SUMMARY OF UW GRADUATE EDUCATION INITIATIVES: AY2011-12
Office of Academic Affairs
April 2011

Backdrop:

- New resources for graduate education
- Effective use of existing resources
- Encouragement and implementation of best practices
  - Recruiting
  - Mentoring
  - Assessment of outcomes
- References: UP3 Action Items 61-63; “Raising the Stature of Graduate Education at UW,” by Carol Frost

1. All-electronic application process (Goal: Implementation Fall 2011)
   - Seamless communication between Admissions and departments or programs
   - Increase in interest in graduate education at UW
   - Exploration of software options--vendors have been identified
   - Admissions is developing a RFQ
   - Intent is to involve members of the Graduate Council in the selection process
   - Funds provided through the President’s Fund

2. Recruiting Initiative (Goal: RFP announced 27 April 2011)
   - Attractive, informative, and dynamic websites including information on:
     - Opportunities for graduate students
     - Faculty research
     - Examples of professional opportunities of recent graduates
     - Notable student accomplishments
     - Opportunities beyond the discipline
     - Clear expectations and expected timelines to graduation
     - Early commitment rewards
   - Identify department connections to other universities
   - Identify conferences to attend and request funding to do so
• Identify a recruiting coordinator (active recruiting takes effort). Consider releasing a faculty member from teaching duties if appropriate
• Commit to following up an all promising student inquiries with telephone calls and timely emails.
• Commit to bringing outstanding students to campus, either individually or as part of a group effort. Academic and social events should be planned.
• Commit to making early offers to outstanding prospects.
• Commit to attending a fall recruiting workshop sponsored by Academic Affairs to include:
  ➢ A discussion of various websites developed
  ➢ Presentation to raise websites to the top of various academic searches—*the Google phenomenon*
  ➢ A discussion of best recruiting practices on campus—what we know works
  ➢ A discussion of strategies for recruiting visits including timing and activities, group visits versus independent visits, etc.
  ➢ An estimated 5-7 departments will be selected for AY2011-12
  ➢ Academic Affairs will provide resources for
    i. Travel funds for campus visits
    ii. Stipends augmentations for outstanding students who commit early
    iii. Summer support for students who commit early
  ➢ Funds provided by the *President’s Fund*
• Commit to attending a spring workshop to assess the recruiting initiative

3. Energy GA Initiative (Goal: RFP announced 27 April 2011)
• $300K for immediate release
  ➢ Priority in ranked order for:
    i. New uncommitted students
    ii. New students for AY 2011-12
    iii. Returning students
  ➢ Elevated stipends (TBD)
  ➢ High performing students with strong GRE scores
  ➢ Students in key energy areas of direct relevance to Wyoming’s current energy emphasis
3.

$800K - $1M released annually through an RFP (Summer 2011)
- Elevated stipends
- New students
- High performing students with strong GRE scores
- Broader energy focus

4. Development of time limits for state-funded graduate assistantships  
   (Goal: Announced summer 2011 with implementation for AY2012-13)
   - Promotion of efficient cycling of GA resources
   - Separate guidelines for masters’ and doctoral candidates
   - Possibility of discipline-dependent guidelines
   - Recognition of the role of GAs funded through other means (e.g. research grants)

5. Guidelines for GA job descriptions  
   (Goal: Announced summer 2011 with implementation for AY2012-13)
   - Requirement of instruction-related responsibilities for all state-funded GAs
   - Discouragement of state-subsidized research assistantships
   - Possible assignments outside of the admitting department

6. Mentoring Initiative  
   (Goal: RFP announced Summer 2011)
   - Supported by the former Competitive GA allocation
   - **Excellence in Graduate Education** — a thematic program
   - Orientation and professional development. Possible examples
     - Graduate student teaching and learning symposium
     - Course for excellence in teaching (GRAD 5910)
     - Course in professional opportunities including opportunities beyond the discipline
     - Charm school—or how to market oneself
   - Department mechanisms to ensure successful mentoring
     - Early advising with clear expectations
     - Development of electronic portfolios
     - Timely reviews with clear feedback on progress to degree
     - Seminar on excellence in mentoring
- Plans for students to attend professional meetings
  - Positive academic and social environments
    - Celebrating graduate student achievements
    - Promoting graduate student engagement among all students in the program
    - Regular social gatherings
    - Graduate student “lounges”
    - Dissertation or writing institute
  - Proposals due mid-November 2011
    - Submitted by departments
    - Ranked by deans
  - Awards will be made to deans: January 2012

7. **Restructuring of budgets: Development of an *Excellence Fund* (Goal: Summer 2011)**

- Development of an Excellence Fund
  - Support for women and minority GAs
  - Summer support for graduate students
  - Off-campus research experiences
  - Elevated stipends for outstanding candidates
  - Elevated stipends for students who commit early
  - Recruiting initiatives
  - Others to be defined
  - Originally funded through the *President’s Fund*
  - Future funding sought in the form of an endowment
- Possible increased department-level flexibility in determining GA stipend amounts
- Clearer guidelines for award of tuition waivers and health insurance to accompany stipends

8. **Introducing college-level Graduate Mentoring Awards (Fall 2011)**

- Outstanding Ph.D. dissertations
- Outstanding Master’s thesis
- Outstanding professional school advising/mentoring
- Awards determined at the college level
• Winners would be put forward for consideration of University awards of the same nature
• Supported through the President’s Fund