

Strategic Priorities

GRADUATE STUDIES

Priority 1: The Office of Graduate Studies will provide effective support for the recruitment of excellent students in all graduate majors.

Relationship of Priority 1 to UNL Core Values:

Priority 1 relates importantly to two core values; uncompromising excellence, and valuing diversity. Our goal is to assist graduate programs to recruit academically excellent and diverse graduate students.

Measurable Actions for AY 2005 - 2006:

External Funding for Graduate Recruitment

Increase permanent Othmer Fellowship funding by \$225,000 over the next three years (\$75,000 in AY 07, an additional \$75,000 in AY 08, and an additional \$75,000 in AY 09). This will allow the permanent funding of an additional 10 Othmer Fellowships per year.

Publicize the availability of special recruitment funding for NSF Fellows. Enroll at least one NSF Fellowship winner in 2005.

Hold fall semester workshop for at least 50 UNL graduate students on preparing winning fellowship applications; focus special attention on NSF Graduate Research Fellowships and other nationally prestigious fellowships.

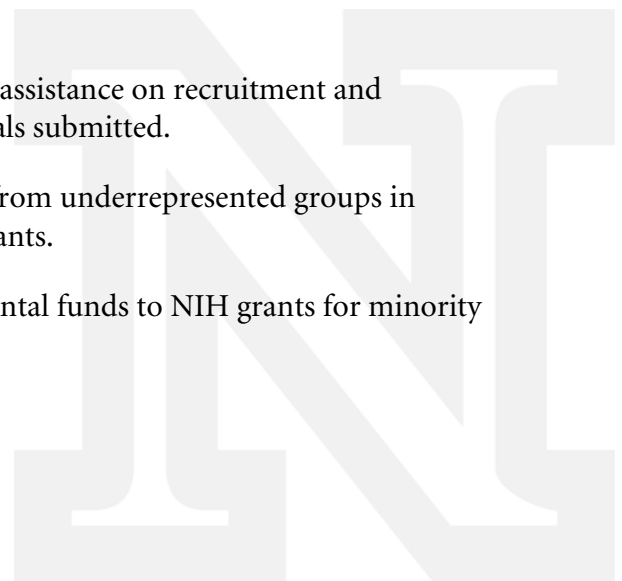
Develop an information clearinghouse on the Graduate Studies website for faculty and graduate students seeking national graduate scholarships and fellowships.

Hold fall semester workshop for at least 10 faculty members on strategies for winning GAANN proposals.

Collaborate with PIs and the Office of Research to provide assistance on recruitment and educational components of 100% of training grant proposals submitted.

Recruit at least 10 summer research program participants from underrepresented groups in research areas with highest potential for federal training grants.

Work with at least 1 faculty member to apply for supplemental funds to NIH grants for minority students to conduct summer research.



Graduate Recruitment Strategic Planning

Analyze the graduate Enrollment Management Templates for every department and create a campus strategic plan for graduate enrollment (in collaboration with SVCAA and IRP).

Follow-up on the 55 department and college meetings that Graduate Studies held in Spring 2005; provide individualized in-depth consultation on graduate recruitment to at least 10 departments/programs.

Hold internal recruitment grant competition and receive graduate recruitment strategic plans from at least 40 departments/programs. Require a strategic plan for graduate student recruitment in the grant application, and a follow-up report on use of previous funding.

Recruitment Training

Hold recruitment training session for 100% of Graduate Studies staff members. Every staff member will identify specific ways that they will enhance graduate recruitment.

Hold fall semester recruitment and retention workshop with at least 120 faculty and staff from at least 50 departments; invite national speaker to focus on strategies for identifying and attracting the highest quality graduate students.

Meet at least once per year with graduate recruitment staff members from throughout campus.

Hold Talisma training workshop with faculty and staff from at least 10 departments to develop Talisma email campaigns for inquiries and applicant follow-up.

Recruitment Travel

Attend at least 20 recruitment fairs nationally, including at least 6 visits to HBCU/HSI campuses; collect an average of 40 student contacts at each fair.

Facilitate travel for UNL faculty to attend or host at least 10 additional recruitment events nationally and collect an average of at least 30 contacts at each event.

Invite at least 20 distinguished graduate alumni who are faculty members at “feeder” institutions targeted by UNL departments to visit UNL, be hosted by their home department, and attend the fall reception for Othmer Fellowship winners. Name the program “Distinguished Graduate Alumni Fellows.”

Recruiting UNL Students

Conduct at least 5 targeted recruitment events for UNL undergraduates: Honors students, UCARE students, UNL Career Fair, UNL Senior Salute, and disciplinary honors societies. (In collaboration with Undergraduate Studies.)

Specialized Recruitment of Underrepresented Students

Attend recruitment fairs or make special visits to at least 6 HBCU/HSI campuses; collect an average of 40 student contacts at each campus.

Facilitate UNL faculty travel to at least 2 national disciplinary groups focused on underrepresented students.

Invite at least 5 key faculty/administrators from at least 5 HBCU/HSI to visit campus.

Create specialized diversity recruitment print materials.

Participate in NU system-level partnerships with HBCUs from Virginia and North/South Carolina.

Web-based and E-mail Recruitment

Refine Graduate Studies Website; enhance focus on recruitment of prospective students.

