



Graduate School - Annual Report v2  
Department: Graduate School

UNC Charlotte

Academic Affairs

Graduate School

Annual Report: The Graduate School

**A1. Highlights Related to AA Goal 1: Educate a diverse student body through an integrated academic experience that positions graduates for personal success and civic responsibility in the global environment of the 21st century.**

Organizational Changes

In the summer of 2016, Dr. Alan Freitag assumed the role of Assistant Dean of the Graduate School. Dr. Freitag's primary responsibility is to lead the strategic communications effort for the Graduate School. The focus here is on communications with our internal constituents especially the Graduate Program Directors. In addition, Dr. Freitag leads our efforts to support military veterans who return to UNC Charlotte to complete their higher education.

In December 2016, our Business Officer, Ms. Linda-Jean Jay, retired. With support from the Budget and Personnel Office in Academic Affairs, we conducted a successful national search for the position and on March 10, 2017, Ms. Jennifer Vincent joined the Graduate School in that role. Ms. Vincent came to us from the University of South Florida where she accumulated 13 years of experience at the business officer level including budget management, personnel, contracting and space management. Ms. Tanya Miller, Business Services Coordinator, left her position in August 2016 and Ms. Debbie Roseman filled that vacancy in October 2016. Ms. Roseman comes to us from the Bioinformatics department on campus.

Long-time Graduate School employee, Ms. Anita Smith also retired in December 2016. Ms. Aura Young replaced Ms. Smith in the Center for Graduate Life.

Customer Service Manager, Ms. Eowyn Melaragno, vacated her position in March 2016 and after a local search, Ms. Ellie Feely was hired in July 2016. Ms. Feely joins us from Belmont Abbey College, where she worked in recruiting.

- During Calendar Year (CY) 2016, 419 graduate faculty appointments were made. Regular membership - 207, Associates - 200, Emeritus - 8 and 4 Administrative. 1169 contacts were made by phone and email to faculty or staff relating to graduate faculty status.
- Serving as the University Research Integrity Officer, the Dean managed the investigation of four allegations of research misconduct this year. One case was concluded while the other three are continuing.
- In the fall 2016, enrolled 5,317 graduate students. That number is up from 5,251 from fall 2015 enrollment.
- Twenty percent (20%) of graduate students were identified as ethnic minorities in fall 2016; another 27 percent were identified as international students.
- Graduate Admissions processed almost 11,000 graduate admission applications for a record number.
- By participating in the Scholarship Portal, The Graduate School increased student accessibility to graduate philanthropic awards. Two hundred twenty-five (225) graduate student applications in different colleges were received.
- The successful implementation of DegreeWorks was a major accomplishment this year. In addition to the work and resources invested in this effort, the positive impact on graduate students was realized when fall 2016 graduates were cleared within three days of the end of term. In the eight months since Degree Works was launched, 4531 unique student users accessed audits, while 339 advisors accessed the system. While this has increased administrative work for staff in the Graduate School, it vastly improved the end of term results for students.

- The overall number of students graduating increased slightly (5%) for a total of 1974. (125 Doctoral degrees, 140 Master's thesis, 1358 Master's non-thesis and 351 Graduate Certificates)
- The Center for Graduate Life (CGL) successfully served more than 7000 graduate students through a program, class, service or activity. Seven hundred twenty-two (722) graduate students participated in a professional development event or workshop offered through the Center for Graduate Life.
- Teacher Assistant (TA) training transitioned to a hybrid model, with much of the teaching content offered on-line to better serve the needs of graduate students with competing demands at the start of the academic year. Approximately 194 TAs went through training in 2016.
- The Graduate School Advisory Board's Corporate Skills Committee promoted the creation of a Graduate Certificate in corporate and professional skills by identifying professional skills gaps in the workplace.
- The Graduate Admissions' website moved to a different website with significant increases in site visits by unique visitors. Experienced record numbers of new visitors to the website: August 2016: 124,409; September 2016: 127,871; October 2016: 134,445; November 2016: 189,455; and December 2016: 218,670.
- The Graduate School supported a record number of students with tuition and/or health insurance awards using both merit and need-based aid. 3,147 awards were credited to students' accounts in spring, summer and fall 2016, with 1,551 students funded.
- Managed a 5% increase in accepted Graduate Assistantship contracts: 3,600 in 2016, 3,426 in 2015, 3,081 in 2014. Of those, 1,622 were TAs, 1,790 were RAs (Research Assistants), including 796 grant-funded RAs, and 188 were AAs (Administrative Assistants).
- Developed eGEM, (electronic Graduate Enrollment Management), an online system that renders historic key data metrics by program and accepts annual enrollment and graduation projections for a three-year period. The system also includes functionality for each graduate program to complete and manage a Graduate Enrollment Plan to monitor progress for GEM (Graduate Enrollment Management) strategic goals and projections.
- The Graduate School senior staff reviewed projections and plans in eGEM throughout November and December and made strategic decisions to provide funding support to six master's programs in College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and a handful of programs in Cato College of Education.
- Working toward a target enrollment of 6,303 graduate students by 2019-20, over 90% of graduate programs established enrollment and graduation projections in eGEM, and over 71% of the programs developed enrollment management plans with clear goals/objectives and associated strategies to achieve and evaluate those goals.

