THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN, 2005-2010

Graduate School Plan for 2005-2010
April 1, 2005; revised April 1, 2006

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

It is the role of graduate education to explore and advance the limits of knowledge and to define the state of the art in every field. Its purpose is to serve society's needs in specific and technical and professional ways, but also to serve the need for intellectual expansion. The central purpose of the plan that follows is to make certain that this commitment to excellence in graduate education and scholarship will continue to characterize the role of the Graduate School at UNC Charlotte.

In order to accomplish its mission the Graduate School has set seven major goals:
Goal 1: Increase the funding available to support graduate students and maximize the use of existing funding;
Goal 2: Provide for the effective enrollment management of graduate programming;
Goal 3: Promote and enhance the diversity of the graduate student body;
Goal 4: Develop a complete infrastructure for graduate education at the University and enhance the graduate culture on campus;
Goal 5: Continue the long-range planning and evaluation of new and existing graduate programs. Promote and facilitate the establishment of interdisciplinary programs;
Goal 6: Continue to assess the information needs of the Graduate School and graduate programs and implement technologically based solutions when possible;
Goal 7: In collaboration with the appropriate offices on campus, develop and implement a comprehensive plan for promoting effective relationships between the Graduate School and its external constituents.

To achieve these goals in light of the continued growth of graduate education at UNC Charlotte, we are projecting the following funding needs for the Graduate School:

4 additional staff - $120,000
Tuition Assistance through GASP - $6,400,000
Assistantship funding for programs - $500,000/year ($2,500,000 total)
Operating budget Increase for Graduate Admissions - $25,000 total
Graduate Student Recruiting budget - $30,000
Office of Graduate Student Support and Development. - $35,000 for stipends and operating budget
Community outreach - $20,000

A major concern is the availability of space to accommodate increased demands. The Graduate School Office will need to have access to additional office space in Cato Hall as it becomes available. In the meantime we will need to find suitable space at other locations on campus to house additional support staff and the Graduate Student Support Office

The Graduate School staff will apply assessment measure to determine our effectiveness in achieving our goals, These measures will include an increased competitiveness in recruiting top quality graduate students (domestic, international), improving the diversity of our graduate student body, and increased admission indices (GRE and GPA) of entering graduate students. We will also monitor student attrition and graduation rates and the placement of our graduates once they leave the university.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN/UPDATES SINCE LAST FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

Graduate education is a core function of a research university. A great university may be known for the quality of its undergraduate experience or its exceptional professional programs, but its reputation as an outstanding research university is largely founded on its capacity to attract and support faculty to conduct scholarly research, its emphasis on linking research and education through graduate studies, and its ability to recruit, mentor, support, retain, and ultimately, graduate exceptional graduate students. The central purpose of the plan that follows is to make certain that this commitment to excellence in graduate

education and scholarship will continue to characterize the role of the Graduate School at UNC Charlotte.

One change in the environment of graduate education relates to the recent examination of graduate student funding that was undertaken by the campus Task Force on Graduate Student Support. For a variety of reasons, stemming from the fact that graduate education has grown dramatically over the past several years without adequate support from the state budget, counterproductive enrollment practices have evolved. These practices, though necessary for the growth of graduate programs on campus, had the unintended effect of eroding the funding base (student credit hours generated) for graduate education as evidence by the fact that in the fall of 2003 only 33% of our graduate students were enrolled full time. Given our desire to become the third major public research university in the state of North Carolina we must find a remedy to this situation. Benchmark data currently available indicate that most of our national peers waive or fund all tuition for students on teaching or research assistantships.

The second change relates to the growing concern of a halt in the growth of international student enrollment in U.S. universities. For the past two years applications from international students have continued to decline particularly from China and India countries from which UNC Charlotte has historically drawn significant numbers of qualified applicants in science and engineering programs. The Educational Testing Service, recently declared that the number of international students registering for GRE in 2004 for admission in fall 2005 has dropped 37% for students from India, 43% for Taiwanese students and 50% for Chinese applicants. These downward trends require serious attention in all future enrollment planning. Coupled with the national decline in applications in the physical sciences generally, this down turn in potential international applicants suggests the need to initiate a new approach to international student recruiting and retention while also working to develop the domestic applicant pool.

A third change relates to the ongoing debate concerning the nature of graduate education today. Projects such as *Re-envisioning the PhD* (http://www.grad.washington.edu/envision/index.html) have been developed to address the issues on effecting change based on a new vision of the Ph.D. We believe that the most effective graduate training for the future will prepare students to collaborate effectively across disciplines, adapt quickly to changing conditions, work well in teams, communicate effectively, and work well with people whose language and culture are different from their own. Although such a strategy will insure that UNC Charlotte establishes graduate degree programs designed to produce graduates who are marketable, we must remain aware of the current trends so that we may make adjustments in graduate enrollment across programs as federal funding for research shrinks and as employment opportunities for current graduates influences student choice about field of study. At the master's level, nationally there is significant interest in the development of Professional Master's programs to respond to documented local and regional workforce needs and student interest/demand for master's programs that prepare graduates for entry-level careers in business, government and non-profit employment sectors. In sciences, social sciences and humanities, baccalaureate graduates generally have inadequate technical/disciplinary background, limited mastery of desired skills sets, and insufficient understanding of non-academic work to qualify for entry-level professional employment. Currently graduate programs are not structured to address these needs directly, though many of these needs are actually addressed indirectly through informal mentoring.

A fourth change relates to the accelerated acceptance of the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in graduate training. In the last 5 years, growth in graduate programs has come primarily in interdisciplinary areas, driven largely by the problem- rather than discipline-centered nature of much research funding. In the last year there has been strong attention nationally given to the need to insure that students planning research careers be trained in the broad fundamentals of their fields and be familiar with several sub-fields. Both the reality of research funding and research career preparation argues for organizing graduate education, especially in science, engineering and technological fields, under broad rubrics which facilitate interdisciplinary training. Some fields in the social science and humanities are moving in this direction as well.

A fifth change relates to developments in the public policy environment. First, on the national level, the

federal support base for graduate education is severely threatened. While at this moment it is not clear how far the cuts in federal support for graduate education will go, it is clear that there will be cuts and they will be deep. The cuts threaten loan programs, fellowship and traineeship programs, and research funding from NSF, DOE and DOD which support graduate research assistants. There is a critical need for graduate education to develop a voice at the national level. Additionally, we must look for every opportunity to build and sustain support in the NC General Assembly, with the governor's office, and with the people of North Carolina for the important contributions that UNC Charlotte makes to the State's economic growth and to the quality of life for its citizens.

A final change is the use of technology in the delivery of graduate education for both courses and programs. Changes in this arena have been rapid and are having a dramatic impact on the way that graduate education can be delivered on and off campus. UNC Charlotte has video classrooms, teleconferencing facilities and video production facilities along with the necessary equipment and technical expertise to deliver programs by a variety of media outlets. These resources, along with our campus networking, provide us with the technology to expand further our off-campus graduate education offerings. Web-based technologies makes it possible for students to access class materials, grades, and even register on-line, thus reducing the need for trips to campus; this ability is particularly important to part-time students who commute long distances to campus. These new technologies will present many challenges and opportunities for graduate education. We must take a serious look at implications for program and course organization, structure, quality, and assessment. We must also revisit policy issues such as residency requirements, number of courses allowed via distance education, faculty workloads, FTE credits, student advising, support services (e.g., library and computer), and administrative responsibilities.

During our planning process, the Graduate School conducted a survey of department chairs and graduate program directors and coordinators. In this survey we asked them to identify the top three issues they face in developing or maintaining their respective degree programs. Interestingly many of the concerns raised by our programs are closely reflected in the changes described above. As a result of this analysis, the Graduate School has identified three high priority initiatives:
1. Increase support for graduate students via assistantships, scholarships, and tuition support;
2. Increase the diversity and quality of the graduate student population which includes developing both the domestic and international application pools;
3. Expand the inventory of doctoral programs and professional master's programs to serve local, regional and national needs.

