## Executive Summary


## Accomplishments of 2016-2017

Lead the way in graduate education

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## Priorities for 2017-2018


## Organizational Structure


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Graduate School sets university-wide standards and policies for graduate education, serves a special advocacy and communication role, promotes diversity initiatives, and otherwise augments the margin of excellence. In 2016-2017 we fulfilled these roles in a number of exceptional ways.

Highlighted accomplishments of 2016-2017

SERVICE

Goal: Streamline graduate admissions
- Launched a new online application with improved navigation and a modern look and feel
- Adopted batch academic transcript collection

Goal: Deliver excellent academic services
- Piloted the Graduate Student Tracking System project
- Adopted the new campus Guide to replace the Graduate Catalog

Goal: Optimize program assessment
- Prepared in-depth comparative data reports for graduate program review committees
- Offered new program review, data analysis, and program assessment planning workshops

Goal: Encourage and support new program planning
- Strengthened partnership with the Division of Continuing Studies, focused on non-traditional programs

Goal: Increase student funding
- Allocated $15,000,000 in graduate student funding and $278,000 in travel awards
- Overhauled the divisional funding competitions
- Implemented changes to the assistantship appointment process

DIVERSITY

Goal: Promote diverse and inclusive experiences
- Supported student success through community-building opportunities
- Led efforts to foster an inclusive and positive climate, including diversity dialogues and bias-breaking workshops

ENGAGEMENT

Goal: Prepare students for career success
- Built DiscoverPD, a competencies framework, planning tool, and opportunities database
- Increased the number of opportunities promoted by the school and piloted new programs

Goal: Engage the campus community
- Onboarded new graduate students and communicated weekly with all graduate students
- Hosted Coffee with the Dean events to solicit input on graduate student experiences
- Offered trainings on a variety of graduate education topics for faculty and staff
- Met regularly with Directors of Graduate Study, Graduate Program Coordinators, and other disciplinary-specific groups

PROGRAMS
- Master’s: 156
- MFA: 4
- Doctoral: 109
- Graduate faculty: 1,914

GFEC ACTIONS
- New programs approved: 15
- Discontinued/suspended: 19
- Reviews conducted: 25

ADMISSIONS
- Applicants: 19,385
- Admits: 5,942
- New enrollments: 2,808

FUNDING
- Fellowships: $15,000,000
- Travel awards: $278,000

ENROLLMENT (fall 2016)
- Total enrolled: 9,153
- International: 2,619
- Master’s: 3,803
- Doctoral: 5,540
- Full-time: 7,759
- Part-time: 1,396
- Female: 4,469
- Male: 4,684

PRO. DEVELOPMENT
- DiscoverPD visitors: 3,836
- PD calendar events: 320

DEGREES
- Master’s: 2,039*
- Doctoral: 915*

*degree conferral ongoing at time of publication
The Graduate School advances its mission of fostering excellence in graduate education by partnering with faculty and staff, schools and colleges, as well as central administration to address a number of priority areas that include admissions, academic service, program assessment, and student support. These priorities derive from our core values of service, diversity, and engagement. The Graduate School advocates for graduate education and for graduate students. We work in collaboration with senior administration, schools, colleges, departments, and programs to provide resources and opportunities for success.

The Graduate School is committed to a learning and research environment that is free from harassment and intimidation. By engaging partners at University Health Services, the Graduate School launched programming that informs all graduate students about sexual harassment as well as resources for reporting and support. Similarly, diversity in all its forms is central to a robust educational and research environment and necessary for graduate student career development over the long term. To that end, the Graduate School partnered with faculty and staff who have expertise in recognizing and changing bias habits to deliver inclusivity resources to graduate students.

The Office of the Dean of the Graduate School supported two major projects designed to help graduate faculty, departments, and programs recruit and support the best possible graduate students. The first of these provides additional support to recruit Ph.D. applicants who have offers from peer institutions. This program is in its second year and had a 49% success rate, up from 43% in the previous year. Moreover, the number of students recruited away from prestigious peer institutions to UW–Madison doubled. The second project was the launch of the Collaborative Training Programs (CTP) in Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences. Modeled after the National Institutes of Health (NIH) T32 institutional training grant program, the CTP is a faculty-led effort designed to provide a cohort-based education experience for Ph.D. students in disciplines that have not historically provided such an opportunity. The Graduate School awarded one CTP titled “Interdisciplinary Research Methods Training for Scholars of Pre-Modern China” and a second titled “Youth Development, Social Media, and Assessment.”

