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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER CGS STRATEGIC CONSULTATION REPORT

Final Report

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Review and Site Visit

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The University of Colorado Denver Institutional Profile

Overview

The University of Colorado Denver (CU-Denver) is designated with a Carnegie Classification of Doctoral University with Very High Research Activity (R1). CU-Denver, located in downtown Denver, Colorado, is a public university and is part of the University of Colorado System. CU-Denver has a total enrollment of about 12,977 with approximately 8,983 undergraduates and 3,994 graduate students. Academic programs are organized in seven colleges and schools: 1) Business School, 2) College of Arts and Media, 3) College of Architecture and Planning, 4) College of Engineering, Design, and Computing, 5) College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 6) School of Education and Human Development, and 7) the School of Public Affairs.

For graduate education, CU-Denver offers 13 Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs, two professional doctoral programs (Education, School Psychology), 101 master's degree programs, and 73 graduate certificates. The university has also started to design and implement a series of micro-credentials (2-4 courses) at the undergraduate and graduate levels, designed to develop a basic understanding in a particular theme. Through separate administrative structures, there is also graduate student enrollment in the Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus.

CU-Denver has its roots in meeting the workforce demands of the Denver metropolitan area, with a special focus on providing highly skilled individuals through its professional graduate degree programs. Since its founding, CU-Denver has forged many important partnerships with area businesses and community groups. One of the key achievements observed by the consultants is that many faculty, staff, and students feel a strong sense of belonging at CU-Denver and are proud of its strong connections to the region.

To set a course for the future, CU Denver recently developed a new strategic plan. The plan is devised to increase access to an excellent education and tackle some of the grandest challenges facing our society, all in service of the idea that CU-Denver should work for all. The plan includes five goals that are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
University of Colorado Denver Strategic Goals

Goal 1	Become the nation's first equity-serving institution.
Goal 1	Become known as a university for life.
Goal 3	Become internationally known for our research and creative work.
Goal 4	Serve as the anchor institution for an open innovation district in downtown Denver.
Goal 5	Be known as a people-centered best place to work.

Although goal three, becoming internationally known for its research and creative work, aligns with CU-Denver's vision as an urban research university and necessitates a vibrant graduate enterprise, graduate students and graduate education touch upon all of the university's goals. As revealed during the site visit, there are many strengths of graduate education that will help the institution realize its goals; however, the organizational structure of graduate education has been in flux over the past 12 or more years. This structural instability has stifled, or been unable to optimally support, some of the strategic goals.

Notably, in 2010 following a previous CGS Consultation, CU-Denver leadership moved to centralize graduate education through the organization of a Graduate School led by a Dean. However, this "centralization" was incomplete and many of the colleges and schools "opted out" of the Graduate School. The outcome was a system resulting in multiple graduate-level policies and practices across the university. Many of the policies and practices that were not aligned with the Graduate School were also not aligned with evidence-based practices developed by the Council of Graduate Schools that support excellence in graduate study and foster graduate program success. In 2022, CU-Denver separated from the Graduate School that was aligned with both the University of Colorado Denver and the Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, and CU-Denver leadership initiated a new "decentralized" model in an attempt to distribute roles and responsibilities of graduate education across the campus. The outcome of this redistribution plan has resulted in a lack of centralized information about the policies and practices of individual colleges. Depending on the level of available staffing and resources of each college, it has also resulted in inequities across the campus in terms of student support for academic advising, professional development, conference travel support, and other structures to foster student success.

The graduate education mission at CU-Denver also is challenged by broader resource limitations precipitated by recent enrollment declines. In addition, recent retirement incentives have reduced the number of faculty available (in some cases drastically) to teach courses, leading to loading and overloading graduate students with teaching assignments that negatively impact student progress and degree completion.

In this report, the consultants explore how, in part, CU-Denver can strategically position graduate education to meet its strategic goals as well as avoid legal, regulatory, and accreditation jeopardy from the unclear and/or inconsistent policies and practices. The report focuses on the four profile areas outlined in the Strategic Consultation Assessment Profile. For each profile area, the Consultation Team restates the charge to the consultants, describes the known strengths in that profile area, identifies observed opportunities, and concludes with specific recommendations in that profile area. The report concludes with a summary of our overarching recommendations.

Lastly, the consultants want to take the opportunity to thank Michael Kocet, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education, for his work in organizing an excellent visit for the Consultation Team. Furthermore, the consultants also thank the university leadership, faculty, staff, and students who took time to meet with the team to share their observations and experience. The conversations were frank, collegial, and informative, and a common thread through all of those conversations was a strong commitment to the success of CU-Denver's graduate programs and students.

Assessment Profile 1
Consultation on Organization and Administration of Graduate Education

Charge to the Consultation Team

The consultants were asked to "determine if the essential roles of graduate leadership, as the foundation for setting university-wide standards of academic excellence and scholarship at the university, are being fulfilled." The charge included an assessment of the roles and responsibilities of the Graduate Council, and to assess whether the Provost, the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Graduate Education, and the professional staff "have decision-making authority, resources, and network needed to promote campus-wide best practices, policies, and engagement that are essential for achieving the graduate mission." The charge also involved consideration of the roles of deans, graduate program directors, and faculty in the administration and governance of graduate education, and the collaborations among the various partner offices involved with graduate education administration (Research, International Services, Admissions Services).

CU-Denver's graduate programs boast many strengths. The institution's identity as "the state's premier public urban research university" is well integrated throughout the graduate programs, with a consistent focus on serving the workforce needs of the community. In doctoral programs, both students and faculty were able to articulate their program's research strengths. The graduate students with whom the consultants met felt engaged in the pursuit of new knowledge and well supported by their mentors. A desire for excellence, and a strong investment in improving the student experience, are themes that were clearly expressed across all levels of faculty and administration. Additionally, the faculty and students on the Denver campus, in all sectors, recognize the growth potential that arises from sustaining and increasing their collaborations with the Anschutz campus, as each school or college seemed to have one or more core areas that were health-sciences-facing in terms of research or graduate-level strength. This synergy offers strong potential for future growth, and for CU Denver cementing its national and global identity, in terms of depth as well as breadth of graduate programming.

