UNC CHARLOTTE

2010-2011 Annual Report Template

(The Graduate School)

Major accomplishments (including student accomplishments) of unit/dept./college during the year. 1 page maximum

- A record number of graduate students enrolled in fall 2010 bringing the total headcount to 5,308 which represents over **21%** of the total headcount. In the spring 4,940 graduate students were enrolled.
- As of May, 88 doctoral students graduated in 2010-11 bringing the total number to 564 since the first graduate in 1997. In addition to the doctoral graduates, we had 1,176 master's graduates and 452 graduate certificates awarded this year.
- FY11 the Graduate Assistant Support Plan supported 499 doctoral students (91% of the fulltime doctoral students) at a cost of $4,495,372. This is up from the 454 students funded (93% of the fulltime doctoral students) on GASP FY 10.
- In the fall 2010 we enrolled our first three Fulbright Scholars. For the fall 2011 the Graduate School has received applications for admission for 15 Fulbright participants.
- Since its opening in August 2010, 3,455 graduate students have registered and attended a class workshop, seminar or other event sponsored by the CGL.
- GRAD 6001/8001 Teaching at the College and University Level (3 cr) was offered for credit for the first time in the spring 2011. It was highly successful and will be offered each semester.
- Through a generous gift, the Harshini de Silva Graduate Mentoring Award was endowed this year.
- Seven NSF Graduate Research Fellows will attend UNC Charlotte in the Fall 2011.
- In December we held the first Doctoral Student Commencement Dinner at the Harris Alumni House. The second Graduation dinner was held in May 2011. A total 141 students, advisors and guests attended both dinners.
- The Graduate School utilized social media to recruit students, including online Chat, GoToMeeting virtual Information Sessions, and Facebook. In all, the Graduate and Undergraduate International Admissions staff had over **12,650** personalized interactions with prospective students via face-to-face appointments in the office, Information Sessions, Office Hour meetings, walk-in meetings, telephone and email. Note that these data do not include social media interactions. The first Open House was also hosted for prospective students with most of the graduate program directors in attendance. Using the ApplyYourself automated email functionality, a total of **322,295** emails with a total open rate of 40% and a click-thru rate of 39%, were sent to prospective graduate students from August 1, 2008 to May 18, 2011.
- Assistant Dean Katherine Hall-Hertel and Associate Dean Johnna Watson co-taught a new course, *Graduate Educational Opportunities* (UCOL 3401), for under-represented undergraduate students to educate them on the nature of graduate education and encourage their participation in a post-baccalaureate program of study. 15 students successfully completed the course.
- A former UNC Charlotte graduate student, Ms. Natalie Herring received the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools outstanding master's thesis award.

UNC CHARLOTTE

1-3 pages maximum

1. OVERALL PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING GOALS IN 2010-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN: Briefly comment on the unit/dept./college's overall progress in achieving goals in the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan.

Despite the continuing economic downturn, the Graduate School continued to make progress in achieving the goals described in our strategic plan. Some of the measureable outcomes we have achieved include:

- Exceeded the enrollment goal for graduate students in the fall term.
- Record numbers of students graduated at the doctorate and master's levels.
- Supported the implementation of one new doctoral degree and three new master's degrees. Submitted plans to implement new master's degrees in Health Informatics and Real Estate
- Increased private donations for graduate student fellowships and other kinds of funding to attract and retain high quality students.
- Increased ethnic diversity among graduate students who are U.S. citizens, permanent residents or are citizens of other countries.
- Promoted the use of technology by implementing social networking sites for engaging past and future students; provided enhanced Web services for faculty students and staff; improved recruiting and admissions software; played major leadership in programming, testing, and training in the use of Banner.
- Encouraged and supported graduate student professional development centrally and through the individual academic units.
- Improved graduate education and career preparation of professional master's programs.
- Continued a new focus to improve the career development and working conditions for post-doctoral scholars.
- Improved our communications with Graduate Programs by launching new initiatives such as an on-line newsletter, a web-based resource center, and targeted training sessions for Graduate Program Directors. Also developed improved workflow processing for funding opportunities and matriculated students services. These included a new web-based award management tool and an eCandidacy form.

