



UNC CHARLOTTE  
2011-2012 Annual Report Template

## The Graduate School

### A. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

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

- The Graduate School enrolled 4,994 graduate students in fall 2011, a decrease of 314 students from fall 2012 (with 299 of the decrease from the College of Education), which comprised 20% of the total University headcount.
- Four international Fulbright students continued their enrollment at UNC Charlotte and two new students enrolled in the fall 2011.
- The Institute for International Education's (IIE) 2011 Open Door's Report estimates that international students contribute over \$304 million annually to North Carolina's economy. North Carolina ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation in international students enrolled in higher education, and *UNC Charlotte ranks fourth* among institutions in the state: (1) NCSU: 3,235; (2) Duke University and Medical Center: 2,850; (3) UNC Chapel Hill: 1,674, and (4) UNC Charlotte: 1,333. Fifth on the list is UNC Greensboro with 547 international students.
- As of May, 118 doctoral students graduated in 2011-12 bringing the total number to 682 since the first graduate in 1997. In addition to the doctoral graduates, we had 1,230 master's graduates and 403 graduate certificates awarded this year.
- The Graduate School awarded \$5,904,315 in tuition funding to masters and doctoral students in 2011-12. \$2,629,720 was allocated to the colleges for graduate assistant stipends and the Graduate School awarded \$100,648 in graduate fellowships to students in each college. Additionally \$315,020 was made in health insurance premium awards. The Graduate School processed \$73,939 for tuition and fees and \$157,500 in stipends for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship recipients.
- The Center for Graduate Life had 3673 visitors during the 2011-2012 academic year; 775 students registered for a professional development workshop and there were three sessions of the Dissertation Boot Camp.
- The Professional Science Master's degree in Health Informatics was approved by the UNC Board of Governors for implementation in the fall 2012. This innovative degree program is a collaborative venture among the colleges of Health and Human Services, Computing and Informatics, and the Graduate School.
- Request to Plan documents were sent forward for a Doctor of Nursing Practice, a PhD in Public Health, and Master's in Applied Energy and Electro-mechanical Systems.
- Seven NSF Graduate Research Fellows attended UNC Charlotte in 2011-12 and two more were awarded for fall 2012.
- Initiated on-line orientation presentations for graduate students in the spring 2012. Since then there have been 4558 views of the doctoral presentation; 4251 of the master's presentation; 4475 of the non-degree seeking student presentation.
- Faculty, staff, and graduate students participated in the first North Carolina Graduate Education



day in Raleigh on May 23, 2012. Students met with state representatives to promote the importance of graduate education to the state of North Carolina.

- The Graduate School hired the first full-time Director for the UNC Charlotte Graduate Center. The Center now supports programming through NC State University, the Charlotte School of Law, and the Teach for America. Discussions are underway with Appalachian State University, UNC Chapel Hill, and UNC Greensboro to increase the academic inventory of the Graduate Center. The Director also serve as the Program Director for the Health Informatics Professional Science Master's degree offered by the Graduate School, the College of Computing and Informatics, and College of Health and Human Services.
- The Graduate School in cooperation with the Office of Research and Economic Development developed a new graduate course in the Responsible Conduct of Research, GRAD 8002/6002. The course will be taught for the first time in the Spring 2012 and will be required for all new doctoral students in the STEM disciplines.

## B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF ANNUAL PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING 2010-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

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:

- Although graduate enrollment in the fall 2011 declined for the first time, the decreases were seen in a small number of professional programs. We expect that growth in graduate student numbers will increase in 2012-13 although perhaps at a slower pace than we've seen in the past.
- The number of graduate students completing master's or doctoral degrees increased from 1477 in 2009-10 to 1674 in 2010-11.
- Funding for tuition awards was raised to compensate for tuition increases.
- Supported the implementation of four new master's degrees. Submitted requests to plan new doctoral degree in Nursing Practice and Public Health.
- Increased private donations for graduate student fellowships and other kinds of funding to attract and retain high quality students.
- Graduate Admissions engaged in more external recruitment fairs at colleges, universities, businesses and industries than ever before to enhance recruitment initiatives. Admissions also 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 **13,600 personalized interactions** with prospective students via face-to-face appointments in the office, Information Sessions, Office Hour meetings, walk-in meetings, telephone and email communications. Note that these data do not include social media interactions. Graduate Admissions staff offered **32 Information Sessions** virtually or on campus



for prospective graduate students, including programs geared specifically to underrepresented students.