The Consultation Team recognizes that a critical challenge facing CU-Denver, at this point in its evolution, is what and how much of graduate program administration should be centralized, and which activities are best left to each college's self-determination and preferred structures. This is a complex challenge, and it is addressed differently by every university in alignment with its culture, academic specializations and accreditations, and historical norms. However, the

Consultation Team is optimistic that the issues can be clarified, and parameters can be laid out, to enable CU-Denver to make significant strides forward in terms of the clarity of its graduate governance, responsibilities, and operations. The Consultation Team's findings and perspectives in the area of governance and administration fall into four broad categories, each of which are discussed below:

- Category 1: Coordination and transparency of information.
- Category 2: Central policies that can be tailored to the needs of each college and program.
- Category 3: Engagement and leadership by faculty
- Category 4: Clear delineation of roles, responsibilities, and workflows, with appropriate assessment of resources and needs within the colleges as well as centrally

Profile 1 Recommendations

Profile 1 Category 1
Coordination and Transparency of Information

This area is discussed first because the Consultation Team considers this to be a significant area of vulnerability and risk for CU-Denver, and thus a matter of urgency. It is also an area that, in the view of the Consultation Team, is straightforward. It is essential that the academic policies of each program be centrally documented, so that they can be consulted by any interested party, and CU-Denver's adherence to its own policies can be clearly demonstrated. This observation is self-evident but is viewed with some mistrust by many academic programs due to the university's history of college autonomy. The centralization of information should not be seen as a mechanism of control.

Recommendation 1.1.1 Develop a Policy Library
The consultants recommend that information be centralized in an official policy library, cataloging each program's existing policies and practices, without simultaneously trying to alter each program's policies and practices.
The assembling of this institution-wide library of graduate education policies can only be managed in an environment of trust that clearly separates the library function from any concerns about control. All stakeholders would need to understand that this central library or Catalog is the official version of all policies, whether those policies are actually managed and monitored centrally or within the colleges.

The Consultation Team clearly heard the concern from several programs that any type of coordination or centralization will in some way interfere with processes that are currently working well, and that adhere to high standards internally set and maintained in ways consistent with their academic disciplines and national norms. This perspective should be carefully honored by all, as a point not only of cultural sensitivity but of academic integrity. Therefore, it bears repeating, early in the consultation process and throughout this report. Gathering, organizing and archiving policy information are institution-level imperatives. Institutional accreditation and legal defensibility are responsibilities that impact the entire institution.

Recommendation 1.1.2 Develop a Policy Template

The Consultation Team recommends that the information be gathered in a template structure, **so that it can be formatted and shared in a consistent way across programs and so that students easily locate it.**

Websites and internally circulated documents cannot provide a sufficient foundation for academic requirements. Degrees cannot be conferred centrally based on the simple affirmation by staff in a college that the student has completed all requirements; those requirements must be accessible to all, and documentation that each graduating student has met those requirements must be legible and accessible as well.

a. **Offer Flexibility:** The Consultation Team recommends that the template should also contain ample areas for "program-specific notes" that might fall outside the template areas, in order to collect all information and allow for program variation. The specific template structure is best developed through dialogue among central offices and the individual colleges.

b. **Establish an Organizational Structure:** The Consultation Team recommends that each program submits information organized into the following sections:

- Minimum Admission Requirements
- Program completion requirements (including coursework requirements, time limits, residency requirements, comprehensive exams or other non-curricular milestones, program-specific thesis/dissertation requirements)
- Transfer credit policies.

- Student progress and academic-standing expectations (including all academic circumstances under which a student might be dismissed)
- Graduate Faculty roles and qualifications
- Student advising structures and examining/thesis/dissertation committee regulations, if applicable to the program
- Licensure requirements, rules on campus work, or other program-specific guidance for students
- Financial support structures/mechanisms/opportunities/norms

This phase of information-gathering provides immediate benefits to CU-Denver in terms of understanding how each program operates. In addition, this phase creates opportunities conversations focusing on any perceived areas of vulnerability. The information-gathering process will allow the central administration to acquire a detailed understanding of all current practices and their justifications along with practices aligned with academic disciplines.

This policy library should be seen as a reinforcement mechanism providing legal protection and an institutional backstop to the operations of the individual programs. Since the library can be seen as a version of a "Graduate Catalog," it would allow for annual updates and for students to be admitted under a particular set of academic rules and agreements. As is standard practice for most institutions and as determined in future policy discussions at CU-Denver, students could choose to graduate under either the guidelines under which they were admitted or a subsequent set of guidelines that they viewed as more advantageous to their education. However, students would not be able to assemble their own plan of study based on various sets of guidelines and would not be forced to graduate under guidelines other than those under which they were admitted.

The library will not only allow CU-Denver to build trust and transparency among the academic programs and their students but will also provide a base of knowledge from which the appropriate centralization or coordination decisions can subsequently be made, as discussed in the following sections of this report.

Profile 1 Category 2
Central Policies that Can be Tailored to the Needs of Each College and Program

Rigorous discipline-specific accreditation, and variation among disciplines, have been the cited as the rationale for programs "opting out" of a central Graduate School or office. The reasons for autonomous policies and practices must be respected, as detailed above. However, most Carnegie R1 universities do manage this level of disciplinary variation within a centralized, yet expansive, set of policies and standards. At R1 institutions across the country, discipline-specific accreditation does not provide an exemption from central coordination of specific policies around admission, student progress, and graduation monitoring. Even though some CU-Denver colleges feel that their uniqueness as a discipline should exempt them from central policies, in fact their peer institutions are equally diverse, but still create policies with sufficient flexibility to accommodate disciplinary uniqueness.

Recommendation 1.2.1 Develop a Set of Institutional Standards
The Consultation Team recommends that a working group of faculty members create a set of institutional standards that encompass the needs and variations of all academic programs. This recommendation should follow the semester or a year of information gathering and the creation of a central repository. It is critically important that those central CU-Denver graduate standards provide guidance and guardrails but also include explicit and flexible policies for exceptions and student appeals.

   a. **Follow Best Practices:** The Consultation Team offers the following example of best practices.

   - The institution sets minimum admissions requirements.
   - Each program is invited to set its own higher standards where appropriate.
   - An exceptions policy would allow programs to document their reasons for allowing a student to enter who did not meet those minimum admissions requirements. For example, the program seeks to offer admission because other factors important to the discipline strongly suggest that that student would be successful in the program.

Using this best practice model, the central policies provide "a floor but not a ceiling," and would allow each program to function in ways that are optimal for their students and consistent

with their disciplinary norms. Benchmarking against national peers must be an essential component both of the central policies and of the program-specific exceptions.

Definitions of a maximum and minimum number of hours that a graduate certificate can contain, or a minimum number of hours required for a master's or doctoral degree, offer further examples of where central policies can support rather than impede innovation. The 2022 Graduate Catalog can provide a starting point for this conversation; but again, the actual policies that CU-Denver develops should arise out of successful campus practices at present, rather than seeking to impose a fixed set of rules broadly on programs where they may not be appropriate.