College	Projections Completed	% Submitted	Plans Submitted	% Submitted
Business	11/11	100%	4	36%
Arts + Architecture	2/3	67%	1	33%
Computing & Informatics	11/11	100%	40	36%
Education	29/29	100%	22	76%
Engineering	13/16	81%	5	31%
Graduate School	4/4	100%	0	0
Health & Human Services	16/17	94%	1	52%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	34/42	81%	22	52%

- Graduate Student funding increased in 2016:

Award	Spring 2016		Fall 2016	
	Number of Students	Total Spend	Number of Students	Total Spend
GASP	552 (336 nonresidents, 216 residents)	\$3,059,577	577 (348 nonresidents, 229 residents)	\$3,288,138
Health Insurance	472	\$407,572	491	\$545,501
Master's Awards	509	\$961,967	370	\$729,073
Philanthropic Award Assistance	11	\$67,500	11	\$64,359
Fellowship/Scholarship Award Assistance (NSF, Fulbright, Grad Life, Yellow Ribbon, Campus Scholarship)	16	\$96,928	15	\$82,272
TOTAL AWARDS (fall/spring)	1,560	\$4,593,511	1,464	\$4,709,343
TOTAL AWARD RECIPIENTS	1,088		973	

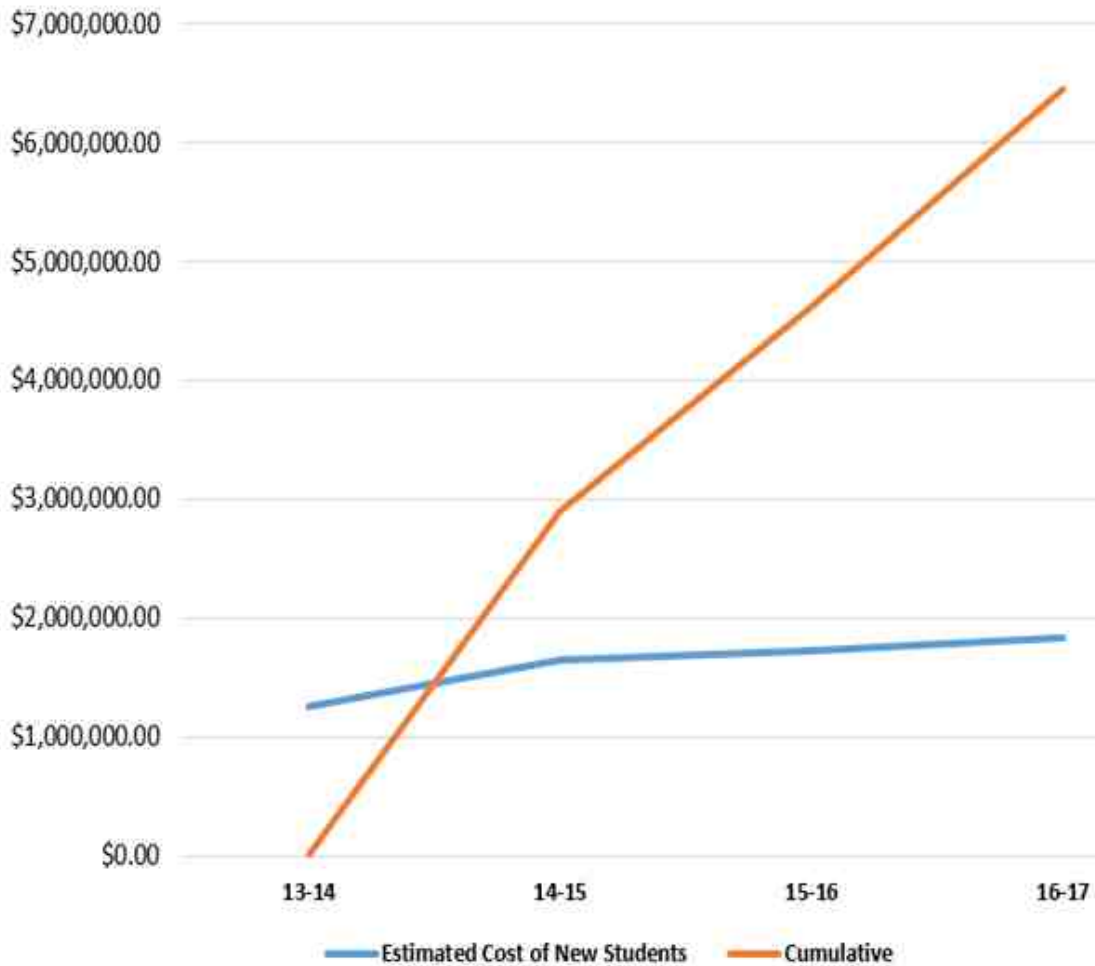
- The total number of doctoral students supported on GASP continues to increase, as does the money requirement to support the continuing financial commitment. Without additional monies to support new GASP students, there is no longer a funding stream available to cover the costs associated with funding increasing numbers of GASP students. To date, every eligible full time enrolled doctoral student has been awarded tuition support. As shown below, as the number of new students increases each year, so does the cost of tuition and health insurance, thus, there will be less funding available for continuing students, particularly in masters programs.