III. NEW STRATEGIC GOALS, ACTION PLANS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES FOR 2005-2010

The Graduate School at UNC Charlotte has a dual mission to serve external and internal constituents. We serve our graduate faculty, graduate programs and colleges and schools, with an array of activities designed to facilitate efficient and effective admission, education, and graduation of students. We also serve students, employers, other universities and the public at large, by providing institutional leadership for removing barriers to excellence and by envisioning and initiating changes in graduate training that position our graduates to be highly competitive in the future. In order to accomplish this mission the Graduate School has set seven major goals listed below, to be incorporated into the 2005-2010 strategic plan.

GOAL 1: A. Increase the funding available to support graduate students and maximize the use of existing funding.

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to the Academic Affairs Goal #1 to enhance educational

opportunities at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral level; Goal #3 to develop nationally recognized programs of research and scholarship; and Goal #8 to promote an environment that embraces the benefits of diversity in education, research, and service.

In the fall 2003 a campus-wide Task Force on Graduate Student Funding was convened as a result of a growing concern that the University could encounter difficulty in recruiting excellent graduate students if we are unable to offer them sufficient financial support. In order to preserve and enhance the quality of our graduate student body, and increase its size, we must substantially improve support for graduate study. The Task Force's purpose was to produce a strategic plan to offer more competitive funding to graduate students. The specific charge to the Task Force was to conduct an in-depth study of graduate student financial support on our campus, to make specific recommendations about using existing funds more effectively and to secure additional funding, and to examine comparable levels of support provided to students in different graduate programs. These measures are considered essential to maintaining and enhancing our ability to recruit outstanding graduate students. The Task Force submitted its report in September 2004 (http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/GradStuSupport/index.html).

C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

Although most of the recommendations and goals developed by the Task Force on Graduate Student Support are not repeated in this strategic plan, much of the focus of the Graduate School in increasing the funding to our graduate students and maximizing the use of existing funds centers on implementing the recommendations made by the Task Force in its report. Some specific examples for the Graduate School include:

- Increase the financial support of graduate students through various mechanisms including seeking monies from external funding agencies and from internal appropriations (e.g., new position allocations and private donations) consistent with enrollment management goals.
- Because graduate students who hold a University assistantship or fellowship expect both resident and non-resident tuition support, we must be able to improve the pool of funding available to meet these needs in order to remain competitive. Nearly half of the financial support awarded to graduate students at this University is in the form of an assistantship. Current system policy requires all graduate teaching assistants and research assistants to pay full tuition and fees. For non-resident GTAs and GRAs, this means paying out-of-state tuition, which is substantially higher than in-state. As a result of this policy, the University is losing top prospects to universities in other states where tuition and fees for graduate students employed as teachers and researchers are frequently waived. As a result of this situation, the Task Force proposed the Graduate Assistant Support Plan (GASP) to improve our competitiveness for the best graduate students; and to capture through formal registration the full scope of faculty instruction and student learning in the graduate curricula of the university. A primary focus of the Graduate School's strategic activities over the next five years will be to implement this tuition support plan. Details for this plan can be found in the Task Force report.
- The Graduate School will continue to administer a pool of funds for graduate teaching assistantships to programs, based on strategic need. Strategically, the appropriation of assistantships should be deployed in university priority areas. These might include highly ranked graduate programs, programs that have the potential to move up in rankings, new graduate programs, interdisciplinary graduate programs, programs that are growing, to recruit outstanding students, particularly students who will improve the diversity of the discipline and/or the university. However, support of these strategic priorities must be balanced with college needs to maintain the teaching mission of the University.
- Implement strategies to maximize the use of graduate student support monies to bring new students to the University and to achieve a more diverse graduate student population. Apply a web-based management tool to coordinate the funding offers among graduate programs, the Graduate School, and financial aid such that assistantship and tuition scholarship offers go out

simultaneously, and earlier in the year. Study the barriers that discourage programs from making offers of support simultaneously with admission decisions.

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

We must first set funding targets based on strategic need and the projected growth of graduate programming. Then during each of the five years, evaluate the net funding for graduate students to ensure that it is consistent with the growth in the number of graduate students at the University. It will then become important to determine whether or not there is a corresponding enhancement of student retention, shortening of time-to-degree, and improvement of graduation rates.

Each year we will review when assistantships and tuition awards are being made in the various colleges to determine the extent to which this funding is being used to effectively recruit and retain graduate students to the University. We will also assess the coordination financial support to our students by the Graduate School, the individual graduate programs and Financial Aid and continue to work with the Office of Research Services to measure the effectiveness of the programs in generating external funding for their graduate students.

While many of the recommendations put forward by the Task Force on Graduate Student Support when implemented can have an immediate effect on students, others like the establishment and full implementation of the Graduate Assistant Support Plan represent a more ambitious goal of the Task Force, one which may not see an immediate realization. To ensure that its recommendations remain a highest priority for the University, the Task Force suggested the establishment of a committee that will oversee the University's progress toward its goal of achieving the recommendations and objectives developed in its report. The committee should be established by the Provost and include membership from Graduate Faculty and staff from all four divisions. The terms of reference of the committee will be to monitor, advise, and report to the Provost on the progress being made in the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations that have been approved for implementation. In preparation for the work of this committee, the Provost was asked to set specific funding targets and timelines for achieving the goals of this report.

E. Assessment Schedule to Assess Goal

Progress toward achieving this goal will be assessed each year throughout the term of the strategic plan.

F. Person/Group Responsible

Although clearly to achieve this goal will require a collaborative effort among the Provost, college deans, and Graduate Dean, the Graduate Dean will take the lead in moving this initiative forward,

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

Tangible performance outcomes for this goal include:
- The actions taken in pursuit of this goal will allow the University to recruit and retain a larger, more diverse, and higher quality graduate student population. Progress Indicators include an increased competitiveness in recruiting top quality graduate students and increased admission indices (GRE and GPA) of entering graduate students. We also anticipate that with the implementation of multiyear support packages, there will be decreased student attrition and increased graduation rates as long as other program quality indicators remain constant. Evaluation results will be used to help colleges and departments determine if progress toward this goal is being made. These results will be particularly helpful in determining if efficient of funding is taking place.

- We expect there to be an Increasing number of programs making offers of funding support to students at the time of admission and prior to the April 15 "deadline" for students to commit to

graduate degree programs.
- The inventory of completed recommendations made in the Task Force Report on Graduate Student should increase annually.

H. **Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals**

Tuition Assistance through GASP - $6,400,000 (total)
Assistantship funding for programs - $500,000/year ($2,500,000 total)
We are projecting that the $800,000 start up fund for GASP for Fall 2005 will generate approximately $2,990,000 in student credit hour funding for 2005-06.Obviously being able to apply all of these funds to support the growth of GASP would enhance the University's progress in graduate student funding support. Still, in order to support this program we recommend that every effort be made to have the source of the stipend for GRAs funded through grants and contracts also provide funding for tuition. In those instances where this is not feasible, every effort will be made to fund any eligible student through the GASP. We hope that there will be additional legislative appropriations for graduate student tuition remission in the future.

Funding for the Graduate Assistantship pool should grow by at least $500,000 each year in order to provide at the least the minimum number of GTAs to support program growth. These funds should continue to be used as a strategic source of money to use within the Graduate School.

As detailed in the Task Force report, fellowships and training grants will be pursued through external funding sources (http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/GradStuSupport/index.html).

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	Despite a severe economic downturn during the last two years of the 2005-2010 strategic planning period, the Graduate School made good progress in achieving the objectives for this goal. Some of the measureable outcomes we have achieved include: • The Graduate Assistant Support Plan was launched which greatly enhanced our ability to attract and support high quality doctoral students. • Funding in the form of stipends, tuition awards, and health insurance awards increased almost annually. • New Graduate Fellowships were established. • Several technological improvements have been made in the way that graduate student support is awarded and monitored. New initiatives to encourage and support graduate student professional development centrally and through the individual academic units were implemented. • There has been a steady improvement in the quality and diversity of our graduate students that corresponds directly with an enhanced ability to make funding awards that are adequate and appropriate for a particular stage of the students' academic careers.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	Although steady progress is being made in achieving this goal, it is clear that the Graduate School must enhance its efforts to identify and procure financial support for graduate students and to allocate existing resources in the most efficient and productive manner. This goal has been refined based on the results we have achieved over the past five years and has been incorporated into an overarching goal for enrollment management in the 2010-15 strategic plan.