Develop an electronic contact card to capture information about visitors to the Graduate Studies website; offer this file to all programs, departments and colleges.

Hire a professional photographer to create high quality images of graduate students and faculty mentors for use in electronic and print materials.

Implement Talisma communication campaigns for 100% of student contacts generated by Graduate Studies.

Meet once per semester with staff from Extended Education and Outreach to more effectively publicize the distance courses and programs available at the graduate level.

General Recruitment Publications

Create and distribute brochure and poster templates to enhance program-level recruitment materials (printed and electronic) to 100% of departments/programs. (In collaboration with Publications.)

Develop generalized UNL graduate recruitment brochure for national recruitment events.

Develop generalized UNL brochure for international student recruitment.

Mail specialized posters with webcards to at least 300 universities in targeted countries worldwide. Target institutions with specific links to UNL alumni or current students and faculty.

Assessment of Recruitment Efforts

Evaluate 100% of department websites and provide feedback to each unit about the graduate recruitment features of their site.

Conduct telephone interviews with at least 30 students who were admitted to UNL, but chose to attend another university. Ask about the factors that influenced their final choice.

Conduct a focus group with first year Othmer Fellowship winners. Ask about the factors that influenced their choice to attend UNL.

Send survey to 100% of new graduate students concerning the factors that influenced their choice to attend UNL.

Admissions Enhancements

Create a specific plan and timeline for implementation of paper-free graduate admission process.

Priority 2: The Office of Graduate Studies will provide effective programs that add value to the academic and professional development of graduate students.

Relationship to UNL Core Values:

Priority 2 relates most directly to the core values of fostering discovery, linking research to teaching, and learner-centered education. Our goal is to foster the development of these skills in graduate students.

Measurable Actions for AY 2005 - 2006:

Conduct new student orientation focused on academic and professional preparedness for 100% of on-campus graduate students.

Create a new UNL Graduate Student Council, with representatives from all departments, to help guide academic and professional development efforts.

Conduct ITA Institute for 100% of international teaching assistants. Enhance content in sexual harassment, ethical issues, and dealing with difficult student behaviors.

Conduct campuswide assessment of the duties, experiences and further development needs of UNL's graduate teaching assistants.

Increase the attendance at the Fall Campuswide Workshops for GTAs by 5% (to 130).

Offer graduate teaching assistants developmental support through individual consulting, to foster instructional improvement.

Conduct at least one large campus-level graduate development workshop each semester: topics could include ethical responsibility, career preparation, research communication, and teaching effectiveness.

Effectively publicize these workshops so that at least 100 graduate students and faculty attend each one.

Facilitate at least 2 national speakers to conduct sessions for graduate students at the annual Research Fair. Sponsor Research Fair graduate poster session.

Work collaboratively with the graduate students and faculty in at least 5 targeted departments on student development activities specific to their discipline.

Expand the PFF program to include students from 2 more UNL departments.

Design and disseminate 4 publications (on CD) to enhance undergraduate teaching and graduate student development: 1) (updated) Instructional Handbook for Graduate Teaching Assistants, 2) TA Supervisors Handbook, 3) How to Get the Mentoring You Want: A Guide for Graduate Students and 4) How to Mentor Graduate Students: A Guide for Faculty.

Assess effectiveness of current graduate student training and development activities offered through the Office of Graduate Studies, through workshop evaluations, focus groups, and telephone interviews.

Continue to collaborate with Academic Affairs and the Office of Undergraduate Studies to assist in the enhancement of teaching and learning at UNL.

Priority 3: The Office of Graduate Studies will provide effective leadership of graduate academic policies and initiatives.

Relationship to UNL Core Values

Priority 3 relates most directly to the core values of fostering excellence, and of encouraging, supporting and challenging every member of the university community to pursue the core values. Our goal is to encourage and support the graduate faculty's efforts to create a rigorous and vibrant academic environment for graduate students.

Measurable Actions for AY 2005 – 2006

Provide "Graduate Degree Program Profile" data on applications, admissions, enrollments, degrees granted, attrition, time-to-degree, etc. to 100% of department and interdepartmental degree programs. Use these data as a framework for conversations about the quality of graduate programs and academic policies that could foster excellence.

Follow-up with 100% of departments that undergo APRs to discuss graduate-related issues.

Selectively expand graduate programs by establishing new majors that reflect emerging areas of knowledge, especially interdisciplinary programs. Target at least one new major in 2005-2006

As appropriate, encourage the development of specializations into new majors, especially in interdisciplinary areas. Target at least one new graduate major from an existing specialization in 2005 – 2006.

Create at least one new graduate certificate program.

Initiate Graduate Faculty Task Force to develop new strategies for improving GA stipend levels and recruitment fellowship funding – as per the recommendation in the 2020 Document.

Participate in campus Task Force on interdisciplinary graduate education, with special emphasis on new program development and student recruitment.

Create graduate policy database that contains full language and approval history of all major graduate academic policies.

Hold at least 2 training workshops concerning graduate procedures and timelines for college- and department-based graduate staff members per year.

Implement a web-based outcomes assessment exit survey for all graduating students.

Participate in the university's North Central Accreditation process.

Assist the office of IRP to refine models of graduate enrollment and tuition revenue.