### Costs of New Student Cohorts



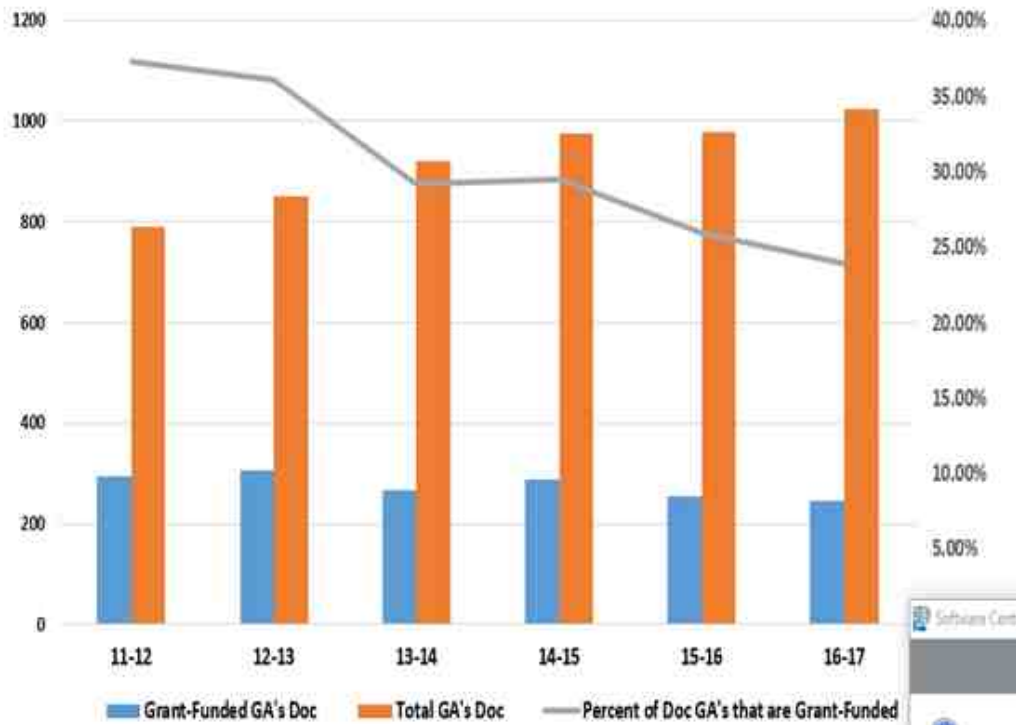
- The number of students who received financial support from the Graduate School decreased in fall 2016 due to the monetary support required to fund new and continuing GASP students. Without an infusion of additional monies to support master's students, funds will continue to be redirected to doctoral students and financial offers to master's students will be unavailable. As an example, 509 master's awards were made in spring 2016 compared to 370 in fall 2016.