Goal 2: A. Provide for the effective enrollment management of graduate programming

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to Academic Affairs Goal #1 to enhance educational opportunities at the baccalaureate, masters and doctoral level; and Goal #8 to promote an environment that embraces the benefits of diversity in education, research, and service.

The Chancellor has offered as a goal that UNC Charlotte become a major research institution; the third such institution in the UNC system, by achieving Doctoral and Research Extensive classification. To obtain this status, a university must award fifty or more doctoral degrees annually in at least 15 different degree programs. Although the next level of classification cannot be reached unless approval is given to establish additional programs, we must also ensure that our current doctoral programs are able to recruit, retain, and graduate appropriate numbers of high quality graduate students.

C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

- Annually review the growth patterns of the various graduate programs as a basis for enrollment targets and recruitment strategies. We will work with program coordinators and directors to help them attain enrollment targets that are optimal for each graduate program. A program was initiated in August 1998 to provide benchmark data (annual comparisons) by degree and academic program. This data is now accumulated bi-monthly in an effort to (1) continually monitor the progress of individual programs towards their enrollment goals, and (2) provide valuable information in the program review process, which is discussed later in this plan.
- Continually develop and modify differential recruitment strategies to meet enrollment targets with emphasis on recruitment to the doctoral programs, and to those master's programs where enrollments can grow without negative effects on program quality. Such strategies are designed to recruit both prospective and admitted graduate students to enroll in the University. Research and experience (yield reports) indicate that direct contact with program faculty is the most valuable tool in recruiting prospective graduate students, whereas random "poster" campaigns and graduate recruitment fairs are low-yield endeavors that produce few enrollments. Specific actions by Graduate School staff include:

    1. Identifying prospect lists by specific discipline that graduate coordinators and directors can use for recruitment;
    2. Continually evaluating which recruitment practices are effective and the schools and locations from which matriculated students are drawn;
    3. Maintaining a comprehensive calendar of marketing materials that are sent to prospective students;
    4. Assessing and evaluating recruitment technology with regional, national, and international web sites and print solutions for marketing;
    5. Implementing a structure wherein students can be contacted promptly by program coordinators/directors, faculty, Graduate Admissions, and/or enrolled students;
    6. Creating a system where post-baccalaureate students can be followed in terms of matriculation into a degree program; identifying graduate degree completion rates by program and other demographics;
    7. Providing opportunities for departments to facilitate their specific recruitment strategies through travel support, training, and colleague networking.
    8. Pushing out technological systems (and training) for graduate coordinators and directors to utilize in the recruitment, enrollment, and retention of graduate students.
    9. Meeting with various college representatives to brainstorm ways to recruit students to a particular college or program, and developing relationships so that recruitment strategies with the colleges can be collaborative and effective.
    10. Utilizing email and web technologies to communicate with prospective and enrolled

   graduate students.
11. Actively recruiting students to enhance the diversity of the graduate student population.
12. Hosting information sessions each month for prospective students to learn about the graduate programs at UNC Charlotte.
13. Offering one-on-one admissions counseling for prospective students.
14. Hosting at least two Open Houses per year for prospective students to learn about the graduate programs offered at UNC Charlotte and meet with the graduate coordinator or director of those programs.

- Study barriers to degree completion and factors that encourage success and persistence in various programs. We will continue to obtain degree completion rates by program. Also, we will notify non-enrolled students of a pending expiration of the two-year window to re-enroll in the program and also email students who are eligible to register for classes but have not done so in an effort to encourage their continued enrollment each term.
- Identify areas in which graduate certificate programs can be added and work with the College deans to add at least two programs annually. Encourage the development of certificate programs and articulate the simple process regularly to graduate faculty and the college deans. Each year an evaluation on the progress of implementing new graduate certificates will occur in order to determine where new ones can or should be added. Likewise, data will be gathered annually to determine how many certificates are granted each academic year for the certificate programs.
- Identify units that do not have early-entry programs for undergraduates who are ready to be enrolled in a joint undergraduate/graduate program, and encourage the units to establish such programs.
- Study and support non-traditional delivery systems such as increased Saturday offerings, intensively formatted courses, distance learning mechanisms, and non-credit prerequisites. Also, the summer program will be used increasingly for graduate-level offerings.
- Now that the Office of International Admissions has merged with the Graduate School and a new senior level position, the Assistant Dean for International Student Affairs, has been established, we are positioned to strengthen and enhance the recruitment, admission, enrollment, and retention of international students. Some of the new initiatives for international student recruitment will include:
    1. Developing pipelines with institutions abroad to recruit students.
    2. Developing dual or joint degree agreements.
    3. Exploring academic enrollment opportunities with current Intercultural Outreach Programs.
    4. Exploring options with existing exchange partners for degree seeking enrollment.
    5. Actively recruiting current international undergraduate students to Graduate School.
    6. Working with faculty and administrators to solicit international contacts and then cultivating those relationships to create opportunities to recruit international students.
    7. Applying for grants that aid international enrollment.
    8. Aggressively following up with international students who inquire about UNC Charlotte's graduate programs.
    9. Nurturing contacts with Overseas Educational Advisors (OSEAS) and serving as host to OSEAS delegations in the USA.
    10. Developing print and web-based marketing strategies and utilizing e-marketers.
    11. Investigating the cost effectiveness of recruitment tours.

- Because the Graduate School now oversees the admission of international undergraduate students, there will be a specific focus on the recruitment of undergraduate international students to graduate programs. Initiatives to facilitate this activity will include:

    1. Developing a network of high school partners/pipelines abroad.
    2. Exploring dual or joint degree agreements at the undergraduate level.
    3. Recruiting at local community colleges and high schools in North Carolina that serve large populations of international students.

4. Continuing to cultivate existing recruitment partners (i.e. Saudi Aramco Oil; Kuwait Embassy; etc.).

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

Annual reviews of the actions described above will be analyzed to modify program enrollment targets and recruiting strategies as necessary. Results of the annual evaluation to identify programmatic areas in which graduate certificates can be added and early-entry programs begun will be used to guide decisions regarding implementation of such programs.   Additionally enrollment targets for the Graduate School and for some of the individual programs will be studied on an annual basis to determine if they are appropriate. It is extremely appropriate to study the retention of graduate students in the various programs so that the projections of new students as compared to the percentage of enrolled and graduated students are appropriate. This study also provides invaluable information about financial resources and how they can are leveraged to support the graduation of students across the disciplines. Finally, a Graduate Student Satisfaction Survey will provide information about how enrolled students perceive the services provided to them by the Graduate School.

F. Person/Group Responsible

Associate Dean of the Graduate School for Enrollment Management and Information Systems and the Assistant Dean for International Student Affairs.

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

In sum, total graduate enrollments need to increase at a greater rate than undergraduate enrollments, and doctoral enrollments and degrees must increase in absolute numbers over the next ten years. Towards this end, the Graduate School will annually accumulate and analyze enrollment figures and establish overall enrollment targets and limits, working with the Colleges to identify where the University should focus its resources so as to be proactive in reaching the desired enrollment profiles. It is important to note that enrollment targets include the both new students and currently enrolled (or eligible to enroll) students. Institutional enrollments for undergraduate and graduate admissions are also studied annually, and University enrollment goals are established based on the prior year's experience as well as knowledge of new programs coming onboard and new initiatives that indicate a possible increase in the enrollment of students in specific programs.

Performance outcomes will include:
- Meet the enrollment targets set by the individual programs and the University.
- See measurable decreases in time-to-degree rates and attrition in our graduate degree programs
- Increase in the inventory of Graduate Certificate with more students completing certificates and moving into corresponding degree programs.
- Increase the list of graduate degrees with early entry programs.
- Increased numbers of international student applications, admissions, and most importantly, yield.

H. Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals

Funding to support these initiatives will come from the Graduate School, Graduate Admissions, and International Student Affairs operating budgets. We do anticipate however that as the University continues to expand graduate education these operating budgets should increase by at least 15% over the period of this strategic plan. A significant cost will come in pushing out services to retain graduate students in the academic programs in an effort to improve the retention (persistence) of graduate students. As detailed in the report of the Task Force on Graduate Student Support, there is a critical need to fund recruiting initiatives. The Graduate School will work with the colleges in an effort to pool our resources but we anticipate the need for an increase in funding to support these activities adequately.