Recommendation 1.2.2 Seek Guidance from Peer Institutions
The Consultation Team recommends that the institution reach out to peer institutions; to understand in what ways their central policies still allow for the necessary flexibility within academic colleges.
This recommendation emerged based on discussions during the site visit, The institution can draw on examples of established systems of graduate governance at peer institutions in order to address concerns about college-level flexibility.

In sum, CU-Denver is not unique in the array of programs that it offers, and the Consultation Team is optimistic that a set of central policies can be devised that "first does no harm." Conversations during the site visit with both students and faculty revealed that many programs and students have a feeling of isolation under the current lack of central guidance. Members of the graduate community feel that they need to find their own way. There are also economies of scale in terms of setting "default" guidelines centrally, and then having programs build on that shared foundation. It will be important to involve all colleges in the conversations so that the trust gap can be closed with colleges that now operate autonomously, and so that the resulting guidelines can be useful to all programs.

Profile 1 Category 3: Engagement and Leadership by Faculty
Throughout the above two campus-wide inventory processes, the question arises: who should lead, shepherd, and/or participate in the work? This question is core to the charge that the Consultation Team was given. In addition, this has been clearly at the forefront since the separation from the

CU-Anschutz Graduate School in 2022. At this juncture, the faculty and the senior administration seem to agree that the issue needs to be resolved one way or another.

The Consultation Team does not believe that one size fits all, across institutions. While many universities do have a Graduate School that coordinates campus-wide processes, policies, and services for graduate education, many others operate in a more decentralized way. Given both the institutional history and the current budgetary realities, the Consultation Team does not recommend the creation of a broad Graduate School at this time. This may not be the moment for trying to staff such an office, or for over-promising on a suite of services that cannot be provided on a constrained budget.

Recommendation 1.3.1 Establish Faculty Leadership Groups
The Consultation Team recommends that, at this time, the processes of creating the initial library and then establishing central policies be led by a representative body of faculty members who are empowered by the Office of Graduate Education to gather information, talk with individual programs across campus, and bring forward recommendations.
The Consultation Team perceived that the current Graduate Council requires clarity of purpose, as the members expressed a lack of clarity about the purpose of their role or the impact of their recommendations. This perception was shared by other offices across the institution.

Recommendation 1.3.2 Establish Leadership Roles for the Graduate Council
The Consultation Team recommends that the Graduate Council be reset in terms of purpose, structures, and members.
The number and distribution of members, and the constituency of the Council's membership, should be determined in accordance with its new function as the body that guides graduate education policy for the institution. Each college or school could set its own mechanism for electing or naming its members to the Council, but the Council would be recognized by the Office of Graduate Education and the senior administration as a thoughtful, representative, and deliberate group that supports and enhances graduate education administration on behalf of the institution. While it would remain advisory to the Provost in its recommendations, the term "advisory" would no longer be seen as weak. Rather, this body would in fact be influential in terms of representing the programs and guiding graduate policy.

Recommendation 1.3.3 Establish a Committee Structure

The Consultation Team recommends that the Graduate Council form specific Council committees with clearly specified charges and timelines, to accomplish the goals outlined above in terms of a graduate policy repository as well as central foundational policies that encompass all programs.

Committees can also be formed to advise on the other three areas of the Consultation Team's charge, as detailed below. The chairs of the committees can form an Executive Committee that works in smooth and efficient coordination with the Office of Graduate Studies. Again, this "reset" of the Graduate Council would have the primary challenge of closing the trust gap between central administration and the academic programs, in terms of graduate education coordination. An attitude of active listening, and the development of expansive policies that allow for discipline-specific variation, would be critically important.

a. **Offer a Course Release for the Council Chair:** The Consultation Team recommends that the Graduate Council be either chaired or co-chaired by a faculty member who perhaps has a course release or other recognition of the time investment this should involve, rather than someone with a primarily administrative assignment, in order to ensure that changes are faculty-led.

b. **Establish a Timeline:** The Consultation Team recommends that the Graduate Council should operate on a clear and urgent timeline, in the coming few years, to achieve the goal of transparency and cohesion across CU-Denver's graduate programs. The Graduate Council should be empowered to present issues of shared concern to the administration, not only in terms of policy but also in the three other areas of the Consultation Team's charge as outlined below.

c. **Focus on Solutions:** The Consultation Team recommends that the Graduate Council should not only create awareness and understanding of the institution's graduate education challenges and needs but also propose solutions that are actionable within the context of the institution's resources and priorities.

With a broad base of faculty members, a thoughtful executive committee, a widely respected faculty chair or co-chair, and a leader of a Graduate Education Office, all graduate education programs should feel that the voice of graduate education is well represented in leadership conversations across the institution, and that progress is visible and welcomed by all

programs and students. The leadership role of these centralization initiatives should be not control, but rather improved service to students and academic programs, and an enhancement of the visibility of graduate education in CU-Denver's strategic priorities.

While the establishment of a broader Graduate School may be advisable at some future point, the culture and needs of CU-Denver may not make that optimal at this moment. Rather, the steps and structures outlined above will not only address the urgent vulnerabilities and needs of the current situation but will set CU-Denver up for future expansion of the Office of Graduate Education into such a program at the appropriate juncture.

Profile 1 Category 4

Clear Delineation of Roles, Responsibilities, and Workflows with Appropriate Assessment of Resources and Needs within the Colleges as well as Centrally

Most R1 institutions have found benefit in establishing a robust central Graduate School that supports and adds value to the colleges. There are economies of scale, national best practices, management of risks and exceptions, process efficiencies, and convening authority for cross-college dialogues that can happen in the context of a Graduate School. However, this is not to say that CU-Denver erred in opting not to establish a campus-based Graduate School in 2022. Rather, what gave rise to the current situation is that, at the time of the dissolution of the CU-Denver/Anschutz Graduate School, clarity was not gathered or provided regarding how the various functions would be managed. While the colleges that had opted out of the combined Graduate School structure were able to continue more or less as they always had, the colleges that had relied heavily on the combined Graduate School were left both uninformed and under-resourced in terms of the new responsibilities they might be expected to take on. Examples include not only the lack of clarity on who establishes and monitors graduate policies, but also exactly what individual colleges or departments were expected to manage, that they had not managed before. These responsibilities include:

- Marketing and recruitment
- Student orientation and continued provision of information regarding their degree requirements and pathways
- Management of student progress records
- Professional development/career preparation for students

- Data tracking

- Graduate faculty management and committee formation

- Graduate student support services

- Mentorship training for faculty

- Training and monitoring of teaching assistants

- Regulations and management of research assistants as well as tuition remission systems

- Advocacy for graduate education

- Workflow for decision approval at different levels (e.g., management of graduate student "forms" for monitoring progress), including management of theses and dissertations as well as approval for graduation

- Slate software management and optimization

- Community-building among students in different programs

Many of the above responsibilities were given to faculty members in departments and colleges that were not prepared with either the training or the workload capacity to take on this work. The Consultation Team's conversations with students, as well as the student survey conducted during and after the visit, reflects that CU-Denver's graduate students are acutely aware of inequities across the colleges, in terms of the support services and access to information that are available to students.