UW–Madison has historical success in securing extramural funding for graduate student training. The university hosts 31 NIH T32 training grants that support students in the biomedical sciences. This funding mechanism exposes graduate students to a cohort training environment and allows graduate faculty in a large number of programs to compete nationally for the best graduate students. In partnership with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, the Graduate School committed tuition, stipend, and operational support for nine T32 training grant renewal applications.

In 2016-2017 the Graduate School continued its partnership with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education in its support of the UW2020 program as well as the new Microbiome Initiative. In both funding competitions, the Graduate School committed a research assistantship to each funded project. Providing this additional support to the highly innovative research proposals serves two functions: to help faculty accelerate the pace of discovery and to expose graduate students to cutting edge research, which enhances their career development and subsequent opportunities.

The major challenge facing the Graduate School continues to be graduate student funding levels and the ability to help programs offer multi-year funding packages. The school has been fortunate to receive a strong and increasing commitment from the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) in support of graduate students. The reinvestment of past research success into current graduate education allows UW–Madison to recruit the most talented graduate students who continue to change the course of the world through their creativity and innovation.
Specialized staff in the Graduate School Office of Admissions serve as essential resources for applicants and newly admitted graduate students, as well as for faculty and academic program staff throughout the admissions process. In 2016-2017 the Graduate School partnered with 156 master’s degree programs, four MFA, and 109 doctoral programs to process 19,385 applications.

UW–Madison attracts students from across the globe. The Office of Admissions provided service for 9,700 international applicants this past year. Certified staff in the office create I20 forms for international applicants, which are required by the Department of Homeland Security to obtain student visas.

In order to meet the needs of academic program staff who require specialized instructions on admission procedures and systems, the office hosted one-on-one training opportunities.

In January 2017 the Graduate School launched a new online application for admission. It features a modern look and feel, with differentiated sections that ease navigation. Application questions are dynamic and reorganized for better flow. For example, if an applicant indicates that he is applying as an international student, he is asked for visa type and dependents - improvements that make application easier for prospective graduate students and aid in improved data collection.

The new application connects to the residency smart application, maintained by the UW–Madison Office of the Registrar, to determine if an applicant would pay in-state or out-of-state tuition. The feature eliminates the need for the Graduate School to manually collect residency information and send electronic files to the residency office. Instead, information is transmitted directly and decisions about resident/non-resident tuition rates are made more quickly.

Batch receipt of electronic transcripts is an additional innovation put in place this year. By creating relationships with transcript vendors, the Office of Admissions was able to collect official transcripts electronically in batch, beginning in May 2017. This centralized collection eliminates the need for applicants to send transcripts to individual department offices, thus reducing confusion and increasing efficiency. Academic programs still receive unofficial transcripts through the online application and can make a recommendation using an unofficial transcript if desired.

### Applications
- Domestic Non-targeted: 8,450
- Domestic Targeted: 1,235
- International: 9,700

### Admissions
- Domestic Non-targeted: 3,542
- Domestic Targeted: 501
- International: 1,899

### New Enrollment
- Domestic Non-targeted: 1,777
- Domestic Targeted: 240
- International: 791
The Graduate School Office of Academic Services (OAS) is the academic dean’s office for all graduate students and serves as a campus resource to facilitate excellence in graduate education from matriculation through degree conferral. The office works with students, faculty, and graduate program staff to provide academic guidance and assistance, ensure satisfactory progress, manage academic portfolios, and grant master’s and doctoral degrees, including special committee degrees and joint degrees.

The office is responsible for ensuring that graduate students maintain satisfactory academic progress, monitoring and intervening as needed. While a student’s primary academic advising comes from the home program and faculty mentor, OAS staff ensure that students are meeting Graduate School timelines and expectations. The office is often a source of “neutral” counseling separate from the student’s faculty advisor and graduate program, interpreting policies and applying them to student situations.