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	In the fall of 2005 the graduate student headcount was 4,217 (20% of the total student headcount). Five years later the number has increased by more than 1,000 students to 5,282 which is nearly 22% of the University student body. Since 2005 not only has the total number of enrolled graduate students increased but so has the diversity of those students. We enroll more international students, more women, more students from historically underrepresented groups, and more students with young children. Maintaining this level of growth with the right mix of students and programs to sustain a research university will require careful management of enrollment targets and capacities for each graduate program. Additionally, it will be necessary to study barriers to degree completion to identify ways to reduce the attrition rates of students who drop out from a program without completing the degree. We must also recognize that there is an increasing global competition for students and a changing perception of the U.S. as the destination of choice for international students.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	Given our current growth projections for the University to reach 35,000 students (of which nearly 9,000 are to be graduate students) by 2020, it will be important to continue to plan for this growth now. To this end, the Graduate School will: • provide leadership in determining targets for graduate student enrollment and how and where that enrollment should expand; • develop plans for general recruiting with a timeline and goals; • review and evaluate current recruiting initiatives; • support greater efforts in program-level recruiting through providing increased funding for recruiting grants and publicizing the most innovative and effective graduate recruiting methods; • identify programs with the high attrition and time-to-degree statistics and work closely with the program faculty to apply strategies for improvement; • provide workshops for all Graduate Program Directors and Coordinators that emphasize best practices in recruitment, retention, and time to degree in their programs and to apply strategies for improvement; • make technology available that will give faculty and students the tools they need to implement annual student progress reports with the purpose of reducing attrition.

Goal 3: A. Promote and enhance the diversity of the graduate student body

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to Academic Affairs Goal #8 to promote an environment that embraces the benefits of diversity in education, research and service.

The Graduate School will continue to work with academic departments to increase the diversity of the graduate student population, as well as to improve the overall applicant pool. Support for diversity should be considered in the context of the overall enrollment balance of the institution. We will facilitate graduate program growth and development efforts consistent with strategic academic program development priorities of the institution to increase the participation rates of underrepresented groups while increasing the total number of students served by North Carolina institutions of higher education.

C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

New major efforts of the Graduate School to support student diversity will include:

- Encouraging graduate programs in appropriate disciplines to develop proposals for participating in national and international initiatives to increase graduate student diversity, e.g., Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.
- Expanding our early entry programs.
- Inviting undergraduate students of color and women on the UNC Charlotte campus to participate in Information Sessions hosted by the Graduate School, with an opportunity for one-on-one admissions counseling.
- Advertising in specific print publications and/or web sites that cater to diverse students.
- Partnering with other institutions in an early graduate admissions program designed to increase the number of minority and first-generation advanced degree seekers at UNC Charlotte with partner institutions potentially including:

    1. Sister institutions in the UNC system
    2. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's)
    3. Encouraging and providing incentives for the emulation of diversity pipeline programs in other states, regions, and countries.

- Other efforts to support faculty and staff diversity will include encouraging a modified grow-our-own strategy of sponsoring outstanding undergraduates in completing doctoral degrees, relying on such programs as the:

    1. Bridges to the Doctorate program
    2. SREB Minority Doctoral Scholars Program
    3. The Gates Millennium Scholars Program
    4. Consortium on American Indian Graduate Education

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

We will monitor the annual growth in enrollment of minority graduate students and women graduate students in fields of national under representation.

E. Assessment Schedule to Assess Goal

Annually.

F. Person/Group Responsible

Associate Dean for Enrollment Management and Information Systems

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

The actions taken in pursuit of this goal will allow the University to recruit and retain a larger, more diverse, and higher quality graduate student population. Progress Indicators will include:
- Increased funding support and mentoring opportunities for minority graduate students.
- Establish specific linkages between UNC Charlotte and other institutions leading to an increase in the number of minority and first-generation advanced degree seekers.
- An increased competitiveness in recruiting under-represented students to our graduate degree programs especially at the doctoral level. Evaluation results will be used to help colleges and departments determine if progress toward this goal is being made. These results will be

particularly helpful in determining the role of funding and mentoring in recruiting, retaining, and graduating under-represented students at the University.

- Increases in the number of minority graduate students who are admitted, enroll, and complete our degree programs.
- Enroll at least one native American in a UNC Charlotte doctoral program.

H. Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals

The Graduate School has recently hired an Admissions Counselor whose focus is to not only aid in the recruitment of high quality graduate students but to also find ways to enhance the diversity of our programs. Funding to support these initiatives will come from increases in the Graduate School operating budget requested above and from both central sources (Academic Affairs, the Graduate School) and from individual units as proposed in the Report of the Task Force on Graduate Student support. (http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/GradStuSupport/index.html).

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	Many of the actions associated with graduate student funding and graduate enrollment management presented in goals 1 and 2 of the 2005-10 strategic plan focused on the enhancement of diversity of our graduate student population. Moreover, while there are some overall objectives to enhance our student diversity, specific goals are often set at the unit level. For instance in many of the STEM disciplines, enhancing the mixture of enrolled students would be facilitated by increasing the number of domestic applicants. In other disciplines such as education, increasing the pool of male applicants of color would be an aim. Realizing that when it comes to diversity there is no "one-size-fits-all" strategy, the Graduate School's role has been to emphasize the importance of enrolling a diverse class to the individual program faculty and assist them in planning appropriate recruitment and retention strategies. We have also worked to make the Graduate School welcoming to all who have the desire and ability to pursue an advanced degree.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	As described in the new 2010-15 strategic plan the Graduate School will help to create a more diverse graduate student population by: • developing assessment plans with timelines and goals for recruiting underrepresented populations of students; • facilitating the development of proposals designed to create a better pathway to graduate and professoriate degree programs for students from underrepresented groups; • supporting efforts designed primarily for recruiting underrepresented groups by developing pipelines and participating in recruitment activities with other institutions and organizations both on campus and off; • conducting workshops, presentations, and information sessions for students at HBCU's and at state, regional and national diversity-focused conferences; • expanding university-level campus visitation programs for prospective graduate students; • supporting and expanding summer research experiences for undergraduates and recent recipients of the bachelor's and master's degree; • increasing the involvement of current graduate students and faculty as

	ambassadors in Graduate School-sponsored recruiting activities, such as visiting recruiting fairs and participating in on-campus recruiting events for prospective students

Goal 4: A. Develop a complete infrastructure for graduate education at the University and enhance the graduate culture on campus.

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to Academic Affairs Goal #5 to provide high quality and accessible advising and other services to enhance educational opportunities and promote student achievement and personal growth.

The infrastructure and culture of a university provide the background in which students and faculty study, teach, conduct research, recreate, and make decisions. Now that UNC Charlotte is a doctoral-granting institution, the intangible as well as the tangible elements of the infrastructure and culture need to be in place to support the changed mission of the University. While the University's first priority is to provide sound academic programs and the intellectual framework in which they will be meaningful, it is also our responsibility to provide opportunities for the professional development of our students and to identify those aspects of graduate student life that distract them from their academic pursuits.

