



Graduate Education in the U.S.: National Concerns and a Princeton Perspective

William B. Russel
Dean of the Graduate School
Princeton University

ACGS
October 2009

- Commission on the Future of Graduate Education in the US
- A Princeton Perspective



Commission on the Future of Graduate Education in the United States

Conveners

Debra W. Stewart, President
Council of Graduate Schools

Kurt Landgraf, President & CEO
Educational Testing Service

Chair/Vice Chair

William B. Russel, Dean
Princeton University

Suzanne Ortega, Vice Provost
University of New Mexico

Members

Corporate executives (IBM, Xerox, DuPont, TIAA/CREF, Battelle
Institute, Bank of America)

University presidents/chancellors (UCLA, Jackson State, Wisconsin)

Provosts and deans (American, Virginia Tech, UC Davis, Ohio
State, Penn State, Hofstra, SUNY Brockport, Indiana)



Major National Reports

National Academies

- *Policy Implications of International Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars in the United States* (2005)
- *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* (2007)

➔ U.S. innovation and future prosperity depend on our capacity to produce appropriate numbers of graduate degree holders prepared to address the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.



What's missing? The evidence!

- What is the right number of graduates?
- What do the trends indicate?
- Is current graduate training appropriate?
- How is the rest of the world responding?



Organization

- **Commission** advice and consent
- **Council of Graduate Schools** guidance and editing
- **Educational Testing Service** research and writing

Report

- Introduction
 - Current status and expectations
 - Vulnerabilities
 - Recommendations and action plan
- release April 29, 2010



Princeton University

small, private research university
5,200 undergraduates

Graduate Programs

2,452 graduate students 39% female
37% international (7% China)
14/7% American minorities

2009-10 enrollment	Doctoral (41)	Masters (7)
Humanities	478	4
Social Sciences	452	40
Natural Sciences	660	-
Engineering	489	28
Architecture	22	63
Int'l & Public Affairs	41	174
2008-09 degrees	349	155



Goals of the Graduate School

- Attract the best and brightest from all demographic groups and around the world
- Support graduate students well both financially and physically
- Maintain rigorous disciplinary degree programs with interdisciplinary opportunities
- Provide opportunities to gain understanding of other societies and cultures
- Augment academic programs with professional development
- Bring a major fraction of the students to timely completion of their degrees
- Graduate individuals who will steward the professions and improve the world
- Maintain connection with alumni to assess our success and enlist their support



Support Services for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Students

Center for Teaching & Learning

English Language Program
Preparation for teaching

Writing Program

Science Writing
Dissertation Boot Camps

General Counsel

Visa services

Campus Life

Health services
International center
Career services

Facilities

Housing and dining

Alumni

Alumni Council

Reunions & regional events
APGA

Communications

Princeton Alumni Weekly

Development

Graduate Annual Giving



What do we worry most about?

- **admissions** quality and diversity of students
- **support** financial aid and housing
- **academic standards** reenrollment and completion
- **placement** employment and success



Graduate Admissions

Graduate School

- set targets and overbids
- collect applications [Jan 1]
- transmit applications to programs
- transmit offers
- process responses

School/Dept/Program

- recruit applicants
- evaluate and rank admits
- recruit admits

meet to agree on admits and financial offers

negotiate offers to applicants on wait list

complete admissions process by April 15



Results of Graduate Admissions

- | | 2005-06 | | 2009-10 |
|----------------|---------------|------|---------------|
| • applications | 8,120 | | 10,138 |
| • admits | 1,050 [12.5%] | | 1,070 [10.5%] |
| • acceptances | 540 [51%] | | 571 [54%] |
- [74% masters, 48% Ph.D.s]
- most serious competitors
 - Harvard in all but engineering
 - Stanford, MIT, Berkeley in sciences, engineering, social sciences
 - Columbia, Yale, CMU, Chicago also in several divisions
 - selective growth in masters and Ph.D. programs



Annual Re-enrollment

- | Graduate School | → | Graduate Program |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• open process in Spring | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• graduate student reports progress and plans for next year• committee/adviser reviews and provides assessment• graduate student reviews/responds• adviser & director of graduate studies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• associate dean reviews and approves or consults• decision transmitted to student | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ↙ agree to re-enroll/defer/terminate |



The Graduate School maintains **centralized control** over graduate education, but must remain **responsive** to the priorities of the University and the needs and aspirations of the departments and programs and **depends** on support from all administrative units of the University.

Therefore, maintaining close contact with the entire campus is essential to the health of the Graduate School.



Ph.D. Completion, Median Time-to-Degree, and Placement

2008-09 Ph.D.s	#	TTD	Placement		#
Architecture	1	5.6	Academic	Major U.S.	29
Humanities	74	6.6		Other U.S.	50
Social Sciences	70	6.0		Int'l	14
Int'l & Public Policy	6	4.7	Postdoctoral	U.S.	110
Natural Sciences	108	5.0		Int'l	29
Engineering	<u>90</u>	<u>5.1</u>	Ind/Business		65
Overall	349	5.6	Govt/NPO		23
			Not/Unkn		16

- Percentage of completion in the 75-85% range
- Healthy time-to-degree though long in the humanities
- High percentage (95%) placed at graduation
- Intense competition for top academic positions
- Major fraction (40+%) in postdoctoral appointments
- Significant portion (25%) in non-academic positions