The Graduate School is responsible for grievance procedures, typically in partnership with the Office of the Dean of Students. However, more commonly needed are confidential, impartial, and informal advice and guidance, which Academic Services staff provide on a daily basis.

This year a number of administrative efficiencies were achieved, including updating the program change form from paper to online, eliminating the required final review appointment, transitioning front desk staff from professional staff to a team of student employees, and implementing automatic phone call distribution.

The Graduate Student Tracking System project, which aims to allow students, faculty, and graduate program staff direct access to a detailed academic progress report directly in the Student Information System, met major milestones in 2016-2017. A pilot phase with two academic programs was completed, including an evaluation, summary report, and roll-out plans with budget estimations for a broad campus adoption.

With leadership from the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment, in June 2017 campus celebrated the launch of the Guide, a new academic catalog that combines graduate and undergraduate offerings. The Guide was created with a robust, specialized catalog builder that links courses generated by the Student Information System, applies workflow controls for governance, and provides an easy-to-use layout for enhanced navigation. The Guide includes material from the 2016-2018 Graduate Catalog and will go through an update cycle in 2017-2018.

Dissertator status granted 856
Master’s degrees conferred 2,039*
Doctoral degrees conferred 915*

*degree conferral ongoing at time of publication
Supporting UW–Madison’s commitment to timely and beneficial academic program review is an annual priority. In 2016-2017, the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) approved 25 program reviews (Figure 1), and the Graduate School provided in-depth comparative data reports on important student metrics for all review committees charged. These reports were shared with all programs under review so they could also reflect on the results and work on continuous improvement efforts.

New this year, the Graduate School Office of Academic Planning and Assessment (OAPA), worked together with the Office of the Provost to offer multiple new training opportunities for campus. This training included program review workshops offered each semester to programs charged with completing self-studies as well as to school/college representatives called upon to lead and monitor program reviews.

OAPA hosted campus data overview presentations explaining the use of data for learning outcomes assessment to all academic campus programs, as well as new GFEC member orientation and review committee training.

Working together with the Office of the Provost, the OAPA led quarterly workshops and graduate-level communications, supporting development of plans to assess Student Learning Outcomes. The first annual assessment report is due November 1, 2017.

Graduate Faculty Executive Committee Program Actions 2012-13 to 2016-17

![Graph showing program actions from 2012-13 to 2016-17](image)

Figure 1. Program actions by the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (2012-2017)
The Graduate School provided approximately $15 million in graduate student funding during the 2016-2017 fiscal year. The primary source continues to be the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), with additional support from donors including the State of Wisconsin Advanced Opportunity Program, the Office of the Chancellor, the Mellon Foundation, the Kohler Foundation, the Dickie Family, and the Kemper Knapp trust.

The Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Funding (ODIF) oversees the Graduate School’s funding competitions, serves as the coordinating unit for multiple external fellowships, and provides assistance to graduate students, staff, and faculty on campus-wide funding issues.

Travel awards totaling $278,000 were provided to 365 students, using support from WARF, the Vilas Trust, and the UW Foundation’s Twin Cities Women’s Philanthropy Council.

A major initiative during the 2016-2017 year was an overhaul of the four divisional funding competitions. This effort sought to allow flexibility for programs to request the funding they need to be most competitive, provide consistency across the four divisions, and make the application process less onerous. This revision effort also sought to better align these funding competitions with the academic program review process.

In January 2017 the university approved a 3.5 percent increase in the TA-standard and PA stipends. Approximately 1,600 graduate students who hold teaching assistant-standard appointments and 600 with project assistantships benefited from the pay raise. Academic departments received a permanent supplement to budget allocations to cover the cost of the increase. This is part of an upward trend in graduate assistant stipends at UW–Madison, resulting in about a 14 percent rate increase over five years.

In addition to the rate increase, policy changes to the graduate assistantship appointment process went into effect, making it simpler for prospective graduate students to compare funding offers from different universities, and streamlining a department’s ability to set rates above the minimum rate. The Graduate School reviewed and approved all rates, noting trends in rates set at or above the minimum.