C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

- Establish an office for Graduate Student Support and Development. This office will be housed within the Graduate School and will work to help achieve University graduate education goals including attracting and retaining outstanding graduate students and supporting the continued development of graduate programs of the highest quality. Specific activities would include: provide graduate students with training, one-on-one assistance with proposal writing, and a centralized area to access funding information for fellowships, prizes, awards, independent projects, scholarships, work cooperative programs, and research opportunities; develop, implement, administer, and evaluate policies and practices for the smooth and efficient delivery of student financial support services; consult with and advise faculty, students, and campus administrators on graduate student financial support and broader graduate education matters; develop short-term and long-term plans for graduate student financial support; through analysis and innovation, address and resolve complex graduate student financial support issues and problems; prepare grant proposals for institutionally awarded fellowships and coordinate fellowship programs and funded grants administered through the Graduate School.
- 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, the Graduate School intends to establish within the Office of Graduate Student Support and Development the Institute for Graduate Student Leadership and Professional Development. This institute will be designed to provide programs to teach graduate students some of the skills needed as professionals. A proposal to establish this institute has already been drafted and a program on the Responsible Conduct of Research proposed by the Institute for Professional and Applied Ethics has been funded by the Graduate School for the 2004-2005 academic year. This program will serve as a pilot program that may be incorporated into the Graduate Institute. The Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Affairs is also in contact with faculty and staff on campus to establish support for this initiative.
- Support the Graduate and Professional Student Government in their efforts to enhance their visibility and encourage it into new areas of programming and activities for graduate students. The Graduate School will annually evaluate the Graduate and Professional Student Government on

the progress it has made in terms of impacting the campus life and services for graduate students. Such measures will include:

1. Consider the degree to which graduate students have a voice in matters relevant to them. In other words, how has the GPSG become representative of the graduate student population and what does it do to create a system of communication to, from and among graduate students?
2. An evaluation of the funding level requested and acquired by the GPSG and the uses of that funding to support departmental graduate student organizations and individual graduate students.
3. Appraise the level of graduate student representation on University committees.

- Identify existing campus programs and services appropriate to the graduate student population and make their availability known. Assessment measures of existing services appropriate for graduate students would include: documentation of the progress of individual offices in creating or adapting their services to better meet the specific needs of graduate students and an annual assessment of new initiatives which were created or proposed to contribute to improving the graduate student community.
- Make offices such as the Career Center, Computing Center, Writing Center, Library, and Student Success and Retention aware of graduate student needs. Provide information on the areas of interest to the typical graduate student age group (e.g. tax information). Determine and identify campus services (existing and new) which would support the academic endeavors of graduate students and work to make existing service more graduate student oriented.
- Expand the pilot program on campus of the electronic submission of graduate theses and dissertations and the establishment of a network digital library.

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

As the Office of Graduate Student Support develops, we will use a variety of measure to assess the success of the program. These measures will include but are not limited to:

- numbers of students and faculty participating,
- level of funding generated to support the program,
- improved funding for students through individual grants and fellowships generated through the Office,
- increase in student retention, reduced time-to degree, enhanced graduation rates,
- student satisfaction with services, and
- placement of our graduates.

Within the Graduate Student Professional Development Program, students will register for courses in the normal fashion. Additionally, courses and course instructors will conform to standard University policies including course evaluations. The Graduate School has developed a survey instrument that will be used to measure graduate student satisfaction at UNC Charlotte including their experiences with the Professional Development Programs. We will use these and more informal means to constantly measure the professional development needs of graduate students within the University.

Activities of the GPSG should increase on an annual basis. Work toward securing additional funding from the pool of student activity fees should occur by way of creating and proposing arguments for additional funding for departmental graduate student groups as well as requesting appropriate fee increases, if necessary, to support the additional activity of graduate students and graduate student organizations. Graduate student representation in the governing body should be cultivated to the point of full representation of all graduate programs on the appropriate University committees. Each year, the GPSG should set goals for itself of issues to address and problems to bring to the attention of the administration and/or offer solutions for that will enhance and improve the quality of graduate student life.

 It is hoped that support programs for graduate students can continue to be developed and existing programs marketed such that graduate students can take full advantage of every opportunity to increase

their chances for success.

E. Assessment Schedule to Assess Goal

Annually.

F. Person/Group Responsible

Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Affairs

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

While graduate education clearly entails academic training, today it must also include a commitment to providing students with resources and services to enhance their graduate experience and prepare them for their post-student careers. Mastering one's academic discipline is the foundation of graduate education, but this may be insufficient preparation for a successful career. There are a variety of benefits that come from professional development activities. Such benefits include positive impacts (performance outcomes) on retention, career preparation, and the quality of graduate education. As a result of our efforts to achieve this goal, we expect the following outcomes:

- Establish the Office Graduate Student Support and Development.
- Increase fellowship funding and training grants for our students including at least 1 GAANN award.
- Higher visibility of GPSG through participation in service opportunities and the establishment of a graduate student center.
- Greater graduate student satisfaction with campus programs and services that support them.
- Move to 100% electronic submission of doctoral dissertations

H. Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals

The Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Affairs will be the director of the Office of Graduate Student Support and Development. We envision a Faculty Associate model to provide staff to aid graduate students in the identification of funding sources to help prepare proposals. Institute courses will be taught by UNC Charlotte faculty and staff who may have the required expertise in a particular topic. The Graduate School will request two part-time lecturer positions along with an instructional graduate assistantship to teach in the program.

The UNC Charlotte faculty and staff, outside of the Graduate School, who serve as instructors for this program will be compensated with $2500 as a one-time payment per AY. Since courses are just 1 credit hour, this would not be considered an overload or warrant a course reduction. We estimate that normally four to six individuals would serve as the instructors for the Office in any given year.

- Faculty Associate   - $35,000 (half-time)
- Stipends   - $10,000 - $15,000
- Operating budget   - $12,000
- Administrative support   - $21,000

We anticipate the student credit hours generated by the Institute although not sufficient to fund the program, will provide supplemental funding.

Ideally the Graduate Student Support Office would occupy space dedicated to that purpose and the Graduate Institute would be part of that facility. Academic space should include an administrative office, small meeting room, office space for the part-time faculty, and a classroom. In addition to providing a location for instruction, the office and meeting room would provide graduate students on campus a common area in which to interact.

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	While the University's first priority is to provide sound academic programs and the intellectual framework in which they will be meaningful, it is also our responsibility to provide opportunities to develop a diverse and cohesive graduate community. During the period of the last strategic plan: • new initiatives to encourage and support graduate student professional development centrally and through the individual academic units were implemented; • the Center For Graduate Life was founded; • graduate education and career preparation of professional master's programs were enhanced; • the role and visibility of GPSG as a voice for graduate students was increased substantially; • a new focus to improve the career development and working conditions for post-doctoral scholars was implemented.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	Over the next five years we will increase the services geared specifically for graduate students, such as professional development, placement counseling and an emphasis on developing teaching and communication skills of students throughout their academic careers. We will also place an emphasis on accountability which requires the collection of data at the institutional and national levels that will help us understand the reasons for unacceptable levels of attrition and increasing times to degree completion seen in many Ph.D. programs. Some of these performance outcomes will include: • Increased number of opportunities provided via the Graduate Professional Institute and an increasing number of students attending the workshops. • Enhanced utilization data for the new Graduate Life Center. • Improved student satisfaction as related to the annual Graduate Student Needs Assessment and Graduate Exit Survey data. • Enhanced and more effective ethics training and responsible conduct of research training programs available and attended. • Expanded for-credit offerings through the Professional Development Program to include certificate programs. • An increased number of events sponsored by the GPSG to promote a graduate student culture and the number of students participating in the various events. • More graduate student representation on University-wide committees. • Increased availability and use of University facilities to support graduate students. • Increased recognition by graduate students of the role of the Graduate School plays in their academic and professional development

Goal 5: A. Continue the long-range planning and evaluation of new and existing graduate programs. Promote and facilitate the establishment of interdisciplinary programs

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to Academic Affairs Goal #1 to enhance educational opportunities at the baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral level; Goal #3 to develop nationally

recognized programs of research and scholarship that will expand the frontiers of knowledge, solve problems at the interface of disciplines, and promote the application of discovery and; Goal #7 to graduate students with intellectual and professional skills and a global perspective that can be broadly applied to an ever-changing world.

The development of new graduate programs is primarily the responsibility of the faculty of each academic unit. However, the graduate school must be fully engaged in the process by encouraging new directions, providing assistance in proposal development, and reviewing new program ideas early on for content and appropriateness to the graduate mission at UNC Charlotte.

Although the development and implementation of new programs is important, enhancement of the quality and viability of existing graduate programs is also vital. Indeed, in an environment in which new graduate initiatives are rapidly being undertaken, the University cannot ignore the status of existing programs.

The Graduate School will work during the planning process to help ensure that graduate and professional programs are exceptional in preparing students to lead, teach, conduct research, and provide professional services.