Recommendation 1.4.1 Clearly Identify Support Services
The Consultation Team recommends that the graduate education and student support services that a college is expected to provide be identified. Next, identify the people who hold responsibility for providing these services within each program and at the college level to ensure consistency in the services and information that students receive.
This is particularly needed in the colleges that formerly relied on a Graduate School to manage these functions.

Recommendation 1.4.2 Delineate Faculty and Staff Workloads

The Consultation Team recommends that the institution carefully consider how much of this workload should be assigned to the faculty, who then must sacrifice some other dimension of their work, and how much of this workload should be managed through increased staff positions, which might offer more consistency, given that faculty often rotate through the program-director role.

A significant number of graduate students, in their survey responses, indicated that faculty advisors are "too busy" to be responsive to all of their questions or proactive about their needs. In the absence of a central Graduate School, it is critically important that this gap in services be remedied, through appropriate role assignment and staffing within the colleges.

Alternatively, if and when college-based investment is perceived to be an inefficient investment of resources, CU-Denver could return to the question of whether a centralized and staffed Graduate School offers a more effective and successful investment of resources. This development will be much more feasible after the policy library has become established and some coordination of central policies has been implemented.

Assessment Profile 2
Consultation on Competitive Funding of Graduate Students

Charge to the Consultation Team

The charge to the consultants was to evaluate the policies and funding that guide competitive research and teaching assistantships. This should include a review of the competitiveness of assistantship packages, the extent of collaboration between the Advancement Office and the Office of Graduate Education to support philanthropic interest in graduate study, and suggestions for metrics that can document the return on investment that graduate teaching and research assistants provide to the institution. The consultants also will consider how programs could strengthen the use of their existing resources as a guide for further strengthening the ability to attract high-quality graduate applicants.

The university leadership (chancellor, provost, deans, department chairs) and faculty recognize and value the importance of graduate education in helping to meet the demand for a highly skilled workforce and to fuel the research and innovation enterprise of the university. From

its founding, the university has capitalized on its urban location and has responded to meeting workforce demands by offering high-quality professional graduate programs—programs that enroll self-supporting students (i.e., pay their own tuition), many of whom are employed in the workforce outside the university and pursue their graduate degrees on a part or full-time basis (the latter of which is made possible by flexible or "work friendly" class schedules).

Although CU-Denver is ranked as a Carnegie R1 university, the assistantship packages available to attract and support graduate students into its research-based programs are not competitive. This appears to be due to several factors, including the university's very constrained resource environment and limited external funding. Resource constraints also impact stipends and benefits for graduate students employed as teaching assistants and part-time instructors in the professional graduate programs.

An overarching concern is the lack of a comprehensive plan aimed at addressing the funding issue. Although some central resources are available through the Office of Graduate Education to support scholarships, the strategy for their deployment in the context of an overall plan is not clear. The development of a comprehensive plan for increasing the competitiveness of graduate student funding will require the university to take stock of its goals, strengths, and opportunities. Moreover, it is essential that there be better alignment of the university's goals with its research/innovation goals and strategic enrollment planning.

Areas of Strength

A significant strength includes the central resources ($455,000 per year that have been deployed to assist in recruitment of research-based master's and doctoral students. In addition, $500,000 per year for three years has been allocated but has yet to be determined as to how these resources will be deployed. Additional strengths include:

- There are some resources to assist with graduate student travel and research.
- There is excellent data generated by Institutional Research that can be used by programs and departments to inform their practices.

Areas of Challenge and Areas of Opportunity

The following challenges and opportunities were identified during the stie visit that provided the evidence for developing recommendations in this profile.

- There is no comprehensive strategy to increase the competitiveness of graduate school funding or its connection to university priorities and strategic enrollment planning.

- Overall, stipends for teaching and research assistantships are lower than those of R1 peers listed in the Oklahoma State University Graduate Stipend Survey.

- In general, there is no provision to provide tuition remission or an allowance for health insurance to graduate students on assistantships.

- There is no apparent centralized review and approval of appointment forms for graduate student employees. This is necessary to ensure compliance with US Department of Labor requirements that impose a limit on the number of hours worked for 0.5 full time equivalent (FTE) appointment meeting the definition of a research assistant (RA) and immigration requirements for international students (e.g., 20h/week limit).

- There is no apparent review or approval for requests to have graduate students work in excess of 20h/week (domestic students). This is necessary to ensure that student progress is not negatively impacted.

- There does not appear to be an option for domestic graduate students to participate in the health insurance program.

- There is no uniform policy of tuition remission paid by institutional or grant funds. Lack of such consistency is potentially at odds with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

- Opportunities about funding from the Office of Graduate Education are not uniformly understood or known, especially by students seeking travel support.

- There is no centralized system for making graduate students aware of external grant/fellowships opportunities nor of a dedicated infrastructure to assist with development/submission of applications or administration of awards.

- Programs do not appear knowledgeable about available data such as completion, time to degree, student publications and awards.

- It was unclear of the extent to which graduate student support/programming is integrated into advancement efforts.

- It was not clear that CU-Denver has a plan for how to support doctoral education to the extent needed to sustain R1 status.

Profile 2 Recommendations

Recommendation 2.1.1 Develop a Graduate Student Funding Plan

CU-Denver should begin the development of a comprehensive plan to increase competitiveness of graduate student funding that is aligned with its goals and (as yet to be developed, see Assessment Profile 4) strategic enrollment plan.

Recommendation 2.1.2: Review the Institutional Business Model

CU-Denver should review its business model to ensure the ability to incentivize entrepreneurial efforts that lead to achievement of research/innovation and strategic enrollment goals. Included in this review should be an examination of the redistribution of indirect costs.

Recommendation 2.1.3: Develop a Central Plan for Student Appointments

CU-Denver should immediately develop a central mechanism for reviewing and approving (central administrator level, not HR) graduate student appointment forms.

Recommendation 2.l.4: Develop a Tuition Remission Policy

CU-Denver should immediately develop a university-wide policy on tuition remission.

Recommendation 2.1.5: Advance a Recruitment Plan

CU-Denver should build financial support to recruit and retain graduate students from underrepresented populations in key areas across the research-intensive programs.

