Three-Year Strategic Plan: FY13-14 to 15-16

**Processes Used to Develop the Strategic Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 3</td>
<td>Graduate School deans retreat to discuss data from outcomes assessment, which is</td>
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<td>tied to Graduate School strategic plan. Data suggested some key areas of concern</td>
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<td>for guiding further strategic planning for FY13-14 to 15-16.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>Deans retreat to discuss priorities for strategic planning, including areas of</td>
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<td>concern and possible actions to address areas of concern</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 24-26</td>
<td>Initial draft of Three-Year Strategic Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 29-30</td>
<td>Revision of initial draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Initial discussion of draft by acting dean Rufty and senior vice provost Larick</td>
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<td>April 5</td>
<td>Revision of second draft</td>
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<td>April 9</td>
<td>Discussion by deans of second draft and revision of draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Discussion of draft by acting dean Rufty and senior vice provost Larick</td>
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**Vision and Mission of the Graduate School**

**Guiding Vision:**
Leadership and Innovation in Graduate Education

**Mission Statement**
The mission of the Graduate School is to serve as a catalyst for excellence in graduate education at NC State by

- promoting the highest-quality education for students and postdoctoral scholars, including outstanding academic experiences, opportunities to engage in cutting-edge research, and professional development that prepares students and postdocs for success in their fields;
- advancing the diversity of graduate education at NC State and of the professoriate nationwide through recruitment, retention, and support of underrepresented minority groups;
- fostering an environment in which graduate faculty can reach their potential as teachers, researchers, and mentors to graduate students;
- encouraging research and graduate programs that address the critical issues that challenge our state, our nation, and our world;
- achieving recognition of NC State as a model for leadership and innovation in graduate education in North America.

**Strategic Priorities of the Graduate School Aligned with University Goals**

1. To enhance the success of graduate students by providing focused support for writing theses and dissertations as a part of the broader emphasis on co-curricular professional development through the Preparing Future Leaders (PFL) program (University goal 1)
2. To enhance the success of graduate students through an initiative to improve mentoring (University goal 1)
3. To enhance scholarship and research through a pilot program to increase the competitiveness of NC State for top doctoral applicants by offering full, first-year fellowships as a part of ongoing recruiting efforts (University goal 2)

4. To enhance student success by investing in Graduate School development activities (University goal 1)

5. To enhance the success of graduate students by making preparation for the workplace though curriculum-based professional development a hallmark of graduate education at NC State (University goal 1)

6. To enhance the success of graduate students by expanding the number and range of Professional Science Master’s (PSM) degrees at NC State and maintaining the health of present ones (University goal 1)

**Plans for Each of the Strategic Priorities**

**Strategic Priority 1: Thesis and Dissertation Den**

To enhance the success of graduate students by providing focused support for writing theses and dissertations as a part of the broader emphasis on co-curricular professional development related through the Preparing Future Leaders (PFL) program

**Need**

Data show that the university is falling short of its intermediate targets for achieving 2020 enrollment goals for new doctoral students, new master’s students, total doctoral students, total master’s students, and a lower proportion of undergraduate to graduate students. Though the 10-year completion rate for doctoral students has risen somewhat over the last three years, the 6-year completion rate has dropped below 50%, the lowest in 7 years. The mean time to degree for doctoral students had been rising steadily for 5 years until a slight decline in 2011-2012 to 6.15 years. Overall, these are not healthy trend lines for the university’s goal of success for graduate students. The Graduate School has set ambitious goals for improving these numbers. Priority 1 is to help to achieve these goals by providing support for students writing theses and dissertations. With funding from last year’s strategic planning, we were recently able to hire a Director of Thesis and Dissertation Support Services. For FY13-14 to 15-16 we request operational support for the director and space for a Thesis and Dissertation Den.

**Strategic Actions**

- To provide an operational budget for the Director of Thesis and Dissertation Support Services
- To hire a graduate services assistant (GSA) to provide logistics, such as reserving rooms for events, maintaining records, ordering snacks and beverages for events, copying event materials, communicating with students, and transporting items to events
- To hire 2 GSA’s to serve as tutors in the Thesis and Dissertation Den
- To identify, renovate, and furnish space for a Thesis and Dissertation Den
- To develop partnerships with the libraries and Counseling Center to increase effectiveness of program and better leverage university funding

**New Resource Allocation Requests and Internal Realignment**
See Table 1 on page 8 for all requests 2013-2014 to 2015-2016

Year 1: **New resource requests:**
- $10,000 operating funds for Thesis and Dissertation Support Services
- $20,000 for 1 GSA for Thesis and Dissertation Support Services
- $60,000 for renovating and furnishing a space for the Thesis and Dissertation Den

Year 2: **New resource request:**
$40,000 for 2 GSA tutors in the Thesis and Dissertation Den