2. MAJOR NEW ACTION STEPS PLANNED (IF ANY) TO ACHIEVE GOALS IN 2010-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN:
Describe major new action steps planned (if any) to achieve goals in the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan. Do not include QEP plans in this section. (Note: this section was included in the event that major new action steps became necessary after the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan was finalized. For most units/depts./colleges, this section will be blank.)

3. QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN: Develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for the coming academic year that identifies a major issue in the unit/dept./college or that is critical to enhancing student learning and/or educational quality. The QEP should identify the issue the unit/dept./college plans to address, the action steps the unit/dept./college will take, and the effectiveness measures that will be used to assess the success of the QEP.

Over the past ten years, UNC Charlotte has experienced considerable growth in both the number and quality of our student body. In the fall 2000 the University enrolled a total of 16,955 students; in 2010 more than 25,000 students registered for classes. It is anticipated that our growth will continue perhaps reaching 35,000 students or more by 2020. In order to manage this increase in student head count while maintaining educational quality and competitiveness, we must plan and implement processes that focus on what is best for students' success while increasing enrollment numbers and stabilizing institutional revenues.

The Graduate School Quality Enhancement Plan employs two action themes to guide our efforts to improve graduate education**: (1) attracting and retaining quality students** and **(2) enriching the academic environment**. While listed separately both objectives are deeply intertwined and mutually supportive. While **attracting quality students,** we recognize the complex interplay between the academic background and intellectual characteristics of students and the size of enrollment. To educate students for the future, the essential ingredient must be excellence in all aspects of their education. The University must seek the 'right-size' in the numbers of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty and then focus on recruiting highly meritorious students. To follow this road requires thoughtful planning so we must engage in a campus-wide discussion to map the qualitative and quantitative drivers that will determine who our future students are and what it will require to educate them. Some of the more significant questions we must consider in planning our course over the next several years include:

- The mission of the University and the role we play in the region, state, nation, and world
- Given our resources, what is our enrollment capacity and what are the optimal enrollments in terms of numbers (e.g., graduate, undergraduate, degree-seeking, non-degree-seeking), quality, and diversity?
- What are the best practices in student recruitment to meet these enrollment goals?
- How do we manage tuition and student fee increases with both need-based and merit-based financial aid opportunities for our students?
- What are the appropriate retention goals and graduation rates for our graduate students?
- What is the role of institutional branding and marketing on capacity?
- What are ways we can improve the student curriculum and provide for program development during both good and bad economic times?
- What are the best and most appropriate methods of program delivery for our University in both the short and long terms?
- What needs to done now and in the future to insure a continuing improvement of the quality of campus life and campus facilities?

As we consider these questions for enrollment planning, we can simultaneously launch strategic

programs to facilitate the recruitment and retention of exceptional students. These initiatives could involve new and ongoing agendas for targeted recruiting, focusing efforts on retention programs initiated in the colleges, the Graduate School, and the Division of Student Affairs, increasing student opportunities for financial aid, scholarships, and fellowships, and planning for and implementing new and innovative curriculum programs.

Plans for **enriching the academic environment** are based on the belief that the success of all students during their studies and following graduation is often directly related to the overall academic environment of their educational experience. In order to allow students to take full advantage of opportunities to use their expertise to make a meaningful and lasting difference in their lives and the community, this QEP calls for establishing a variety of support and enrichment services that contribute to the development of community for students. In this context, we have identified several actions to be taken to help students succeed by fostering cross-disciplinary education, examining and removing barriers to students' timely completion of degree programs, promoting graduate and undergraduate students' efforts to conduct and subsequently disseminate their research, encouraging student participation in the intellectual life both on and off campus, and preparing graduates to work and communicate in a variety of venues. Additionally, to enrich the academic environment, the QEP will support the reduction of bureaucratic barriers and improve operational transparency through such actions as streamlining application and matriculation processes, financial aid and other funding, and improving access to financial and human resources. This **enrichment of the academic environment** will firmly support **attracting and the retention of quality students** by creating a sense among prospective students that at UNC Charlotte they are important, valued, and that this is their academic and professional home.

