admission status.
- Collaborate with undergraduate admissions and Information Technology to develop a web based application that feeds into SIS.

Objective 2.2: Maintain positive working relationships with departmental staff and Graduate College staff.

Strategies:

- Expand the use of the email in order to establish a two-way electronic communication between the Graduate College, graduate students, and departments (e.g. referrals and letters).
- Develop and distribute a handbook for graduate advisers.
- Hold yearly workshops for graduate coordinators and advisors on such issues as Student Information System screen usage and evaluation of college credentials.
- Hold yearly meetings between the graduate coordinators/department heads and Dean of the Graduate College.
- Annually ask for feedback from departments about the level of service provided.

- Conduct an annual survey of graduate coordinators and department heads to assess their perceptions of Graduate College efficiency in processing applications for admission.

Goal 3. Promote academic excellence and facilitate the retention and graduation of high quality graduate students.

Critical Success Factors:

- Better than ninety percent placement of graduates in colleges, universities, government, and the private sector throughout the State and nation, as well as in international contexts
- Documented success through noteworthy contributions of graduates in their respective disciplines.
- Average time for completion of a master's degree less than three years
- Average time for completion of a doctoral degree less than six years
- Sixty percent or higher retention/graduation rate for master's and doctoral students

Objectives:

Objective 3.1: Prepare graduate students for their roles in academia, industry, and government.

Strategies:

- Provide programs that are devoted to instructional improvement for graduate students (such as Training in the Professoriate and International Teaching Assistantship Program).
- Collaborate with other universities in the Midwest Alliance for Education in the Professoriate in development of a proposal to prepare under-represented doctoral students for careers as university faculty.
- Provide travel support for graduate students to make research presentations in regional and national conferences.
- Encourage graduate student participation in Career Services events.
- Support the offering of workshops conducted by the Graduate Student Career Consultant on such topics as resume writing and job search techniques at OSU-Stillwater and OSU-Tulsa.
- Assist the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSGA) in its efforts to promote professional development among graduate students.
- Recognize outstanding research by hosting the annual Research Symposium and by promoting and managing the Research Excellence Award program.
- Provide an exit employment survey for all graduating students.

Objective 3.2: Strengthen graduate studies within individual departments.

Strategies:

- Provide leadership in graduate program academic reviews.
- Support departmental recruiting efforts for faculty and students.
- Support departments in maintaining and seeking national accreditation for their graduate programs.

- Assist departments in preparation of new degree and certificate program proposals.
- Encourage the hiring of highly qualified faculty to teach, advise, and mentor graduate students.

Objective 3.3: Make clear and meaningful efforts to retain graduate students once they enroll at Oklahoma State University.

Strategies:

- Increase the numbers of students who receive financial support.
- Advocate competitive salaries and workloads for teaching assistants, graduate assistants, and research assistants.
- Make available various types of enrichment programs (e.g., orientation week seminars, variety of workshops such as writing of theses and dissertations, Training in the Professoriate program).
- Participate in special events for underrepresented groups and international students.
- Work with the International Students and Scholars to support international students.
- Send periodic emails during enrollment time to remind students to enroll.
- Require the submission of an employment survey during the last semester.
- Require the completion of a graduate program satisfaction survey from each graduating student.

Goal 4. Hire the best Graduate College staff and make the best resources available to them.

Critical Success Factors:

- Creation of a modern facility that will accommodate the Graduate College's staff needs to assist processing approximately 9500 graduate applications and providing service to 5000 enrolled graduate students
- Complete renovation of Graduate College work area
- Competitive staff salaries compared with those of peer staff on campus

Objectives:

Objective 4.1: Create an attractive, efficient work environment and maintain a strong service-orientation for staff in the Graduate College.

Strategies:

- Maintain a staff of highly qualified individuals, who represent the diversity of the OSU campus, and who can perform their duties in an effective, enthusiastic, and service-oriented manner.
- Renovate office space to create a positive, welcoming environment for students, staff, and faculty, and to enable the staff to work efficiently.
- Provide the necessary equipment, software, and training to enable the staff to provide efficient service.
- Utilize positive management and team building approaches to cultivate "esprit de corps" and maintain staff commitment to a service-orientation.

Objective 4.2: Assist staff in working at an effective and efficient level of performance.

Strategies:

- Provide training opportunities to assist staff in learning their duties.
- Provide periodic training sessions to enable seasoned staff to upgrade their skills.
- Up-date staff desk manuals that describe the responsibilities associated with each position.
- Perform periodic review of position descriptions and job classifications to determine if staff members are positioned at the appropriate levels.
- Utilize annual performance evaluations and other opportunities as helpful to provide constructive feedback to staff about their job performance.

Objective 4.3: Provide more competitive salaries to Graduate College staff.

Strategies:

- Enlist the support of the OSU Office of Human Resources to conduct a comparison of Graduate College staff salaries with similar positions on the OSU campus.
- Request salary adjustments consistent with the findings of the aforementioned comparison study in order to improve retention of qualified and experienced staff members.

Objective 4.4: Provide an atmosphere in the Graduate College that will be inviting to graduate students.

Strategies:

- Make certain the office has a professional and appealing quality for students who conduct business here.
- Establish a norm in the office for staff to be respectful and helpful with faculty, staff, and students.