Going forward, each year the Graduate School will recommend to central administration the campus minimum stipend rates for TA, PA, and RA appointments and then will collect, review, and approve rates from all graduate programs.

The Graduate School updated its external fellowship supplementation policy in the summer of 2017. While the school has for many years supplemented a number of external fellowships, the new policy recognizes the fact that there are many other prestigious external fellowships earned by UW–Madison graduate students and provides an official process for programs to request funding to cover unmet educational costs. The new policy will further encourage students to identify and apply for such fellowships that will support their education and provide opportunities for them to connect with others in their disciplines.
PROMOTE diverse & inclusive experiences

Accomplishments of 2016-2017

The Graduate School promotes access and success for all graduate students, especially those from underrepresented or marginalized backgrounds such as domestic targeted minority, low-income, or first generation college-going students. The Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Funding (ODIF) works to promote an inclusive climate for all graduate students through initiatives such as the McNair Scholars Program, the Summer Research Opportunities Program, and the Graduate Research Scholars communities.

In 2016-2017 ODIF supported students through a number of community-building opportunities, including events like the Multicultural Graduate Network welcome and a mixer/luncheon series to minimize the sense of isolation voiced by many students from racial/ethnic minority groups or the LGBTQ community. Recognizing the need to provide role models and engage the campus community, faculty, and administrators were invited to all mixers. This was a collaboration with the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Educational Achievement, with organizations such as the Black Graduate and Professional Student Association and the LGBT Campus Center.

To recognize the achievements of graduate students, ODIF is home to the UW–Madison chapter of the Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society. In the spring of 2017 UW–Madison inducted its seventh cohort of Bouchet Society members, which included five dissertators and one postdoctoral researcher, bringing the total number of UW–Madison inductees since the chapter’s inception in 2010 to 32. The Vice Provost and Chief Diversity Officer continued support by providing professional development awards to inductees.

In alignment with campus diversity initiatives, the Graduate School led efforts to help graduate students understand their roles in promoting positive campus climate and increase their capacity to enact diversity efforts. These efforts included diversity dialogues during Welcome Week, a discussion with graduate students based on the Fair Play video game developed at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, and bias-breaking workshops led by psychology professor Patricia Devine’s research team. Approximately 250 students attended at least one of these activities, with an additional 100+ expressing interest.

To help build a pipeline of prospective graduate students from underrepresented groups, the Graduate School annually supports campus Summer Research Opportunities Programs. In SROP 2016, 110 undergraduate students participated through eight programs across campus. Additionally, the Graduate School partners with 15 predominantly minority-serving institutions and two consortia to promote UW–Madison summer and graduate program opportunities to their students.

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PREPARE students for career success

Accomplishments of 2016-2017

Drawing from research, national reports, peer practices, and input from graduate students, faculty, and staff, the Graduate School Office of Professional Development and Communications (OPDC) created a new model for graduate student professional development at UW–Madison. The resulting framework identifies universal competencies, skills, and attributes developed through graduate education. Paired with an Individual Development Plan, it provides students scaffolding on which to plan their time in graduate school, as well as a vocabulary to describe the skills that are central to graduate study. The framework is the basis for DiscoverPD, an online tool launched in October 2016.

DiscoverPD prompts graduate students to assess their confidence in each subarea of the framework, then generates a custom report that includes recommendations for improvement. The opportunities in the DiscoverPD database are searchable by keyword, modality, type, and time commitment.

The number of professional development events promoted through the Graduate School increased in 2016-2017. The events calendar, populated both by OPDC’s programming and collaborators’ events, contained 320 events, up from 280 last year. Beyond the Tenure Track, a series hosted by OPDC for the fourth consecutive year, included “The Graduate Student’s Guide to the Non-academic Job Search.” Over 230 people attended the three-hour event led by consultant Anne Krook, and it received a 93% satisfaction rating.

OPDC expanded its connections with academic programs. Together with the Office of Postdoctoral Studies, OPDC ran a pilot to grow capacity for programs to host non-academic career panels. A new grant program funneled funding requests from student organizations and departments into a single process, and awarded nine graduate student organizations and ten academic departments.