The creation of this QEP should be seen as a catalyst for change and is integral to achieving the University's agenda to become a major research University. But, the intended actions and assessments will not happen without human and financial resources. Therefore, the Plan must include structures and mechanisms for monitoring and ensuring the continued development and implementation of the QEP. To be successful the Plan must include units such as Enrollment Management, Academic Services, International Programs, ITS, Institutional Research, Distance Education, the Academic Colleges, University College, and the Graduate School. The divisions of Student Affairs, Business Affairs, Research and Federal Relations, Alumni and Community Affairs will also be engaged in this effort. Faculty members are critical to the accomplishment of all of these endeavors. Without recognition of the importance of faculty in the form of incentives, support, and development opportunities, achievement of this plan will not be possible. Furthermore, some proposed actions require new or reallocated funds.

This QEP will be forward looking and will span at least five years; however, because it is a *plan* and not a static document, it will be flexible and subject to modifications.

C. ANNUAL EVALUATIONS BY UNIT:

Briefly describe any annual evaluations conducted by units/depts./colleges to assess outcomes that are not included in the unit/dept./college's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (.e.g., scholarly productivity.) 1 page maximum

Graduate Student Needs Assessment

The graduate student Needs Assessment was conducted in January/February 2011 using Student Voice. The response rate this year was a little over 12%, of the 4,542 students surveyed. Interestingly the percentage of responders in each degree category was the same as last year: 65% were pursuing a master's degree, 26% were doctoral students, and 7% were graduate certificate students

Overall our graduate students continue to be satisfied with their educational programs and with the support they receive from the Graduate School. Most (73%) agree moderately to strongly that they feel a sense of belonging to the particular program of study. Less than half (47%) moderately to strongly agree that they feel a sense of belonging to the larger UNC Charlotte community, while over a quarter of the respondents disagree to feeling a sense of community. In general the number of students who have a sense of belonging to the program and to the University is up 8% compared to last year.

The top three issues of most concern are:
- Availability of classes
- Work, financial commitments outside of school
- Availability of stipends and other sources of funding

Post-Doctoral Fellows Needs Assessment

For the first time this year, we also conducted a brief survey of our Post-Doctoral Fellows. Currently there are 33 post-docs on campus. We received a 36% response rate from this survey. In general we found that our post-docs are not very satisfied with the training they receive. Most reported that their training in areas such a research ethics, group or lab management, intellectual property issues, project management, grant or proposal writing is informal or non-existent and that there is a clear lack of any formal programs. This finding suggests that the CGL can help fill the gap in the training for some of these researchers.

Graduate Assistantship Renewals

In 2010-11$1,636,268 was up for renewal in 13 doctoral programs and six master's degrees. Each program was invited to apply for renewal of this funding and asked to respond to the following:
1. The number of students supported during the three year allocation and the amount of funding provided to each student
2. How graduate assistantships were assigned.
3. How the assistantships contributed to the degree program.

4. How the assistantship assignments contributed to the professional development of the students.
5. The impact of the funding on the quality of the program.
6. How the program was able to leverage these funds to increase the financial support of their students.

Graduate Applicant Survey

In March 2011, the applicant survey was reformatted and put into production again to continually evaluate applicants' experiences with the online application process in ApplyYourself. As of 5/13/2011, 1,025 surveys had been submitted and 96% of the respondents stated that the admissions application is easy to complete.

Graduate Program Review

To ensure the progressive advancement of graduate programming at UNC Charlotte, a proposal went to the Graduate Council to develop and adopt the policies, guidelines, and procedures for a regular and systematic review of doctoral programs at UNC Charlotte. Although a similar review for the master's programs would be beneficial, the appropriate first step is to develop a review for the doctoral degrees first since they are fewer in number, more uniform in structure, and all have been implemented since 1994.

The primary purpose of this review will be the improvement of graduate programs, as measured by the quality of the faculty, the students, library and other educational resources, the curriculum, and available facilities. By creating a structured, scheduled opportunity, program review will provide a strategy for improvement that is well-reasoned, forward-thinking, and is as apolitical as possible.

A committee of Graduate Council members, Lee Gray (chair), Todd Steck, Larry Mays, Rob Roy McGregor, Frada Mozenter, and Susan Sell (ex officio) has been formed to prepare a comprehensive plan for Doctoral Review that will be carried forward to the Council in the fall 2011.

