

Graduate Education Working Group

Report and Recommendations to Chancellor and Provost

Executive Summary

Feb. 6, 2026

Overview: In Spring 2025, CU Denver engaged the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) to review elements of graduate education at CU Denver. They delivered an [April 2025 report](#) that outlined issues and offered recommendations on graduate education structure, governance, and operations following CU Denver’s exit from a dual-campus Graduate School in 2022.

To follow up the CGS report, in Sept. 2025 Provost Karen Marrongelle charged a Graduate Education Working Group to develop recommendations on each of three central questions by Dec. 15, 2025.

- 1) What policies and procedures should guide graduate education delivery at CU Denver, and how should these policies and procedures be managed and communicated to the CU Denver community?**
- 2) What administrative structure should oversee and coordinate CU Denver graduate education operations?**
- 3) What policies and procedures should guide graduate student employment and tuition remission?**

The charge in full is available on [this working group webpage](#). The [full 35-page working group report](#) is organized in three primary sections that respond to each of those three questions.

Question 1: Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures governing graduate education across CU Denver have been fragmented, inconsistent, and insufficiently communicated in recent years. This is partly because though many CU Denver graduate programs followed policies of the former Graduate School, programs were permitted to opt-out of those policies and create their own—and many did. It is also because graduate programs have differing needs that have inhibited a “one size fits all approach” and warranted a measure of flexibility.

This Working Group proposed policies for all CU Denver graduate programs to follow. They set minimum foundational standards for all, while allowing flexibility to enable units to apply supplemental policies tailored to their own distinct circumstances.

Proposed policies in these four areas are drafted in full in the Working Group report:

- I. Foundational/General Governance
- II. Enrollment, Leave, and Standing
- III. Academic Progress and Continuation
- IV. Examinations, Candidacy, and Graduation

Question 2: Administrative Structure

After CU Denver exited the dual-campus Graduate School in 2022, a central Office of Graduate Education was formed. But questions remained about which functions should be central and which should be local. This was exacerbated by the differing governance of some programs articulated in the section above.

This Working Group proposed recommendations in three areas:

- I. The structure, mission, and responsibilities of a Graduate Studies Office
The group advised the continuation of a central entity (to be reorganized from its current state); the leader of that office (title TBD) will report to the provost.
- II. The configuration of the Graduate Council, along with clarified responsibilities and governance jurisdiction
- III. The rules and procedures governing appointment to Graduate Faculty

This section of the working group report includes a matrix outlining primary graduate education administrative functions, and the parties responsible for (or otherwise involved in) each function.

Question 3: Tuition Remission and Graduate School Employment

CU Denver is the only public, PhD-granting campus in Colorado without a tuition remission policy for graduate students who perform teaching or research activities for the university. A goal of this working group was to generate a policy—based on exploration of various financial models—to provide a baseline of centrally available funding for qualifying CU Denver graduate students with teaching or research assistantship contracts between .25 and .5 FTE. Doing so will ensure CU Denver compliance with federal regulations, increase consistency across our graduate programs, align with our financial capabilities, and increase our recruitment competitiveness.

Based on current practices and teaching/research positions contracted, the annual cost of tuition remission in the proposal advanced would be \$668,500 for all teaching positions and \$228,000 for all research positions. The total estimated cost of about \$900,000 would represent about 1.6% of the AY 2024-25 graduate tuition revenue. The report includes financial tables that detail the number of students across three relevant job codes that tuition remission would apply to, and costs per student based on tuition in each school and college.

The group recommended using \$1.5 million in one-time funds committed by the Provost's office (over three years from FY26 to FY28) to help offset costs for this transition.

Working Group Leadership

The 11-member working group was led by Michael Wunder, special assistant to the provost for graduate education, and by graduate education faculty fellows Scott Bauer, Jeffrey Jacot, and Gillian Silverman. All working group participants and titles are listed [on this page](#).