Year 3: **No new resource requested**

**Measures for Success**
- Overall time to degree, thesis master’s and doctoral students
- Overall completion rates, thesis master’s and doctoral students
- Overall number of degrees awarded, master’s thesis and doctoral students
- Time to degree for students attending events
- Completion rates for students attending events
- Number of students attending events
- Number of different graduate programs represented by students attending events
- Level of student satisfaction
- Number of students tutored individually in Thesis and Dissertation Den
- Number of return visits to tutors

**Strategic Priority 2: Mentoring**

To enhance the success of graduate students through an initiative to improve mentoring

**Need**
As the Council of Graduate School’s Ph.D. Completion Study showed, faculty mentoring ranks with funding as the two top reasons given by graduate students for both completing their dissertations and not completing them. It is one of the keys to success for doctoral students and it is reasonable to assume the same of thesis master’s students. The same data given in strategic priority 1 may be used to support the need for this priority. Better mentoring could help NC State achieve its goals for graduate student success. When the new dean is in place, the current acting dean will be able to lead the effort toward substantially improving mentoring beginning in FY 14-15.

**Strategic Actions**
- To create a digital tool to collect data on individual faculty mentors (faculty profile) as a baseline to track effectiveness in individual mentoring over time and also to identify especially effective mentors for determining best practices, to identify ineffective mentors to target for improvement, and to supply information on mentoring to department heads and deans they can use for tenure, promotion, and post-tenure reviews. Metrics would include number of committees chaired or co-chaired, average time to submission of plan of work and to successful prelim, average time to degree, and completion rates.
• To give training in effective mentoring to all members of the graduate faculty and, on an ongoing basis, to all new members of the graduate faculty
• To create a speaker series to bring in high-profile mentoring experts twice a year in order to increase the focus of graduate faculty on mentoring
• To heighten the awareness of the importance and value of good mentoring through an annual award and event for excellence in mentoring
• To offer competitive grants to graduate programs for improving mentoring thereby generating successful strategies that could be applied to other programs
• To institute a requirement for periodic review of graduate faculty for maintaining graduate faculty status
• To develop a partnership with the Office of Faculty Development to increase the effectiveness of mentoring programs and better leverage university funding

**Internal Realignment and New Resource Allocation Requests**
See Table 1 on page 8 for all requests 2013-2014 to 2015-2016

**Year 1: Internal realignment:**
• $10,000 for development of a digital tool for evaluating mentors (faculty profile)

**Year 2: New resource request:**
• $35,000 for operational support for improving mentoring, including a GSA ($20,000), speaker series ($5,000), and an annual mentoring award and event ($10,000)

**Year 3: New resource request:**
• $20,000 for matching, competitive awards to programs for best practices to improve mentoring

**Measures for Success**
• Overall mentoring metrics: percentage of active graduate faculty (chairing or co-chairing committees; participating on committees), time to submission of plans of work for thesis master’s and doctoral) and to successful prelim (doctoral), time to degree and completion rates (thesis master’s and doctoral)
• Survey student satisfaction with mentoring
• Overall number of degrees awarded, master’s thesis and doctoral
• Number of faculty attending mentoring events
• Number of different graduate programs represented among faculty attending mentoring events

**Strategic Priority 3: Fellowships**
To enhance scholarship and research through a pilot program to increase the competitiveness of NC State for top doctoral applicants by offering full, first-year fellowships as a part of ongoing recruiting efforts

**Need**
In nearly every external review of graduate programs, the directors say that they are not competitive for the best students because of better offers from other universities.
The main problem is that there are so few full-ride fellowships (stipend, health insurance, and fees from 6 and 7 accounts) to offer to top candidates for their first year. In fall semester 2012, for example, the university awarded only 18 of these fellowships (from external support), with a third going to one department. Only 2 of the 18 fellowships were not aligned with a college and therefore available to the best applicants from any college. If NC State is to be competitive with other universities in recruiting, we need to be able to offer more university level fellowships to top doctoral applicants.

**Strategic Actions**

- To run a pilot to determine the potential of first-year, full-ride fellowships for attracting the best doctoral applicants who would otherwise take a better package at another university
- To generate 8 first-year, competitive, full-ride fellowships ($45,000 each) for doctoral students, the initial 6 for the 2014-2015 recruiting period (including $25,000 stipend, health insurance, fees, and 25% tuition remission)

**New Resource Allocation Requests and Internal Realignment**

See Table 1 on page 8 for all requests 2013-2014 to 2015-2016

Year 1: **No new resource requested**

Year 2: **Internal realignment:**
- Convert $135,000 of the funding currently received from Provost Arden and Vice Chancellor Lomax for $4,000 top-up fellowships to generate 3 full-ride, one-year $45,000 fellowships (3 total)

**New resource request:**
- $135,000 to generate 3 additional $45,000 fellowships (6 total)

Year 3: **New resource request:**
- $90,000 to generate 2 additional fellowships (8 total)

**Measures for Success**

- Number of applicants designated by programs as their highest recruits who would have gone elsewhere without the fellowship
- Number of applications submitted by programs for fellowships
- Number of different programs represented among those applying for fellowships

**Strategic Priority 4: Development Officer** (this is a tentative priority)

To enhance student success by investing in Graduate School development activities