Recommendation 2.1.6: Establish a Health Insurance Option

CU-Denver should set up a health insurance program that allows domestic students to opt-in, as is the case at many peer institutions.

Recommendation 2.1.7: Establish a PhD Funding Focus

CU-Denver should set the expectation that funding is guaranteed only for PhD students. Academic programs without PhD programs should be exempt from this policy.

Recommendation 2.1.8: Promote Student Funding in Grant Proposals

For the financial health of CU-Denver, faculty need to write grants that include graduate student funding into their grant proposal budgets. Typically, this includes the cost of tuition and health insurance. This is a standard budgeting practice for most universities with active research portfolios and typical for R1 institutions. Fostering grants that include graduate student funding will be a significant cultural shift in practice. In addition, the faculty will aim to make the case that it makes their proposals less competitive. The consultants recommend that the university prepare a transition plan and create other incentives to foster adoption of this practice. Incentives may include the return of a portion of the revenue to the PI.

Recommendation 2.1.9 Incentivize Student Funding in Grant Submissions

To help sustain R1 status, CU-Denver should consider ways to incentivize external grant submissions that include support for graduate students, especially doctoral students.

Recommendation 2.1.10 Support Applications for National Awards

Establish a dedicated office for supporting student applications for national awards and fellowships.

Assessment Profile 3
Consultation on Graduate Student Professional Development and Support Services

Charge to the Consultation Team

The Consultation Team was asked to focus on ten categories of professional development. The categories included:

1. Category 1: Inventory all Current Programs
2. Category 2: Inventory Office of Graduate Studies Programs
3. Category 3: Increase Programs Offered Centrally
4. Category 4: Inventory Programs Offered by Graduate Programs and Colleges/Schools
5. Category 5: Advocate for Best Practices
6. Category 6: Evaluate Alignment with Best Practices

7. Category 7: Promote Excellence
8. Category 8: Identify Support Services for Graduate Students
9. Category 9: Foster Collaborations
10. Category 10: Promote Faculty Menting

Profile 3 Category 1
Inventory of All Current Programs

The consultants were asked to assess the professional development programs and wrap-around services that are currently available university-wide as well as those that are available within colleges, schools, and programs to create a comprehensive framework of existing programs. university wide.

The diversity of careers pursued by graduate students has increased dramatically in recent decades. As a result, it is essential that universities be responsive to the desires of today's graduate students and the requirements of the current/eventual employers of those students. There is significant variation between CU-Denver Colleges/Schools in terms of the professional development opportunities that they provide to their graduate students and the context in which those opportunities are "offered." Externally accredited programs that train students for a limited set of careers frequently are required by the accrediting body to include professional development as an integrated part of the curriculum. In contrast, master's and PhD programs whose students are preparing for a wide range of careers, depend more heavily on extracurricular professional development offerings. Therefore, this assessment is focused primarily on extracurricular professional development and these latter programs.

A significant difference between graduate education at CU-Denver and many other higher education institutions is the large percentage of part-time students (40% of doctoral students and 26% of master's students). Furthermore, the fraction of part-time students varies dramatically between disciplines. Many of these part-time students are working professionals whose need for professional development skills is quite different from full-time students who recently graduated with a bachelor's degree. When evaluating the landscape of professional development opportunities and needs, it is essential that the university takes into consideration the distinct needs of part-time vs. full-time students.

Colleges/Schools with programs that depend on extracurricular professional development vary in the breadth of opportunities that they offer to their graduate students. It is not clear that any college/school provides the full range of opportunities. These can include leadership, multiculturalism, conflict resolution, budget management, supervision, classroom management, audience-appropriate communication, both written and oral presentations, team building, Individual Development Plan (IDP) development, professional networking and other competencies that promote degree and career success. The programs are beneficial to today's graduate students; however, many of the colleges/schools are challenged to provide even basic opportunities. For the foreseeable future some colleges/schools will need to depend on central administrative offices, or other colleges/schools for extracurricular professional development. Even students in colleges/schools that have a robust set of offerings tailored to their discipline could benefit from professional centrally offered development programs that provide broader disciplinary perspectives.

Recommendation 3.1.1: Inventory, Expand, and Identify Program Offerings

The Consultation Team recommends that colleges/schools take these actions.

    a. **Inventory all current professional development offerings.**

    b. **Expand offerings within the colleges/schools that have the expertise and resources to do so.**

    c. **Identify additional professional development opportunities that ideally graduate students within the colleges/schools would be able to access elsewhere in the university.**

Based on the experiences with other universities striving to expand extracurricular professional development in graduate education, it is insufficient to simply make such opportunities available to students. Students need to be strongly encouraged, or even required, to participate in those opportunities. This latter point is of particular concern to the reviewers. CU-Denver has a high proportion of first-generation students, many of whom, if they are like their peers nationally, mistakenly assume that their degree will provide the full preparation they require for a career.

Recommendation 3.1.2: Foster Individual Development Plans

The consultants recommend the following practices for graduate students who are enrolled in programs and pursuing a diversity of career paths.

> a. **Encourage (or require) students to complete an Individual Development Plan.**
>
> b. **Encourage (or require) students to identify mentors who can help them understand the "soft skills" that they will need for their desired career(s).**

Note that a potential problem which sometimes occurs when students are supported on research assistantships, is that their supervisor discourages them from participating in extracurricular professional development programs that take them away from the "lab." We didn't hear this concern during our visit but we encourage program directors to watch for, and correct, such behavior.

Recommendation 3.1.3: Plan for Centrally Offered Programs

The Consultation Team recommends that a leader from a central administrative office work with the colleges/schools to produce a prioritized list of professional development programs that ideally would be offered centrally.

A variety of central offices, among them Writing Centers, Career Services, and others, offer their services to graduate students. Most of those services are designed for undergraduate students. Based on interviews, undergraduates are currently the primary focus of those offices. However, everyone who participated in the discussion also expressed support for working with the graduate education community to align their services, within their limited resources, to better support graduate education. It didn't appear that they've been asked to make that a priority or given guidance on what changes would be most strategic.

Recommendation 3.1.4: Create a Central Web Page

To increase graduate student awareness and use of existing opportunities, the consultants recommend completing the following practices.

> a. **All administrative offices, colleges/schools, and programs providing professional development programs to graduate students should create a standard document summarizing all of the programs offered.**
>
> b. **Create a central web page to provide access to all links to those documents.**

This recommendation addresses a common issue in graduate education nationally, that graduate students are primarily aware of resources provided by their program, somewhat aware of resources provided by their college/school and often completely unaware of resources offered centrally. Developing tools to increase awareness of existing professional development opportunities should be a high priority. For example, the Writing Center has produced an excellent document specifically for graduate students, summarizing the opportunities offered by that office and providing links to online resources.