C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

- In concert with the Provost and the college deans establish a periodic review process of all existing graduate programs. Program review, both for enrollment levels and for program quality, has been limited to system-mandated reviews of new and "low-productivity programs". The establishment of a more comprehensive plan for program review will allow the University to address specific areas in making an evaluation of program strengths, weaknesses and overall quality, such as: program goals and curriculum, faculty, student, productivity, adequacy of financial support for the program, quality and adequacy of facility and library holdings. These evaluations will determine the overall quality and productivity of the program and be used to enhance or maintain their continued development.
- Work with the Provost and deans to aid in identifying and encouraging new degree programs that are consistent with institutional goals. In addition to expanding the inventory of doctoral degrees, the Graduate School will pay particular interest to the role of graduate education in workforce development at the local, state, and regional levels. We wish to develop Professional Master's initiatives to respond to local and regional workforce needs and student interest/demand for master's programs that prepare graduates for entry-level careers in business, government and non-profit employment sectors.
- Encourage initiation and expansion of interdisciplinary graduate programs in selected areas. This means encouraging both the development of new programs and the reformatting of existing programs to respond to the interdisciplinary trends in the organization of knowledge and learning. The effectiveness of this action will be assessed by determining if policies and procedures relative to implementation and governance of interdisciplinary programs and to the appointment of faculty members to interdisciplinary appointments have been implemented and used successfully.
- Reassess the role of the Graduate School in providing support to academies to help them to achieve their various missions.

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

Quantitatively, this goal may be assessed by looking at the number of new degree programs that are proposed, planned and implemented on a yearly basis. This must be done in conjunction with overall enrollment goals set for the University and its mission in providing graduate education opportunities at the local, regional, national and international levels.

For newly proposed degree programs, qualitative assessment for their potential viability can come from the evaluation of program-prepared feasibility studies. The use of feasibility studies to plan new graduate

degrees provides the mechanism for consultation among the Provost, college deans and graduate dean to enable the campus to continuously maintain and update its long-range planning. The University will be able to assess the effectiveness of the process by monitoring the number of new graduate degree approved by the Board of Governors for implementation. Justification for the program must include a focus and rationale shown by:

- Clearly articulated mission, goals, and objectives.
- A well defined curriculum that is adequate to meet the program's goals and objectives. While the proposed curriculum does not have to be in "final form" there should be enough detail presented to show how it will be designed to meet programmatic goals and objectives.
- The contribution of the program to the mission of UNC Charlotte as well as other programs at the college and university level.
- Potential ability to achieve a significant regional, national, or international reputation as measured by expert external review(s).

For the qualitative assessment of existing programs, the establishment of program reviews to address the following areas of program strengths, weaknesses and overall quality:

- program goals and curriculum,
- faculty, students, productivity,
- adequacy of financial support for the program,
- quality and adequacy of facility and library holdings.

Such measures of effectiveness will determine the overall quality and productivity of the program and be used to enhance or maintain their continued development.

E. Assessment Schedule to Assess Goal

The establishment of a program review process will likely require consideration over the period of this strategic plan. After three years we will evaluate our progress toward this goal with the final assessment at the end of five years. We will annually assess our progress in the planning and implementation of new graduate degree programs.

F. Person/Group Responsible

Dean and Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

We expect to establish a formal graduate program review to provide a means by which the University can evaluate our graduate degrees so as to be able to maintain or enhance their overall quality.

Other performance outcomes for this goal include:

- Increase the inventory of doctoral programs to at least 25.
- Consider the feasibility of establishing 1 or more professional science master's programs each year.
- Continue to work with the Provost and deans to implement the recommendations made in the Interdisciplinary Task Force report.
- Provide funding and other support opportunities to the UNC Charlotte Academies.
- Encourage the establishment of new Academies so that at least one is added each year.
- Appropriately increasing the inventory of graduate degrees is essential to the broader mission of the University to become the third major public research institution in North Carolina.

H. Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals

We expect that no new resources will be required for the continuation of new degree planning process or to develop the program review initiative. However, once implemented, program review may require supplemental funding.

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	We believe that the most effective graduate training for the future will prepare students to collaborate effectively across disciplines, adapt quickly to changing conditions, work well in teams, communicate effectively, and work effectively with people whose language and culture are different from their own. Although such a strategy will insure that UNC Charlotte establishes graduate degree programs designed to produce graduates who are marketable, we must remain aware of the current trends so that we may make adjustments in graduate enrollment across programs as federal funding for research shrinks and as employment opportunities for current graduates influences student choice about field of study. At the master's level, nationally there continues to be a significant interest in the development of Professional Master's programs to respond to documented local and regional workforce needs and student interest/demand for master's programs that prepare graduates for entry-level careers in business, government and non-profit employment sectors. In sciences, social sciences and humanities, baccalaureate graduates generally have inadequate technical/disciplinary background, limited mastery of desired skills sets, and insufficient understanding of non-academic work to qualify for entry-level professional employment. Currently many graduate programs are not structured to address these needs directly, though many of these needs are actually addressed indirectly through informal mentoring.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	The Graduate School's objective will be to continue to work with colleges and other campus units to integrate curriculum development, faculty development, and assessment in order to provide an integrative learning environment for our graduate students. This way we seek to initiate transformative change through internal and external partnerships, develop and support nationally and internationally recognized programs of research, scholarship, and service that foster excellence and promote sustainability and inclusion in a very diverse world. • Increase and expand internal and external campus partnerships involving graduate students and graduate faculty that provide integrative mentoring opportunities, including those that prepare the future leaders of tomorrow. • Promote and facilitate the establishment of interdisciplinary degree and certificate programs. • Implement the first interdisciplinary degree housed in the Graduate School, the Health Informatics Professional Science Master's program. • Support interdisciplinary curriculum development that includes linked courses, team teaching, bridge programs (undergraduate to graduate), study abroad, summer research experiences, and internships. • As a component of an integrative curriculum, provide meaningful and periodic review of existing graduate degree programs that includes skill, learning, and attitude outcomes assessment. • Assess the role of the UNC Charlotte Academies in new program development. • Expand the number of programs offered through the UNC Charlotte Graduate Center.

	• Work to fully integrate graduate education with campus-based research centers. • Expand mentoring opportunities for faculty. Focus on cross-disciplinary mentoring and guidance for junior faculty who have yet to graduate a doctoral student. • Encourage exemplary professional development for graduate students and graduate faculty. • Assist with the development and implementation of graduate academic partnerships with international universities and organizations. • Improve the education and working conditions of postdoctoral scholars by providing them advocacy, support, and professional development. • Assess various mediums of instruction and methodically work to support alternative delivery methods based on public need.

Goal 6: A. Continue to assess the information needs of the Graduate School and graduate programs and implement technologically based solutions when possible

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to Academic Affairs Goal #6 to support the success of faculty and staff in teaching, research, and service through career development opportunities, mentoring, and access to critical human and physical infrastructure and Goal #9 to create a flexible, responsible culture that uses effective review and assessment as the basis for improvement.

Graduate Faculty and Graduate School staff are highly dependent on state-of-the-art information technology in order to operate efficiently and to be competitive in the recruitment, enrollment, and retention of graduate students.
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C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

- Establish a Graduate School Information Center to develop, enhance, and maintain multi-user information systems to support graduate education at UNC Charlotte. Acquiring and maintaining good information on graduate students and graduate programs are essential for the continued advancement of graduate education at the University. Since the Graduate School is the repository of basic demographic and academic data on all graduate students and provides this information to graduate programs and other University offices, it is imperative that the information can be disseminated accurately and efficiently. Such information includes admission application yields (applied, admitted, enrolled), kinds and numbers of degrees awarded, program requirements, numbers and characteristics of students enrolled, time to completion of degree, attrition rates, and financial support data. In addition to allowing the Graduate School to make informed decisions on academic policies and trends, these data can be included into graduate program reviews. Decisions about curriculum changes, future academic planning, the use of fellowship and assistantship resources, and the academic quality of individual programs cannot be made effectively without reliable statistics. Presently the associate dean for enrollment management and information systems is responsible for acquiring and disseminating this information for the Graduate School. However, this task has become too large and complex for one individual and so the Graduate School plans to establish an Information Center. The primary duties for this office would include performing statistical analysis and reporting of graduate data, coordinating faculty and staff training on all systems, providing technical support, and maintaining the Graduate School web site.
- Position the Graduate School for greater use of the World Wide Web, particularly for:

1. Recruitment of prospective domestic and international students (provide information about the University, graduate programs, graduate admissions, etc.,), and, in particular, to allow all graduate students to submit the entire admissions application online (with the exception of standardized test scores and official transcripts), including the application, processing fee, statement of purpose, and letters of recommendation.
2. Support of currently enrolled students (provide greater access to forms, information and student services), with a particular emphasis on student retention and graduation and the need to help create a graduate student climate on campus.
3. Faculty to access information (forms, applicant and enrolled student information, meeting minutes, funding sources and financial support for graduate students).