- Increased ethnic diversity among graduate students who are U.S. citizens, permanent residents or are citizens of other countries.
- New technological solutions were implemented or enhanced for a variety of business practices including graduate admissions applications the processing of graduate assistantships, and candidacy forms.
- The Center for Graduate Life was able to build on the structures that were developed in the first year. Programmatic additions support the overall development of graduate community. Two faculty affiliate members were added this year (10 hour per week each). They provided expertise to our doctoral students, focusing on career development and mentoring. In addition, these faculty provided outreach to doctoral program faculty in an attempt to better understand how the CGL can support the professional development needs of their students.
- The **Graduate Life Fellow** program expanded. The programs they offered were well received and drew diverse student participation. Overall student participation went up dramatically (from 175 last year to **689** this year.) The GLF award is also gaining notice, as we received 45 applications for the award this year and were able to hire 7 GLFs for the 2012-2013 year.
- Enhanced professional development opportunities for graduate students including ethics and RCR training, communications, career development, networking, and teaching <http://gradlife.uncc.edu/workshops>
- Support for **post-doctoral** researchers was improved. A Resource Handbook was completed and posted on the web. Post-docs were included in Graduate Education Week and a special “coffee” was held on the Research Campus in an attempt to reach out to post-docs
- Prepared a plan for Graduate Program review which will consider both master’s and doctoral degree on a 7 year recurring cycle. We hope to implement the plan in the summer 2012.
- The Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) had a successful year. Despite some conflict in the leadership, the group provided more than \$69,759 in travel funding. The Grad Research Fair was so successful that GPSG was awarded the Outstanding Teamwork Award by Student Affairs. Next year’s GPSG budget has been increased to \$130, 968. There were 27 chartered graduate organizations this year.
- Graduate Teaching was addressed through the credit bearing course, GRAD 6001/8001. The course received excellent reviews. In addition, 4 graduate student teaching fellows offered workshops highlighting effective practices in teaching. This peer-to-peer training was well received.

**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.)

- In an effort to provide more program-specific functionality in the recruitment process, the Graduate Admissions staff is collaborating with ITS to design and deploy a replacement system for ApplyYourself over the next 14 months.



**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.

The ongoing Graduate School Quality Enhancement Plan employs two action themes to guide our efforts to improve graduate education: **(1) attracting quality students** and **(2) enriching the academic environment**. We continued to follow these objectives and the QEP serves as the foundation for our 2010-15 strategic plan. While **attracting quality graduate students**, we recognize the complex interplay between the quality of students and the size of enrollment. To educate graduate students for the future, the essential ingredient must be quality in all aspects of graduate education. The University must seek the ‘right-size’ in the numbers of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty and then focus on recruiting high quality graduate students.

Plans for **enriching the academic environment** are based on the belief that the success of graduate students during their studies and following graduation is often directly related to the overall academic environment of their graduate school experience. In order to allow graduate students to take full advantage of opportunities to use their expertise to make a meaningful and lasting difference in their discipline and the community, our 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 Graduate School strives to reduce bureaucratic barriers and improve operational transparency through such actions as streamlining application and enrollment processes, graduate student funding procedures, graduation clearance, and improving access to financial and human resources. This **enrichment of the academic environment** firmly supports **attracting quality graduate students** by creating a sense among prospective graduate students that at UNC Charlotte they are important, valued, and that this is their academic and professional home.

### 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

#### **Internal Audit**

The Internal Audit Department conducted a review of selected administrative business operations from January 17 through February 27, 2012. The report found that overall for the areas assessed internal processes and controls were excellent to adequate. Key operational issues to address included:



- International Undergraduate Admissions process is misaligned in the Graduate School responsibility. Resources are inadequate and compete with the primary mission of graduate admissions and communications on undergraduate admissions standards are sporadic. Process should be transitioned to Enrollment Management to consolidate with undergraduate admissions functions.
- Key personnel shortages directly impact critical functions. Lack of staff support in Graduate Admissions and Graduate Academic Affairs are being addressed with temporary help and cross training. Reduction in administrative staff impacts ability to meet some administrative compliance tasks.

### **Graduate Student Needs Assessment**

The Graduate Student Needs Assessment was conducted once again. 448 graduate students (9.4% response rate) responded to the web-based survey, which was launched in November. This lower than expected response rate is thought to be due to the November launch date. More than 50% of the respondents came from the College of Education and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Of those, 39% had attended at least one professional development workshop in the CGL. This suggests that more marketing is needed. In addition, we are exploring the possibility of taking workshops to the colleges next year. Qualitative data in the assessment suggest that the CGL location is not convenient and more weekend opportunities might be useful for some students.

Some of the interesting results include: the number one concern (52.4%) continues to be the availability of stipends and funding, with the availability of classes a close second; 69.2% of the respondents stated that their department does NOT provide training in RCR; 68% reported a sense of belonging to their department and 48% reported a sense of belonging to the greater UNCC community. Only 25.6% of the respondents have served as an IOR or had significant teaching responsibilities.