Profile 3 Category 2
Inventory Office of Graduate Studies Programs

The Consultation Team was asked to complete a comprehensive review and assessment of the current professional development programs and processes available for all graduate students through the Office of Graduate Studies. Based on the site visit discussions, there are currently no professional development programs offered through the Office of Graduate Studies.

Profile 3 Category 3
Increase Programs Offered Centrally

The Consultation Team was charged with determining if there are opportunities to grow additional programs centrally in contrast to supporting program-level services. Everyone from central offices with whom the consultants spoke seemed open to working with the graduate education community to align their services, within their limited resources, to better support graduate education. It does not appear that constituents in these offices have been asked to make central professional development programs for graduate students a priority or given guidance on what changes would be most strategic. As mentioned above, the consultants are recommending that someone centrally work with the colleges/schools to produce a prioritized list of professional development opportunities that would ideally be offered centrally.

Recommendation 3.3.1: Encourage Centrally Offered Programs
The consultants recommend the following practices to promote central access to professional development.

a. **Encourage central offices to develop high priority professional development programs to graduate students.**

b. **Explore the willingness of colleges to make their existing professional development offerings open to students from other colleges.**

The consultants recognize that some deans might view serving students from other colleges as "subsidizing" those other colleges. However, including a diversity of students makes these richer experiences for their own students. Professional development opportunities that are frequently offered centrally include:

- Three Minute Thesis (3-MT) competition (Graduate Education)
- Conflict Resolution (Human Resources)
- Personnel and Budget Management (Human Resources)
- Building a Professional Network (Graduate Education)
- Individual Development Plan (Research Office)
- Grant/Fellowship Proposal Writing (Research Office and/or Graduate Education)
- Finding Grant/Fellowship Opportunities (Library and/or Research Office)

Profile 3 Category 4
Inventory Programs in Graduate Programs and Colleges/Schools
The consultants were asked to identify those professional development programs that are available through administrative offices, through the colleges/schools and by individual graduate programs, in order to verify if these programs offer different services or duplicate those that are offered centrally or across these offices, colleges/schools, and programs. The Consultation Team did not learn about all the programs offered in the institution, but we saw no evidence that there was significant inefficient duplication. There are certainly examples of colleges/schools offering similar programs, but our sense is that each college/school has tailored these offerings in ways that fit the needs of the students in their discipline.

Recommendation 3.4.1 Guide Program Updates through the Inventory
As outlined in Recommendation 3.3.1, the inventory of programs available through colleges/schools and graduate programs should be included on the central web page with links to the various professional development opportunities offered by the institution. Use the complete inventory of professional development programs as a guide for adjusting

program offerings. The inventory will serve as a guide to identify unnecessary duplication and to determine gaps in program offerings.

Profile 3 Category 5
Advocate for Best Practices

The Consultation Team was charged with providing a suggested outline of the professional development policies and practices that should be part of the Office of Graduate Education mission to strengthen program and career success. Given current staffing levels, the role of the Office of Graduate Education with respect to professional development should be to advocate for and encourage colleges/schools to ensure that professional development is a component of the curricula of their programs and to advocate for the development of an ecosystem of extracurricular professional development opportunities offered by both colleges/schools and central offices that meets the ever-changing needs of their students.

Recommendation 3.5.1: Advocacy through Surveys
The Consultation Team recommends that the Office of Graduate Studies serve in an advocacy role to implement Recommendation 3.1.1 by completing periodic satisfaction surveys of graduate student professional development programs. Such surveys should allow disaggregation to evaluate responses from full-time and part-time students, students enrolling soon after obtaining their bachelor's degree, and students returning after entering the workforce.

Recommendation 3.5.2: Advocacy through Convening Key Leaders
The consultants recommend that the Office of Graduate Studies convene an annual meeting of representatives from central offices and colleges/schools to assess the effectiveness of professional development programs and to collectively develop plans to address the identified gaps in those offerings.

Recommendation 3.5.3 Advocacy Through Engagement

The consultants recommend that the Office of Graduate Studies establish an expectation that programs will encourage/require their students to engage in professional development. Engagement will include:

    a. **Completing an Individual Development Plan**

    b. **Collaborating with one or more mentors other than their committee including faculty, staff, and/or professionals external to the university.**

    c. **Participating in professional development opportunities of their choice guided by their IDP.**

Profile 3 Category 6
Evaluate Program Alignment with Best Practices

The Consultation Team was charged with determining if current professional development programs, and the policies or practices that foster and support the students within the programs, are aligned with Council of Graduate Schools' best practices. Best practices as defined by CGS focuses on the question "Are the professional development programs offered centrally achieving the best outcomes?" During discussions at the time of the site visit, the consultants did not find evidence that the professional development programs offered centrally are evaluated. The graduate students interviewed seemed largely unaware of such programs.

Recommendation 3.6.1: Establish Competencies and Assess Satisfaction

The Consultation Team recommends that the offices, colleges/schools, and graduate programs offering professional development programs identify the competencies each program is designed to convey and the tools that will be used to assess program success. As outlined in Recommendation 3.5.1, competencies can then be aligned with the periodic surveys to evaluate satisfaction with professional development experience. Competencies and satisfaction data can inform representatives from central offices, colleges/schools, and graduate programs to adjust the effectiveness of these professional development programs during the convenings outlined in Recommendation 3.5.2.

Profile 3 Category 7
Promote Excellence

The Consultation Team was charged with providing recommendations to guide the university toward strategically developing the programs and processes essential for excellence in professional development programming that complement and strengthen their disciplinary competencies and should be accessible to all graduate students. See Recommendations 3.5.1., 3.5.2., and 3.5.3 above.

Profile 3 Category 8
Identify Support Services for Graduate Students

The Consultation Team was charged with determining if the support services provided to graduate students that are currently aligned with specific colleges/schools and disciplines should remain decentralized or should these services be offered centrally. Best practices as defined by CGS focuses on the question "Are the decentralized support services provided to graduate students by their colleges/schools and graduate programs achieving the best outcomes in contrast to those services provided by central offices such as the Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of Professional Development, Student Services, Counseling Center, or Office of Research? During the site visit, the consultants determined that there is a minimal overlap between services offered centrally and services offered by colleges/schools.

Recommendation 3.8.1: Engage with CGS Leaders
The consultants recommend that graduate education leaders at CU-Denver engage and network with nationally recognized leadership within the Council of Graduate Schools. Through CGS meetings, CU-Denver leaders will learn innovative practices from other institutions and will learn of best practices that promote success. Upon returning to the university, the leaders can share innovative and best practices with representatives of central offices, colleges/schools, and graduate programs during convenings of the annual meeting to assess the effectiveness of professional development programs as outlined in Recommendation 3.5.2.