Below are examples of the evaluations that are conducted on a routine basis:
- Graduate Application statistics (weekly)
- International Undergraduate Application statistics (weekly)
- Graduate Enrollment reports (monthly, bi-weekly)
- International Undergraduate Enrollment reports (monthly, bi-weekly)
- Graduate retention/attrition reports (bi-annually)
- Graduate Applicant survey
- Application for Degree (bi-annually)
- Graduate Student Needs Assessment Survey (annual)
- Post-doctoral Fellow Needs Assessment Survey (annual)
- Graduate Exit Survey (3 times per year)
- Data Integrity survey (reports are run 1-3 time weekly)
- Graduate Certificate Program review (five-year cycle)

- Graduate Faculty review (three to five year cycle)
- Graduate Faculty criteria review
- Graduate Assistantship allocation review (three-year cycle)
- New Graduate Student Orientation survey (bi-annually)
- Graduate Student Professional Development program surveys
- CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees (annually)
- CGS Survey of International Applications/Admits/Enrolled Students (three times per year)
- Survey of Earned Doctorates (annually)

D. EXAMPLES OF DATA-BASED IMPROVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR:

Describe 3 examples of how the unit/dept./college has used assessment data for the purpose of improvement during the year.

1. Utilizing data obtained from graduate application statistics, enrollment reports and feedback provided by the Graduate Enrollment Management Working Group enrollment projections for fall and spring terms were refined and modified accordingly.
2. As a result of the assessment of learning outcomes, the Graduate Educational Opportunities (GEO) course (UCOL 3401) for under-represented students was requested on a permanent basis and will again be offered in fall 2011.
3. The Graduate Student Needs Assessment Survey indicated that graduate students needed more focused helped with career development. To address this need, the CGL collaborated with the Office of Career Services to offer sessions on the "academic job search". In addition, the CGL worked with an industry consultant to provide resume and CV review for doctoral students. The survey also provided data on the most effective ways to communicate with students. Students asked for advanced notice of programs and a calendar that was easily accessible. To meet these needs, the GradWeekly email was developed and implemented. Similarly, part-time students expressed frustration that workshops are held during the day, when they cannot attend. This fall, the CGL will offer hours on Sunday afternoons, as well as two evenings a week. Intentional efforts will be made to hold workshops during those times so that part-time students can attend. The survey also showed that fewer departments are offering training to their graduate teaching assistants than in the past. Therefore, the CGL hired a faculty affiliate to develop and promote teaching training. A more seamless orientation was developed and a three credit course on graduate teaching was offered.

E. ASSESSMENT OF EVALUATION METHODS

Comment on the strengths and weaknesses of unit/dept/college's assessment methods and describe plans (if any) to strengthen outcomes assessment during the coming year.

Needs Assessment: The needs assessment is useful but it has all the limitations of a survey. The response rate could be higher and the respondents are not completely representative of the graduate

population. However, there are enough responses from each college to draw broad conclusions and recommendations for improvement.

Post-Doctoral Survey: Because the UNC Charlotte post-doctoral cohort is small, there is a reluctance to answer some questions honestly. In an effort to provide confidentiality, we do not collect names or ID numbers, making it difficult to follow up with respondents.

Graduate Assistantship Renewals: Assistantship funding is awarded to a program on a three-year renewable cycle. At the end of the term, the program may request a renewal based on need, utilization of funds, and merit of purpose. Unfortunately, as the process currently stands the data requested are all self-reported. However to be effective we must have access to accurate and relevant data. This is particularly true for financial information especially when funding is limited. In administering

graduate student support money, the Graduate School office must have a comprehensive picture of the funding available for graduate students. This continues to be a chronic issue for the office.

The Exit Survey was drafted but not implemented. A mechanism for identifying students that are leaving must be paired with the technology to implement the survey. This is a goal for the coming year.

6/20/2011

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS TO 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

1. **ANNUAL PROGRESS ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES FOR 2010-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**: After completing sections III I. and III J. of your 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (i.e., the annual report section of the strategic plan template), print and attach here your entire 2010-2015 Strategic Plan.

2. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT DATA:** Attach a Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan and Report Template for each degree program offered in the college. **Colleges that do not submit Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan and Report Templates for each degree program offered in the college will be contacted by OAA.**

3. **(FOR DEANS AND ASSOCIATE PROVOSTS ONLY) MEMORANDUMS TO DEPARTMENT AND UNIT HEADS:** Deans and associate provosts are to attach copies of their written feedback to department and unit heads on the status of outcomes assessment in the department or unit, and identifying any areas meriting priority attention in the coming year.

6/20/2011