- Take full advantage of recent and continuing information system technological advances to ensure maximum efficiency of service rendered by the Graduate School to all constituents including but not limited to, graduate students, directors and coordinators of Graduate Programs, graduate faculty, prospective students and the International Student Office. To provide timely, high quality and accurate information and communication to all.
- Utilize Banner to (1) deploy an online application for post-baccalaureate students, a group not served by the CFNC online application, (2) support Web-based admissions processing utilities for faculty and staff, (3) provide prospective student forms via the Web, (4) support automated, rules-based communication initiatives for both prospective and enrolled graduate students, (5) maintain graduate faculty information that can then be used with the Schedule of Classes to tie graduate faculty with graduate level coursework, and (6) push out reports via the Internet to various constituencies, including graduate faculty and staff and Graduate School staff members.
- Develop, maintain and continually enhance a web-based transactional database for graduate student financial support that is utilized by graduate coordinators and directors as well as Graduate School staff. Ideally, the Graduate Assistant Support Plan (GASP) system and the Graduate Tuition Differential (GTD) system will interface with Banner such that it is available 24-7 and can also be used to drive financial support reports.
- Continue to increase the professional development of Graduate School staff in order to take full advantage of technological developments.

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

The Graduate School will assess it performance in achieving this goal using data collected through formal surveys of, and informal conversations with, students, faculty, and staff. By evaluating the satisfaction of our constituency with the services we provide and any improvement in the efficiency of the Graduate School staff in doing these tasks, we can continually work to improve inter- and intra-office interactions. In particular, we will evaluate how effectively we leverage existing University resources (Banner, Oracle server, ITS training and support) to achieve the goals.

E. Assessment Schedule to Assess Goal

Annually

F. Person/Group Responsible

Associate Dean of the Graduate School for Enrollment Management and Information Systems

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

By enhancing communication (in both terms of speed and efficiency) between the Graduate School and its constituency, we will improve all aspects of the enterprise from admissions, matriculated students

services, to graduation and post-graduation services. To reach this goal, the following outcomes will be required:

- Establishment of a Graduate School Information Center.
- Deploy *ApplyYourSelf* a new online graduate application and prospect management tool.
- Increase use of web-based transactions for the award of financial support to our graduate students.
- Move toward the establishment of a "paper-less" office for the Graduate School

H. Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals

Funding to support these goals will come from the Graduate School, Graduate Admissions, and International Student Affairs operating budgets. However, because these goals require significant development of new and existing technologies, as well as ongoing maintenance and enhancement of systems as needs change, it is imperative that additional resources be acquired to support a Computing Consultant (Grade 76) position. Currently, the Graduate School has one Computing Consultant (Grade 70) who is solely responsible for developing, enhancing, and maintaining all systems for the Graduate School, but it is impossible for one individual to achieve the goals stated herein. Therefore funds should be dedicated to create a position whereby two Computing Consultants can provide the technical expertise to work towards achieving the stated goals. Finally, funds need to be secured for an Administrative Assistant to work in the Graduate School Information Center and support the personnel therein.

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	Today graduate schools must be able to accommodate a highly diverse population of students. New technologies have changed the way we respond to our constituents (e.g., on-line applications) and the ways in which scholarship is published and accessed. Another change is the use of technology in the delivery of graduate education for both courses and programs. Over the past five years changes in this arena have been rapid and are having a dramatic impact on the way that graduate education can be delivered and administered on and off campus. Progress made toward achieving this goal include: **ApplyYourself** The *ApplyYourself* suite of products, prospect, applicant, enrollment, and event management modules, were maintained and enhanced since implementation in November 2007 Annually we provided introductory and refresher training for over 270 AY users to review application files electronically and make admission recommendations online Providing an entirely online application, admission, and enrollment process is a tremendous advantage in terms of graduate coordinators and directors having immediate access to information in the web-based system. Having an integrated prospect and applicant system also enables data reporting that is critical to determining continued viability for recruitment initiatives. Naturally, the cost of maintaining a system with data that must be integrated with Banner is a challenge, but so far the benefits exceed the costs (both literally and figuratively). **Graduate Student Financial Support** Designed, enhanced, maintained and supervised the technical aspects of the GASP system using Microsoft Access and Visual Basic for Applications. Maintained the old Assistantship System (now replaced) using Microsoft Access and

	Visual Basic for Applications. While not as efficient as the new eGA system it was an improvement over the purely paper-based AA-29. Collaborated with ITS to develop an electronic application that incorporates a workflow component for document management. Web-based form for faculty and staff to submit assistantship appointments electronically with the data feeding directing to Internet Native Banner (INB). **Information Systems** Designed, enhanced, maintained and supervised the technical aspects of the Graduate School Scanning System. Based on constituent feedback, enhanced system functionality to improve processing. The Graduate School participated in Banner Functional Team meetings on campus and stressed the need to reduce reliance on shadow databases and focus more on using Banner. Continued to test modifications, enhancements, patches, and upgrades to the Sungard systems, including Internet Native Banner (INB), Self-Service Banner (SSB), the ODS, ReportCentral, and WebFocus.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	The Graduate School will continue to use technology in all aspects of its operations. This goal has been integrated into each of the three overarching goals of the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Goal 7: A. In collaboration with the appropriate offices on campus, develop and implement a comprehensive plan for promoting effective relationships between the Graduate School and its external constituents

B. Relate Unit Goal to Goal(s) of Next Higher Reporting Unit (i.e., Dept to College, or college to university) Contributes to Academic Affairs Goal #4 to respond to regional needs and contribute to the economic future of the region through leadership in service, research, and education and through partnerships with public, private, and non-profit organizations.

In addition to the significant responsibilities on campus, the Graduate School has a responsibility to participate actively with its external constituents and to provide a voice for the role of graduate education in society. This includes developing and maintaining effective relationships with national, state, and local legislatures and boards, particularly those units of government that establish laws or regulations governing graduate students and faculty. Developing good relations with University and especially Graduate School alumni can be effective in promoting both financial and political support to graduate education.

C. Action Plans to Achieve Goal

- Promote the direct and active involvement of the Graduate School senior staff in important professional associations in graduate education. Encourage members of the Graduate School senior staff to hold office in and make scholarly presentations for appropriate local, regional, and national professional organizations.
- Cooperate with the Chancellor, Provost, and other appropriate external relations officers in the University to function as a liaison with the community to help promote and advocate for graduate education at UNC Charlotte.
- Form a speaker's club of graduate students, who will serve as ambassadors for graduate education. These students would present information showing how their research benefits the citizens of North Carolina.

- Establish the "Graduate Dean's Award" to recognize graduate students whose research provides special benefits to the citizens of North Carolina. These awards would be cash awards given to as many as 10 students at an annual event sponsored by the Graduate School
- Work with the office of Alumni Affairs to enhance the relations between the University and Graduate School alumni. Alumni can offer both financial and political support to graduate education; they can be called upon to help evaluate and offer suggestions for improvement programs, and they can be used individually or in groups to speak out on behalf of graduate issues.
- Create an external advisory committee of community partners and alumni whose principal task will be to help with the support and promotion of graduate education. While there may be some competition between the Graduate School and the other colleges and departments for the allegiance and money of alumni we hope that the advisory council and other development activities will serve central graduate school purposes (e.g., unearmarked fellowships, research, study and conference travel money, teaching and research awards.) or be a funnel to departmental/program needs. In any event, we see this as a way to help raise funds and the level of awareness of graduate education in the local community.