Profile 3 Category 9
Foster Collaborations

The Consultation Team was asked to determine if there are opportunities to collaborate among the central offices, colleges/schools, and graduate progrms that offer services along with practices for acquiring data to guide decisions about those services that are promoting student success, those that are not, and to use this data to grow additional programs centrally in contrast to supporting less successful program-level services. Implement Recommendation 3.5.1 and conduct periodic surveys of graduate student professional development experience and satisfaction. Implement Recommendation 3.6.1 and use these survey results to guide a periodic inventory of extracurricular professional development offerings. Implement Recommendation 3.5.2 and convene an annual meeting of representatives from central offices and colleges/schools to assess the effectiveness of professional development programs and to collectively develop plans to address the identified gaps in those offerings (as recommended above).

Profile 3 Category 10
Promote Faculty Mentoring

The Consultation Team was asked to review programs that promote excellence in faculty mentorship for both research-based and professional practice-based degree programs. The consultants did not have the opportunity to actually review these programs. Central offices do provide a suite of programs to support faculty professional development. For example, the Early Career Faculty Mentoring Program is open to all CU-Denver faculty members in their first three years of employment. In addition, all faculty are encouraged to take part in mentoring workshops provided by the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD). Finally, the Office for Access and Campus Engagement and the International Mentoring Association collaborate to deliver the Culturally Aware Mentoring Program, which helps mentors learn to better support mentees with a range of identities. These all appear to be solid programs but no data was provided about the percentage of faculty who take advantage of these opportunities. Finally, the consultants were unable to assess to what extent faculty are evaluated on the basis of their effectiveness as mentors of graduate students.

Recommendation 10.1.1: Apply Performance Review Criteria

To promote excellence in faculty mentorship, the consultants recommend that annual performance review criteria and promotion criteria include an assessment of the quality of a faculty member's mentorship,

Assessment Profile Area 4
Consultation on Best Practices for Enrollment Management

Charge to the Consultation Team

The charge to the Consultation Team was to provide an assessment profile to guide enrollment management that will strengthen access to graduate-level talent. The consultants will complete an analysis of the current infrastructure, technologies, practices, and resources in place to track the progression of graduate applicants from initial inquiry to degree completion within the programs. The review will describe professional guidance on current best practices in enrollment management.

The Consultation Team's observations reveal that many of the elements needed for successful graduate enrollment management are in place. These included knowledgeable central marketing and communications teams, use of data to inform some marketing strategies, the development of enrollment targets (at the college level), and an efficient application platform. Currently, many of the essential functions such as marketing, pre-application counseling, and application processing are decentralized and conducted at the college/school level. The asymmetrical resources available to colleges/schools render some colleges/schools with insufficient support to effectively or efficiently conduct essential enrollment management functions. The decentralization of enrollment planning means that there is little to no coordination among the colleges/schools to achieve university goals. Discussions and observations identified the following challenges.

- The administrative structure supporting graduate enrollment management at CU-Denver is diffuse. There are separate offices for graduate education, graduate enrollment, graduate admission, and college/school and department/program-based offices of graduate recruitment and admissions. The responsibilities aligned with these various offices do not appear well coordinated.

- The marketing and recruitment efforts also appear diffuse and not well coordinated. Some administrative offices, colleges/schools, or graduate programs have well-developed marketing efforts, but these individual initiatives are not integrated with essential information common to all programs, especially with regard to post-admission messaging. The lack of coordination likely results in a lack of appropriate follow-up and less than ideal yield. The inconsistent use of a customer relationship management (CRM) system exacerbates the potential barriers. CU-Denver has conducted some market analysis. However, a comprehensive examination of the domestic demographics and market demand, in addition to an international market analysis that includes economic and mobility data and degree demand should be continuously conducted to inform strategic enrollment planning.

- Although enrollment "targets" appear to be set at the college level, it is not clear how these targets are 1) informed by strategic goals, market demand, or research goals or 2) coordinated to achieve broader university goals. CU-Denver needs an overall comprehensive, strategic enrollment plan for graduate education that supports the university's research/innovation enterprise and helps meet the demands for a highly skilled workforce.

- The workflow of the application process is highly variable depending on the college. It appears somewhat inefficient and, as a result, potentially unnecessarily time-consuming with the added risk of potential loss of top applicants.

- There appears to be no university-wide admission policy, including a process for appealing an admission decision. It is important to note that the office, college/school, or program involved in the decision must not be the final adjudicator on an appeal.

- It is not clear how the CU-Denver business model incentivizes entrepreneurial activities of departments/programs that promote enrollment growth. It is equally unclear how new resources, including graduate stipends and tuition waivers, will be strategically invested to support the achievements required for sustaining R1 status. Among these achievements are increasing the number of doctoral degrees awarded and increasing research expenditures. The practice of allocating resources by spreading them thinly across the campus has been proven to be ineffective.

Profile 4 Recommendations

Recommendation 4.1.1 Review All Graduate Enrollment Planning Processes

CU-Denver should undergo a comprehensive graduate enrollment planning process that considers how enrollment growth will support research/innovation/creative activities and meet the demands, including local demand for a highly skilled workforce. This process should begin at the graduate program level and consider the strategic plan of the program, the research/scholarly themes of the program, the relative mix of doctoral and master's students, the relative mix of resident/online students, emerging opportunities, workforce demands, and necessary resources to support the plan. The graduate program plans should scale up to individual colleges/schools and ultimately to the provost to assure alignment with institutional priorities, including supporting university-wide research priorities.

Recommendation 4.1.2 Advance Enrollment Management Role Realignment

CU-Denver should consider some administrative realignment as noted previously to ensure better coordination of graduate enrollment management efforts. This would enable more efficient and effective enrollment management planning and integration with other university offices including International Students and Scholars, Office of Admissions, and related offices with enrollment management responsibilities. This should include a role in developing graduate enrollment targets for all graduate programs and in coordinating efforts with programs to achieve the targets. On a related but separate note, the routing of applications through International Students and Scholars should also be re-examined. Conducting a review of transcripts for all applicants seems inefficient. There also may be risks or gaps with regard to export control compliance as regulations apply to international applicants.

Recommendation 4.1.3 Coordinate through Central Marketing and Advertising

As part of the re-aligned structure, the central marketing and advertising office should play a role in coordinating graduate marketing and recruitment efforts. This is not to supplant graduate program-specific efforts. This recommendation is aimed at increasing efficiency through an economy of scale to assure that graduate programs with less robust infrastructure may benefit from the new CRM and centralized efforts. In addition, coordinating with campus marketing and communication will foster integration with the department/program-specific communication

plans. This will enable a more consistent post-admission effort that would have a positive impact on yield.

