

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 on 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

- \$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*