The new Higher Education Leadership Project Assistantship program offered exposure to university administration for Ph.D. students, while gaining practical experience in the functional areas of professional development and communication. PAs were appointed, maintained IDPs, and reflected positively on the skills and networks they developed.

The Graduate School remains the primary campus resource for Individual Development Plan support and information, and co-sponsored Mellon-Wisconsin Dissertation Writing Camps. Another new initiative was the Project Management Workshop hosted in collaboration with the Office of Quality Improvement.

Visits to the DiscoverPD homepage 3,836
Opportunities in the DiscoverPD database 440
Events in the professional development calendar 320

To boost graduate students’ access to career advising expertise, the Career Development Summer Series and the Career Development Facilitator grant for graduate program coordinators were offered for the fourth year.

The Graduate School was selected to participate in the Council of Graduate Schools’ Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement. This project will be led by the Office of Academic Planning and Assessment, and will seed career tracking and work toward various aspects of program improvement. The school also made plans to join the Coalition for Next Generation Life Sciences to advance career opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral researchers.
ENGAGE the campus community

Accomplishments of 2016-2017

STUDENTS  New graduate students received a warm welcome to graduate school through a coordinated onboarding campaign that included email messages, Welcome Week activities, and the New Graduate Student Welcome, which was attended by over 450 students and 42 resource fair vendors. The Graduate School held the inaugural Degree Dash during Welcome Week, which brought together over 400 graduate students, faculty, staff, and family members who raced in the 5.7-mile Doctoral Derby or the 1.75-mile Master’s Mile.

The GradConnections Weekly newsletter was sent to over 9,200 students with approximately a 50 percent open rate. Twitter followers increased to over 1,500. The Graduate School started a Facebook group and developed a mobile version of Graduate Student Life.

The Graduate School Dean hosted eight coffee chats, including an online chat, one hosted jointly with the Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences, one hosted jointly with the Dean of the School of Medicine and Public Health, and two chats for targeted demographic groups. These chats gave students direct access to share their triumphs and challenges with the Graduate School Dean.

The Peer Mentor Awards recognized five graduate students for their exemplary mentoring qualities, with five additional students receiving honorable mention recognition, at the Center for Leadership and Involvement’s Bucky’s Awards. This is a tremendous opportunity for the Graduate School to partner with the Office of the Dean of Students to reinforce mentorship as a key form of leadership.

FACULTY AND STAFF  As the data infrastructure grows on campus, the Graduate School too has grown its involvement in the communities and governance bodies associated with it, including participation in the Campus Tableau Advisory Group, Tableau Developer Community, Business Intelligence Community of Experts, and the Teaching and Learning Advisory Group.

Through its work with faculty and staff across campus, the Graduate School participated in cross-unit projects to enhance engagement with directors of graduate studies and graduate program coordinators. It provided individual training for coordinators on policies and student systems. Workshops were available for coordinators each fall semester and on an as-needed basis throughout the year. One such workshop is Jump Start, which is a training held each fall for new coordinators. It provides an introduction to systems, policies, and procedures, as well as an opportunity to network with fellow graduate program coordinators and Graduate School staff.

WEBSITE  The Graduate School website received 1.95 million pageviews in 2016-2017, most focused on admissions pages at peak application times. The school launched a website redesign project, to be completed in the following academic year.

The number of alumni career profiles on the Graduate School website grew, now totaling 50 profiles. Twenty-one original stories were showcased on the homepage carousel. These stories featured Graduate School initiatives such as the GEM fellows, the Bouchet Graduate Honor Society, and the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation Health Policy Research Scholars.
PRIORITIES
for 2017-2018

ADMISSIONS

The Graduate School Office of Admissions looks forward to a successful launch of the application suite to replace GWIS and GWIS lite, which are the systems programs used to review applications, as well as OASIS, the student status check. The suite will include applicant review, applicant review admin, and the student status check. A related improvement will be the graduate admissions data mart to replace admission queries.

The Graduate School will begin initiating requests for final official transcripts from applicants, removing programs from the middle of this process and thus reducing confusion among applicants.

Parchment, an e-transcript vendor, intends to develop an automated search match process, which would be employed by the Graduate School in the next year.