### The Cumulative Effect of Adding Increasing Numbers of Students



- As the chart below shows, the number/percent of grant-funded assistantships for doctoral students has decreased since 2011-12 even as the total number of doctoral students on assistantships has increased. Obviously, this is a concern and competitive grant applications must include stipend support for RAs.
- Interestingly, as grant-funded assistantships have declined for doctoral students, grant-funded assistantships for master's students

### As Total Doctoral GA's Have Increased, Grant-Funded GA's Have Decreased



Other funding highlights include:

- Enrolled five NSF Graduate Research Fellows in 2016 along with fourteen GAANN students. The Graduate School does provide topping-off awards to ensure students who have completed the GRFP but not yet graduated, have funding available to complete the degree. Also, as a cost-share condition for the NSF grant, the Graduate School provides full level of funding to support one GRFP (the total GS commitment for 2016-17 was \$83,826).
- UNC Charlotte ranks #4 in North Carolina for the total number of NSF Graduate Research Fellowship awards.
- In 2016, 22 students received fellowship/scholarship assistance through the Graduate School's philanthropic awards; the awards totaled \$131,859.
- Thirty-one students received Graduate School assistance from other sources (Grad Life, Yellow Ribbon match, UNC Campus Scholarship) totaling \$166,098.
- To leverage student funding from the NSF, the graduate School has committed to providing up to ten NRT Fellowships over a five-year period, if two proposals are funded.

Managing funding awards continues to increase annually:

- Efficiently managed a **5% increase** in accepted Graduate Assistantship contracts: 3,600 in 2016 3,426 in 2015 vs 3,081 in 2014: TA's = 1,622; RA's = 1,790, including 796 grant-funded RA's; AA's = 188.
- Managed **763 changes** to contracts, with an average of one change for every 2.25 students on a contract.

- Managed **182 workflows** in eGA, creating 18 new workflows for system upgrades.
- Managed assistantship **contracts for 1,719 students**, with an average of two contracts per student.
- Managed **309 approvers** in the eGA system.
- Managed 182 workflows in eGA, creating 18 new workflows for system upgrades.
- Initiated fund checking in eGA for grants and contracts funding availability.
- Made improvements on the SEA form.
- Created **electronic supersedes and effectively made the assistantship process paperless.**

**Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::** Student Success, New Student Support Programs, Other Accomplishments

**A2. Highlights Related to AA Goal 2: To expand the frontiers of knowledge and leverage discovery for the public benefit through innovative programs that span the disciplines in research, creative activities, and graduate education.**

- Enrollment in GRAD courses offered through the Center for Graduate Life (CGL) reached 153 for the 2016 calendar year.
- The Graduate Research Symposium, co-sponsored by the Graduate School, awarded more than \$3,500 in prize money to 20 presenters. One hundred thirty-three (133) abstracts were submitted.
- The addition of Dissertation Days, a dissertation support group and the on-going dissertation boot camps supported 92 doctoral students working on dissertations.
- Continued to support the Charlotte Research Scholars Summer program with administrative and programming support.
- Supported the Provost's Doctoral Teaching Fellow program with administrative support and training through the GRAD 8001 course.
- Both the Health Informatics (HI) and Data Science and Business Analytics (DSBA) programs continue to have strong demand and diverse cohorts. After a planned retrenchment, enrollment in the HI graduate programs has stabilized with 63 students enrolled fall 2016 semester. The DSBA program continues to experience exceptional demand with a fall 2016 enrollment of 110 students. To date, the HI program graduated 42 certificate and 55 master's students. The DSBA program graduated 18 certificate and 45 master's students. Both programs strive to meet the challenges for continued improvement of overall quality and diversity of applicants. For DSBA, the primary challenges include managing demand and maintaining diversity in the program. The DSBA program continues to see upwards of 90% referred from international students each cycle.
- The Data Science Initiative (DSI) provided grant seed funding for interdisciplinary and inter-college research projects. Fourteen proposals were submitted with participation from almost every college. The two winning teams were awarded \$20,000 each to fund research assistantships, summer salaries, or to purchase data.

**Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::** Student Success

**A3. Highlights Related to AA Goal 3: To engage community partners in mutually beneficial programs that enhance the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of the region.**

- The Graduate School welcomed 4,177 visitors during the Calendar Year (CY) 2016. Graduate Admissions-related visits totaled 1,871 and Graduate Academics Services accounted for 2,306.
- Call volume stats for CY 2016 were 10,255 presented with 10,097 handled.
- Collaborating with the Office of Advancement, the Graduate Life Fellows (GLF) held a Crowdfunding event that raised \$2600

for school supplies for needy students in nearby CMS schools.