**Need**

The Graduate School no longer has a formal development presence. Its Advisory Board is on furlough, and its development officer was lost during the budget cutbacks. Thus, the Graduate School does not have the ability to encourage donations to enhance graduate education, such as fellowships, travel funds for students, and dissertation completion grants. We plan to wait until the new dean is in place to revive development operations.
Strategic Actions
- To reestablish the Advisory Board of the Graduate School
- To hire a part-time development officer

Internal Realignment and New Resource Allocation Requests
See Table 1
Year 1: No new resource request
Year 2: No new resource request
Year 3: No new resource request

Measures for Success
- Number and amount of contributions to the Graduate School
- Amount of funding directed toward graduate student success

Strategic Priority 5: Professional Development Integrated into the Curriculum
To enhance the success of graduate students by making preparation for the workplace though curriculum-based professional development a hallmark of graduate education at NC State

Need
In graduate education, success must be understood as more than graduating students. Rather, it must also mean enabling graduates to distinguish themselves from those from other universities in order to be competitive for the best available positions and to be effective professionals right from the beginning of employment. Preparing Future Leaders has been very successful in offering professional development on a co-curricular basis. But the Graduate School can provide even greater value to all graduate students by integrating professional development in the curriculum.

Strategic Actions
- To hire a half-time professional development coordinator to run program
- To work with faculty groups to determine the feasibility and needs for professional development opportunities in curricula, exploring various models and methods of delivery.
- To engage employers, as appropriate, to identify goals for professional development.
- To conduct focus groups with students to identify the kinds of professional development they would like to see integrated into their curricula.
- To manage creation of a wide range of course offerings to respond to students’ professional development needs, including 1-, 2-, and/or 3- credit hour courses presented in a variety of formats and number of weeks, e.g., modules that teachers could insert into their courses, cases that students can use to prepare for professional situations they could encounter—all of which offer flexibility to faculty designing their curricula.

Internal Realignment and New Resource Allocation Requests
See Table 1 on page 8 for all requests 2013-2014 to 2015-2016
Year 1: **No new resource request**

Year 2: **No new resource request**

Year 3: **New resource request:**
- $35,000 for hiring a part-time curricular professional development coordinator

**Measures for Success**
- Number of professional development curricular items developed
- Number of courses that integrate curricular items
- Satisfaction of students and faculty with curricular items

**Strategic Priority 6: PSM Programs**
To enhance the success of graduate students by expanding the number and range of Professional Science Master’s (PSM) degrees at NC State and maintaining the health of present ones

**Need**
PSM programs at NC State have enhanced the employability of their students by integrating the development of professional skills into their curricula. Expanding the number and range of programs and maintaining the health of present ones has been the job of an assistant dean of the Graduate School who encourages and aids in developing proposals for new programs, gives workshops, develops relationships with local industries, and leads a committee of program directors. The assistant dean now has a quarter-time position with UNC-GA to advance PSMs on the system level. We need a PSM coordinator to continue the growth of PSMs at NC State.

**Strategic Actions**
- To hire a full-time PSM coordinator to work with the assistant dean of the Graduate School to advance PSMs at NC State

**New Resource Allocation Requests and Internal Realignment**
See Table 1 on page 8 for all requests 2013-2014 to 2015-2016

**Year 1:** **New Resource Allocation Request**
- $38,000 for a portion of full-time PSM coordinator (total salary $60,000 + $18,000 = $78,000)

- **Internal realignment:**
  - $40,000 for a portion of full-time PSM coordinator (salary release from Lis Borbye’s ¼ time and benefits at UNC-GA)

**Year 2:** **No resource requested**

**Year 3:** **No resource requested**

**Measures for Success**
- Growth of PSM programs and concentrations
- Satisfaction of PSM directors

### Table 1: New Resource Requests and Internal Realignments

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<tr>
<th>Fiscal Years</th>
<th>New Resource Requests</th>
<th>Internal Realignments</th>
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<td>2013-14</td>
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<td>• $20,000 for 1 GSA for Thesis and Dissertation Services</td>
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<td>• $60,000 for renovating and furnishing a space for Thesis and Dissertation Den</td>
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<td>• $38,000 for a portion of full-time PSM coordinator ($60,000 salary, $18,000 benefits = $78,000)</td>
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<td>2014-15</td>
<td>• $40,000 for 2 GSA tutors for the Thesis and Dissertation Den</td>
<td>• $135,000 for 3 $45,000 doctoral fellowships from provost and vice chancellor top-up fellowships</td>
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<td>• $35,000 for operational support for improving mentoring, including a GSA ($20,000), speaker series ($5,000), and an annual mentoring award and mentoring event ($10,000)</td>
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<td>• $135,000 for 3 $45,000 doctoral fellowships</td>
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<td>2015-16</td>
<td>• $20,000 for matching, competitive awards to programs for best practices to improve mentoring</td>
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<td>• $90,000 for 2 doctoral fellowships</td>
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<td>• $X?? for hiring development officer</td>
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