Recommendation 4.1.4 Standardize Admission and Funding Communications

As an additional aspect of the re-alignment and to shore up legal vulnerability, CU-Denver should consolidate and standardize graduate admission efforts. Standardization practices include providing all admitted students with a uniform letter of admission and, when applicable, consistent information about assistantships, fellowships, and/or scholarships.

Concluding Remarks

The consultants gratefully acknowledge the support and assistance of the many students, faculty, and staff at University of Colorado Denver who participated in discussions and contributed to advancing the mission and vision of graduate education at the university.

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Appendix A
Council of Graduate Schools and Related Resources

The Council of Graduate Schools has developed a number of authoritative reports and other publications on a variety of topics germane to the recommendations outlined in this report. The complete listing of CGS reports is available here:

The Organization and Administration of Graduate Education
This publication provides a complete picture of the structures, stakeholders, and challenges that define contemporary graduate education. It's intended for graduate deans, provosts, directors of graduate studies, and college deans that are interested in the enduring structures and pressing issues in graduate education.

Assessment and Review of Graduate Programs
Definitive guide on the purposes, processes and practice of graduate program review. Revised in 2011, discusses graduate program review and student learning outcomes assessment, with brief discussion of managing data analysis to inform strategic decisions at the university level for improving graduate education.

Broadening Participation in Graduate Education
This report addresses the need to strengthen and expand diversity and inclusiveness in graduate education. It highlights initiatives that have had success in these areas, and offers policy recommendations for broadening participation in graduate education as a key component of a national talent development strategy, with particular focus on people from traditionally underrepresented groups.

Capitalizing on Innovation: Entrepreneurship and Graduate Education
This monograph summarizes an extensive literature review, findings from interviews with graduate deans, and key perspectives from a stakeholders' workshop of deans, students, entrepreneurs, and leaders of academic/research programs in entrepreneurship. It also provides recommendations for "capitalizing on innovation" through graduate curricula in entrepreneurship.

Ensuring Success
Volume 1: Achieving an Inclusive Graduate Community. CGS leaders discuss the rationale for inclusiveness as well as some of its benefits and challenges. Volume 2: Recruiting for Success Effective recruitment strategies from award winners and other leaders of inclusiveness efforts in graduate education. Topics include funding sources, recruiting networks, and administrative resources. Volume 3: Ensuring Success Explores ways to move beyond recruiting toward ensuring the success of underrepresented minorities in graduate education. Includes discussion of mentoring, curricular reform, and support systems.

Essential Guide to Graduate Admissions
This publication identifies good practices in graduate admissions and graduate enrollment management. Topics addressed include organizational structures and university-wide policies and procedures, departmental guidelines, and legal and financial issues.

Graduate Education for Global Career Pathways
Global research and development networks, along with new technologies for communication and collaboration, make it essential for graduate students to develop global perspectives and skills. This collection of essays by graduate leaders from 15 countries, offers new strategies for communicating the value of global careers across campus and examples of programs designed to equip graduate students with "global" skills.

Holistic Review in Graduate Admissions: A Report from the Council of Graduate Schools
This publication explores current strategies for creating a more diverse graduate student population. This publication outlines the current state of graduate admissions at U.S. institutions, offers promising practices for graduate institutions seeking to implement holistic admissions processes, and provides an overview of existing resources for institutions.

Making a Grad School Plan: From Application to Orientation
For many students, especially those who may be the first in their families to pursue a graduate degree, the pathway to master's and doctoral education is not always clear. This book aims to demystify the "hidden curriculum" of applying to graduate school and offers suggestions for planning and organizing the process. Students will find an overview of different degree types and advice on selecting potential programs and preparing the strongest application possible. The report also provides ideas for maintaining work-life harmony and building supportive networks once a program begins.

Master's Education: A Guide for Faculty and Administrators: A Policy Statement
This guide is useful to faculty members, department chairs and deans as they develop graduate programs at the master's level.

Online Graduate Education
This practical guide for graduate deans and administrators supports the development of quality distance education programs that are aligned with institutional mission and strategic direction. Touching on a range of issues from faculty professional development to assessment, accreditation, and financial structure, Online Graduate Education addresses the administrative policies and practices for improving access, cost-effectiveness and quality.

PhD Completion and Attrition: Policy, Numbers, Leadership, and Next Steps
Reviews recent empirical studies on Ph.D. attrition, completion, and persistence; discussed the institutional factors that contribute to graduate-degree completion; and outlines salutary interventions and next steps for improving completion rates in graduate education.

Professional Development: Shaping Effective Programs for STEM Graduate Students
This report includes findings from a two-year CGS project), funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, to map the landscape of professional development programming at U.S.

universities for graduate students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and to identify opportunities to enhance student preparation for a full range of careers in the advanced STEM workforce.

[Selected Legal Issues Relating to Due Process and Liability in Higher Education](#)
Legal issues affecting graduate education surface in a variety of areas at the very heart of the university's academic enterprise: from academic and research misconduct, and admissions and employment, to disputes regarding the measurement and communication of academic progress.

[Supporting Graduate Student Mental Health and Well-being: Evidence-Informed Recommendations for the Graduate Community](#)
A growing body of evidence indicates that mental health challenges are common among graduate students. Unfortunately, many barriers exist to effective support and care. Beginning in 2019, CGS and The JED Foundation undertook a project to create an evidence base to inform future policies, programs and resources.

Additional Social Justice and Anti-Racism Resources from CGS:
https://cgsnet.org/data-insights/diversity-equity-inclusiveness/social-justice-and-anti-racism-resources-for-graduate-education/

https://cgsnet.org/insight/social-justice-and-anti-racism-resources-for-graduate-education-general-graduate-education-higher-education/

Association of American Universities (AAU) Reports and Statements on Graduate Education:
The AAU works closely with other national organizations to coordinate activities related to graduate education reform. Listed below are seminal reports and relevant statements committed to improving the experiences of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers.

[AAU Committee on Graduate Education Report and Recommendations](#)
[AAU Chief Academic Officers' Statement on Doctoral Education Data Transparency](#)
[AAU Postdoctoral Education Committee Report](#)
[AAU Postdoctoral Education Survey Results](#)
[News Release on AAU Postdoctoral Education Committee Report](#)

National Academies Reports and Statements
[National Academies - Graduate STEM Education for the 21st Century Report](#)
[National Academies - The Postdoctoral Experience Revisited Report](#)