- The Center for Grad Life (CGL) promoted an executive leadership opportunity for students offered through OneTeam Leadership. Participating students received a scholarship from the Graduate School, which enabled them to participate.
- In collaboration with the College of Education, the Office of Distance Education, the Stanly County Schools, the Union County Schools, and the Rowan County Schools provided tuition support to enable the M.Ed. in Middle Grades and Secondary Education faculty to deliver the master's degree off site. The strategic delivery and funding support model enabled teachers, who would have been critically challenged by traditional means, to pursue and earn their M.Ed.
- The Graduate Center continued its collaboration with UNC Charlotte's College of Education and Teach for America (TFA) to deliver an innovative program to serve their Teachers Corps. In 2016, for the second summer in a row, UNC Charlotte hosted 90 TFA Corps members on campus for the summer Induction Training. These are pre-service teachers preparing to go to work in CMS schools across the county. This is an opportunity to highlight the quality of UNC Charlotte academic programs and to recruit highly qualified Teach for America Corp members to our graduate programs.
- New relationships with industry partners were cultivated including Deloitte Consulting, Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, PMMC, Peak 10, and Bank of America. Ongoing partnerships have been strengthened through successful internship placement of DSBA & HI students with companies including Mission Health, Mariner Financial, TIAA, Cardinal Innovations, Deloitte, Premier, and Cone Health. In conjunction with the University Career Center, a new DSI Internship portal was developed to streamline the process by which employers submit proposals and recruit DSI interns. The new system will also facilitate better collection of data about placement sites.
- The DSI hosted the first annual Analytic Frontiers Conference on March 30, 2016 for 450+ senior executives, professional analysts, data scientists and business leaders.
- Collaborated with donors, business officers, advancement and staff to create new fellowship and award funds in the Graduate School to provide financial assistance to graduate students.
  - Craig R. Brown Fellowship Endowment
  - Faye Jacques Memorial Graduate Fellowship Endowment,
  - T. L. Reynolds Graduate Student Research Award,
  - William F. Kennedy Endowed Scholarship,
  - Bharatkumar Joshi Memorial Scholarship in College of Engineering,
  - William and Pam Brandon Endowment in Public Health Policy in CHHS.
- The funding commitments from donors in 2016 increased by 36% and will be realized by graduate student recipients in the form of fellowships, scholarships and research awards during the 2017 academic year.
- The Graduate Strategic Communications group was formally initiated in 2016 to support the Graduate School and its business units. Areas of support include updates to the format and web content of the Graduate School website, the development and marketing to promote graduate programs, and promotional products to support the rollout of DegreeWorks. The Group was also responsible for producing four recruitment spots for Graduate Admissions and various marketing materials such as the Graduate School Report, the Graduate Program Directors Newsletter and a single-page infographic of the Graduate School's Strategic Plan.
- UNC Charlotte is a recognized leader in addressing the needs of military-affiliated students. The veteran community on our campus continues to grow and the University has instituted programs and services to aid them in their transition from the military to University life and on to successful and rewarding lives in the civilian sector. We are a partner with the NC Serves system of support that connects veterans with a network of service providers who can address issues such as housing, employment, education, healthcare and peer support. NC Serves is part of a larger network called America Serves.
- The Assistant Director for Graduate Strategic Communications is also heavily involved with supporting graduate veteran students through the administration of the graduate veteran assistantships program and the attendance of various recruitment fairs targeting veteran and other military-affiliated populations.





**Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::** External Public Relations/Outreach

**B. Examples of Data-Based Improvements During the Year**

- The Graduate Academic Affairs unit has worked to improve the accuracy of suspension and termination processes of graduate students. An analysis of data indicated that many terminated students had not been formally suspended. A change in this process led to a 43% drop in terminated students.
- The Center for Graduate Life unit revamped its Teacher Assistant (TA) training in response to evaluations from students who attended the in-person training. Much of the content has now been converted to on-line modules and TA training is now offered in a hybrid format. The first offering received positive feedback and we anticipate higher rates of participation.
- The DSBA program completed a top to bottom analysis of its current curriculum to identify areas of duplication and repetition in the course content. This report has been shared with faculty in the program and will drive the next iteration of the DSBA curriculum and revision of existing courses. A similar analysis is being initiated in spring 2017 for the Health Informatics program.