The Office of Admissions will continue transitioning to paperless operations. This includes reviewing admission applications electronically, as well as mass assignment and removal of enrollment holds. These changes will alleviate the workload of the Graduate School admissions staff.

The office will prompt programs to rethink admission processes by introducing principles of holistic admission review with the goal of increasing student diversity.

Another innovation will be examining processes and systems to accommodate applicants to non-traditional programs, looking for consistencies and differences with traditional programs.

ACADEMIC SERVICES

The Office of Academic Services aims to secure funding, expand functionality, and begin rolling out the Graduate Student Tracking System to additional programs.

Staff will continue to develop the Graduate Student Portal, an integrated online student-facing system for Graduate School resources and systems.

The office will also review and update the existing workshop “Last Steps to Completing Your PhD” to expand participation and delivery of the relevant content to students.

ACADEMIC PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

Using new data dissemination tools, the Graduate School Office of Academic Planning and Assessment will redesign the graduate program profiles, offering data visualizations that meet the distinct needs of prospective students and faculty/staff. Using Tableau™ software, the redesigned profiles will include a data explorer that gives internal audiences greater access to detail, and a simple dashboard for prospective students with information relevant to selecting a program. The visualizations will be launched in the new Graduate School’s website in 2017-2018.

Staff will lead the update process of the first edition of the new Graduate Guide, which replaces the Graduate Catalog with a visual, easy-to-navigate interface for degree and program information.

The office will continue working together with the Office of the Provost to streamline the program review process for graduate, professional, and capstone certificates.

The Graduate School will play an active role in campus planning, led by the Division of Continuing Studies, to increase the number of students in non-traditional programs, and continue to support the campus 2019 HLC accreditation project.

Staff will implement current student and alumni surveys of the Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement project.
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND FUNDING

While there has been growth in measurable diversity within the graduate student population, new strategies are necessary to make the campus climate more welcoming to all students.

The office will expand mixer/luncheon series to support students underrepresented in various demographic dimensions, including race/ethnicity, LGBTQ identity, low income, and first generation college-going, among others.

ODIF will implement a Bouchet Society seminar series and professional development events to promote the organization and provide special opportunities to members.

Another goal is to expand diversity workshops offered through the Graduate School and support academic programs’ efforts to improve campus climate.

The McNair program will implement intensified workshops to aid scholars’ ability to prepare competitive applications for graduate funding opportunities. SROP will expand to include more humanities, arts, and social science disciplines, and opportunities in academic programs that do not have formal summer research programs.

ODIF will continue refining application fee coupons to encourage students to apply to UW–Madison. This will include a review of recent changes to identify ways to continue to make fee grants visible yet targeted. The Graduate School will pilot holistic admissions practices; this effort will include examining successful programs at other universities, such as the Fisk-Vanderbilt Bridge Program.

The office will deepen and expand collaborative relationships to improve recruitment of underrepresented graduate students, evaluating success, and sunsetting partnerships as appropriate.

The Graduate School will transition divisional and Graduate Research Scholars (GRS) fellowship allocations to a new competition process and structure and initiate a review process of all GRS programs. Efforts to streamline funding processes will be implemented to allow the school to better support students and academic programs.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Among OPDC’s top priorities are promotion of DiscoverPD and graduate student professional development broadly, as well as integrating the new framework into professional development programming.

The office will continue to advocate for career services for graduate students, including hosting the national Graduate Career Consortium conference in 2018.

OPDC will strive to increase use of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), including promotion of the new IDP tool ImaginePhD for arts, humanities, and social sciences.

The Graduate School will grow student attendance and leadership presence at the New Graduate Student Welcome, establish a grant to foster professional development programming at the disciplinary level, build on the success of the Higher Education Leadership Project Assistantship, and evaluate impact of dissertation camp on student success and time to degree.

Finally, the Graduate School website will be redesigned in 2017-2018, a project that includes examining the KnowledgeBase and Graduate Student Portal.
The above organizational chart is current as of June 2017. To view an updated chart, please visit grad.wisc.edu/about.

PHOTOS (all clockwise from upper left)