Goal 5. Streamline plan of study, thesis/dissertation, and graduation clearance processes

Critical Success Factors:

- Plan of study review and approval time in less than seven days
- All plans of study submitted via the web
- All theses and dissertations submitted via web
- Graduation clearance process completed in less than two weeks
- Hooding ceremonies successfully conducted each fall and spring

Objectives:

Objective 5.1: Make use of the best technology to facilitate last semester activities.

Strategies:

- Support the Registrar's office creating a web based diploma application.
- Develop a system for the electronic submission of theses and dissertations.
- Develop a web based plan of study submission and review procedure.
- Through the web, provide all graduation documents online, including semester deadlines, thesis/dissertation manual, plan of study, and admission to doctoral candidacy forms.

Objective 5.2: Hold memorable graduate hooding ceremonies.

Strategies:

- Host well organized hooding ceremonies at the conclusion of each fall and spring semester.

Goal 6. Promote diversity in graduate education

Critical Success Factors:

- A diverse graduate student body that increasingly approaches the diversity of the State of Oklahoma
- Progress beyond the current minority graduate enrollment (fifteen percent of domestic graduate enrollment) to an increase of one percent per year up to 20% within the next five years

Objectives:

Objective 6.1: Diversify the graduate student body.

Strategies:

- Involve students and faculty in workshops and conferences pertaining to diversity (such as the national McNair Scholars conferences).
- Build upon relationships established with McNair programs around the country.
- Recruit at universities with diverse student bodies.
- Develop Graduate College relationships with on-campus organizations that serve underrepresented groups.
- Support networking with state and national organizations that serve under-represented groups.
- Support minority students and faculty who are already at Oklahoma State University.
- Have receptions and other social events for students of diverse backgrounds and international student groups.
- Target special markets by supporting programs that bring prospective diverse students to campus for recruitment purposes such as the American Indians into Psychology program and Louis Stokes-Oklahoma Alliance for Minority Participation.
- Improve recruitment and mentoring program by utilizing educational consultants to enhance diversity recruiting efforts.
- Collaborate with other universities in the Midwest Alliance for Education in the Professoriate in development of a proposal to prepare under-represented doctoral students for careers as university faculty.

Objective 6.2: Provide an environment that will attract and retain the best new faculty from diverse backgrounds.

Strategies:

- Encourage the hiring of graduate faculty from diverse backgrounds.
- Collaborate with the Vice-President for Diversity in the development of programs to recruit and retain quality graduate students and faculty from diverse backgrounds.

Goal 7. Support the national recognition and accreditation of graduate programs and the positive visibility and reputation of the Graduate College.

Critical Success Factors:

- Increased numbers of graduate students who enroll and graduate from Oklahoma State University.
- Increased numbers of graduate students who receive national awards.
- Continued accreditation of graduate programs already accredited by national accrediting bodies.
- Attainment of new national accreditations for graduate programs.
- Continued leadership of the Graduate College at the national level.

Objectives:

Objective 7.1: Encourage and support the research efforts of graduate students at Oklahoma State University.

Strategies:

- Maintain a travel fund that is adequate to assist graduate student researchers to attend national and international conferences.
- Publicize Oklahoma State University's research activities while on recruiting trips.
- Sponsor regional and national conferences that will enhance the Oklahoma State University graduate experience.
- Collect and publicize alumni achievements.

Objective 7.2: Cooperate with other universities and national entities.

Strategies:

- Encourage the Graduate and Professional Student Government Association to participate and be active at a national level.
- Seek out and encourage multi-university graduate degree programs, research programs, and graduate certificate programs.
- Actively participate in the Council of Graduate Schools, the Council of Southern Graduate Schools, the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools, and the Big Twelve Graduate Deans Group.
- Develop liaisons with graduate schools in Oklahoma to address common interests and needs.
- Maintain the national recognition the Graduate College has attained by receiving the Peterson's Award for promoting diversity in graduate education, by presentations made at national conferences on enhancing diversity and on assessing graduate student satisfaction, and by leadership on the Council of Graduate Schools Inclusiveness Project Advisory Committee.

Goal 8: Enhance current and develop new interdisciplinary graduate and graduate certificate programs.

Critical Success Factors:

- Establishment of two new interdisciplinary graduate programs.
- Double the number of graduate certificate programs.
- Successful program reviews of current graduate interdisciplinary and certificate programs, including interdisciplinary programs such as Environmental Science, Photonics, and Natural and Applied Sciences, as well as certificate programs, such as Gerontology and International Studies.
- Successful review of the organization and management of graduate interdisciplinary and certificate programs.

Objectives:

Objective 8.1: Enhance current interdisciplinary graduate programs.

Strategies:

- Conduct a review of the organization and management of graduate interdisciplinary and certificate programs.
- Initiate and supervise interdisciplinary graduate academic program reviews.
- Support recruiting efforts to boost enrollment in these programs.
- Support efforts to attain national recognition for these programs.
- Encourage the hiring of more graduate faculty with interdisciplinary teaching and research interests.

Objective 8.2: Cultivate new graduate interdisciplinary and certificate programs.

Strategies:

- Work with faculty and administration in growing new interdisciplinary graduate programs and graduate certificate programs.
- Work collaboratively with colleges and universities in Oklahoma and surrounding states to develop collaborative graduate interdisciplinary programs.
- Support recruiting efforts to boost enrollment in new programs.
- Provide technical assistance and consultation to faculty in preparing proposals for developing new interdisciplinary graduate degree and certificate programs.
- Encourage the hiring of more graduate faculty with interdisciplinary teaching and research interests.