Professional development programs were evaluated by attendance and by satisfaction, rating both the content and presentation of the material. By using the Core Competencies as a framework for professional development, the CGL was able to offer more targeted workshops. The total number of workshops was reduced to 44 this year – an intentional decline from last year. Based on last year's assessment, we learned that workshops offered late in the semester are not well attended. An effort to offer more effective sessions resulted in **548** students participating (compared with 565 last year), even though the number of workshops **declined by 9**. (This number doesn't include the 550 students that attended Orientation.) This also reflects the departure of the teaching faculty affiliate, which reduced the number of teaching workshops offered by the CGL during the spring semester.

### **Graduate Assistantship Renewals**

Annually several programs come up for their three year renewal of graduate assistantship allocations. 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.

Renewals are made based on justification and strategic need.

### **Graduate Applicant Survey**

Graduate Admissions surveys graduate applicants to determine ease of use of the ApplyYourself application system and the Graduate Admissions web site so that changes and enhancements can be made to optimize the application process. From July 2011 to May 11, 2012 756 applicants responded to the survey. 756 applicants responded to the survey; of those: 97% indicated that the online application was easy to complete; 74% indicated that they talked with a graduate program director or faculty member at UNC Charlotte about the academic program and admissions process; and 54% are using Facebook to research graduate programs. Most respondents positively endorsed the application system and admissions process.

### **Graduate Program Review**

To ensure the progressive advancement of graduate programming at UNC Charlotte, a proposal from Academic Affairs and the Graduate School went to the Deans' Council to adopt and implement the policies, guidelines, and procedures for a regular and systematic review of graduate degree programs at UNC Charlotte.

The primary purpose for graduate program review at UNC Charlotte is to provide a mechanism for the continuous improvement of graduate education. It provides an opportunity to identify strengths and weaknesses in curriculum and instruction; student quality; educational (learning) outcomes; faculty contributions in graduate teaching/mentoring, research/creative activities, and service; resource availability and needs; and special features or services provided by the unit. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the graduate program assessment should allow the unit(s), in conjunction with the university, to plan to build on existing strengths, maximize opportunities for growth, and solve current problems.

Graduate program review at UNC Charlotte will be guided by the following principles and practices:

- There will be significant involvement of the relevant college dean(s). The dean(s) can help frame key issues to be addressed and remain accountable for action steps that result from the review.
- The review will include measures of quality and sustainability. GPR processes will include a system of gauging program sustainability that acknowledges program quality.
- GPR should be viewed as an integral part of the university's mission and goals.
- GPR will be clustered, grouping related programs together in a cycle. Clustered reviews can be used to find strategic opportunities and can be used as an organizational learning tool.
- To the greatest extent possible relevant institutional data should be provided to the



departments utilizing an on line assessment tool making the process more flexible, efficient, and manageable.

A pilot study will be launched in the summer 2012 include graduate degree programs from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the College of Business.

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.

- Utilized data obtained from application statistics, registration reports and feedback provided by the Graduate Enrollment Management (GEM) WorkGroup members and Graduate Program Directors to determine enrollment projections for fall 2012.
- As a result of positive feedback from both students and administrators/faculty, the Graduate Educational Opportunities (GEO) course (3401) for under-represented students will again be offered in fall 2012.
- The Graduate Student Needs Assessment Survey indicated that graduate students needed more focused help with career development. CGL hired two faculty affiliates to focus on doctoral



student professional development. They offered career search workshops; CV workshops; and several sessions on mentoring. A **SLOAN grant** to support the development of PSM professional development allowed CGL to hire a GA, who identified and developed additional career search supports for students. Students requested more professional development in the evenings and on weekends. We offered several workshops at 6 pm, targeting evening students. Writing assistance was offered on several Sunday afternoons, however few students used that service. If weekends are going to be viable, programs will need to be offered on a regular basis. Currently, these offerings are constrained by resources

### 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 is fairly low and the respondents are not representative of the entire graduate population. However, there are enough responses from each college to draw broad conclusions and recommendations for improvement. We added open-ended questions to this year's survey and received very useful feedback. Next year, we plan to gather more qualitative data through focus groups. We are considering moving to alternating years with the needs assessment in order to avoid some concerns about survey fatigue.

**Professional Development Assessments:** The professional development assessments focus on satisfaction and usefulness. The feedback is helpful, particularly when assessing presenter effectiveness. However, we are working to make these assessments based on learning outcomes, rather than on satisfaction.

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. One thought is to link this survey with the application to graduate. Our intent is to launch this survey in December.

**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.





Enrollment planning at UNC Charlotte continues to be limited to system-mandated enrollment projections. The establishment of a more comprehensive plan for enrollment management will allow the University to address specific areas in enrollment growth from application through graduation and beyond. Strategic enrollment planning serves primarily as a means of establishing program visions and goals. The relevance of the degree will be enhanced by considering student demand, enrollment capacity and the changing needs within the career pathways pursued by the program's graduate, and then responding to those needs. Thus there is a need for the University to undertake two critical strategic tasks: develop and implement a forward-thinking enrollment planning and management plan and identify and apply measures that demonstrate the extent to which these programmatic goals have been met.



## 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.