D. Effectiveness Measures/Methods to Assess Outcomes/Goal Attainment

Clearly this is a long term goal and many of the outcomes will be intangible. As graduate education on campus matures there will be more local recognition of the importance of graduate level teaching and research to economic development and the overall quality of life of the region. Some tangible effectiveness measures could include increased private funding to support graduate education, requests from local, regional or national organizations for speaker's bureau, and the establishment of an advisory group composed of individuals who also serve as leaders in the community. .

E. Assessment Schedule to Assess Goal

Annually

F. Person/Group Responsible

Dean of the Graduate School

G. Performance Outcomes for Goal

In addition to the founding of a Graduate School Advisory Committee, the performance outcomes for this goal should include:
- Create a student speaker's bureau
- Each member of the Graduate School Senior Staff will be actively engaged in one or more professional organizations.
- Establish a graduate student award to recognize research of special interest to the citizens of North Carolina
- Increase the recognition by the external community of the importance of graduate education to the mission of the University, to the state of North Carolina and the nation. One outcome of this should be enhanced support for graduate programming through private donations.

H. Resources Required to Achieve 5-Year Goals

- Funding for the Graduate Dean's Award and recognition event - $15,000 annually.
- Speaker's club - $5,000 annually for travel.

I. Annual progress assessment of performance outcomes:	For an office such as the Graduate School effective communication with constituents is a requirement. While we have made progress in achieving this goal there still remains much to be done. This is very much a long term goal and many of the outcomes will be intangible. As graduate education on campus matures there will be more local recognition of the importance of graduate level teaching and research to economic development and the overall quality of life of the region.
J. Follow-up plan to make changes as a result of assessment findings:	The third overarching goal of the Graduate School 2010-15 Strategic Plan is *Support and Communicate the Quality of Graduate Education at UNC Charlotte to Internal and External Constituents.* This goal is a continuation and expansion of this particular objective. Action plans to achieve to the 2010-15 goal include but are not limited to: • Work with the Office of Alumni Affairs to enhance relationships between the University and Graduate School alumni. • Prepare and implement a comprehensive strategic plan for Graduate School Development. • Establish the Graduate Dean's Advisory Cabinet which will consist of the presidents of each of the student organizations that hold a charter through GPSG. The function of this cabinet will be to share information and provide advice to the Dean on issues concerning graduate students and graduate education on campus. • Promote effective communication among the Graduate School and its campus constituents including Graduate Faculty, staff, and students. • Work with the UNC Charlotte Graduate Council to develop or enhance its effectiveness and communications with the University at large. • Encourage effective personnel practices in the Graduate School by maintaining an attractive, efficient work environment and supporting training initiatives for staff. • Provide streamlined and responsive administrative processes for graduate services and programming. • Provide regular training for all staff, with particular attention on standardized training for new staff. • Advocate for resources to support Graduate Program Directors. • Develop a consistent avenue through which to communicate with the public and key stakeholders.

APPENDICIES

III.   UNIT ENROLLMENT PLAN:

UNC Charlotte Graduate Enrollment Plan 2005-2010*

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Resident	3,493	3,645	3,791	3,943	4,106	4,285
Non-resident	584	591	596	602	607	614
Master's	2,741	2,829	2,940	3,088	3,219	3,330
Doctoral	357**	385**	415	452	488	522
Total	4,077	4,236	4,387	4,545	4,713	4,899

*These enrollment projections are based on the numbers submitted to the Office of the President for 2002-2012. They assume growth in only existing degree programs and do not include the enrollment growth associated with the addition of new graduate degree programs.
** We enrolled 410 doctoral students in the fall 2004, so these projections are low.

IV.   STAFFING PLAN:

Graduate School Staffing Plan for 2005-2010

Tenure Track Faculty
        For 2003-04 the Graduate School was authorized to hire an Associate Dean through a half-time, 9-month faculty line. Although an on-campus search was begun, it was stopped in April 2003 and remains unfilled. The Graduate School will seek authorization to upgrade the position to full-time, 12 months for 2005-06. This decision was made after further consideration of the position and the needs of the Graduate School for a senior level administrator to work on funding initiatives for graduate students, graduate program development and review, and other aspects of strategic planning.
SPA Full-Time
        An initiative in the 2005-10 Graduate School Plan is to establish a graduate student support office as a part of the goal to develop a complete infrastructure for graduate education at the University and to enhance the graduate culture on campus. To support this office the Graduate School would require an administrative support person to work with the Associate Dean and Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Affairs.
        As the Graduate School continues to grow, budget administration has become more complex and time consuming. We are requesting the addition of a full-time accounting support person to work with the Executive Assistant to the Dean to oversee the budget.
        We will also request a full-time staff person to review and make decisions on applications to establish NC residency for tuition purposes.

Non-Tenure Track Part-time

The Graduate School plans an Office of Graduate Student Support and Development which will be open to all graduate students at UNC Charlotte. It will be organized in such a way that a wide variety of academic units, academic support units, and community partners will be able to participate and contribute to the program. It will however be necessary to hire non-tenure track, part-time faculty to teach in this program.

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010
Tenure Track	1	1	1	1	1
SPA Full-time	1 administrative support; 1 budget accountant; 1 residency coordinator;	1 administrative support 1 budget accountant 1 residency coordinator; 1 computer consultant	1 administrative support 1 budget accountant 1 residency coordinator;1 computer consultant	1 administrative support 1 budget accountant 1 residency coordinator;1 computer consultant	1 administrative support 1 budget accountant 1 residency coordinator;1 computer consultant
Non-Tenure Track Part-time		3 (lecturers)	4 (lecturers)	4 (lecturers)	4 (lecturers
Special Appointments Non-Tenure Track		1 (Faculty Associate, one year only)	1 (Faculty Associate, one year only)	1 (Faculty Associate, one year only)	1 (Faculty Associate, one year only)

Special Appointments; Non-Tenure Track

The Graduate School is desirous of initiating a Faculty Associate program that would allow members of the Graduate Faculty to spend a year in the office on a half-time basis providing support for the Office of Graduate Student Support and Development.

V.   GOAL ALIGNMENT MATRIX:

Graduate School Goal	**Goal 1: Increase the funding available to support graduate students and maximize the use of existing funding;**
University Goal	Goal 4: To increase the *physical and financial infrastructure* as needed to support the expanding educational, research, and service activities of the University,
Graduate School Goal	**Goal 2: Provide for the effective enrollment management of graduate programming**
University Goal	Goal 1: To improve *educational* opportunities that respond to the intellectual and professional needs of the region
Graduate School Goal	**Goal 3**: **Promote and enhance the diversity of the graduate student body**
University Goal	Goal 7: To enhance opportunities for learning in a culturally rich environment,
Graduate School Goal	**Goal 4: Develop a complete infrastructure for graduate education at the University and enhance the graduate culture on campus.**

University Goal	Goal 6: To enhance student and community life, Goal 8: To graduate *students* with the breadth and depth of knowledge and the intellectual and professional skills that prepare them for a productive life in an ever-changing world,
Graduate School Goal	**Goal 5**: **Continue the long-range planning and evaluation of new and existing graduate programs. Promote and facilitate the establishment of interdisciplinary programs.**
University Goal	Goal 1: To improve *educational* opportunities that respond to the intellectual and professional needs of the region; Goal 2: To increase both faculty and student *research* that will address fundamental and regional problems,
Graduate School Goal	**Goal 6**: **A. Continue to assess the information needs of the Graduate School and graduate programs and implement technologically based solutions when possible**
University Goal	Goal 3: To provide a variety of *services* that respond to the ongoing and emerging regional needs; Goal 5: To provide support for *faculty and staff development*,
Graduate School Goal	**Goal 7**: **In collaboration with the appropriate offices on campus, develop and implement a comprehensive plan for promoting effective relationships between the Graduate School and its external constituents**
University Goal	Goal 9: To enhance public knowledge of the educational opportunities and services provided by the University.

VII.   EVALUATION PLAN/ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE

Review of Graduate Teaching Assistants- UNC Policy Manual Sections 400.3.5 and 400.3.5.1 (annual)

Graduate Certificate Review (5 year cycle)

UNC Charlotte Academies Review (5 year cycle)

Graduate Faculty Review for Appointment/Reappointment (annual review on 3 to 5 year cycles)

Survey of Earned Doctorates (annual)

Graduate Program Review (to be established)

Graduate Student Exit Survey (three times a year)