



GRADUATE SCHOOL

2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT





Dear Colleagues,

2019-2020 has been a year unlike any other. Disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way that we all live, work, study, and conduct research and scholarship. We have felt uncertainty and anxiety born of the pandemic, while facing added challenges from it. As we practice physical distancing and work remotely, we have learned new ways to connect with one another virtually for support and collaboration.

Yet in many ways, this year has been no different. When it became clear in March that swift action was necessary to protect the health and safety of our campus community, the Graduate School continued its commitment to high-quality service during its pivot to virtual operations. We remained engaged with the graduate education community through frequent COVID-19 updates, conversations, and communications resources that have kept students and programs up to date in an ever-evolving landscape. We continued to look for ways to support students. For instance, we anticipated the financial challenges that COVID-19 would cause to graduate students who lost access to their typical sources of summer funding and responded quickly with \$1.2 million in research scholarships to those students.

These are just a few of the ways that the Graduate School has fulfilled its missions of service, diversity, and engagement this year. We have also made progress in advancing admissions and recruitment, bolstering student funding, increasing data access and transparency, providing inclusive experiences, and supporting students' professional and career development. I invite you to read the rest of this report to learn about our many accomplishments in the past year.

Through these challenging times, we remain committed to our mission and the broader mission of the university to advance knowledge that will positively impact our society. Commitment to that mission is more important now than ever. I am confident that the creativity, flexibility, and ingenuity that our students, faculty, and staff have demonstrated this year will continue to move us forward.



William J. Karpus
Dean of the Graduate School
Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
University of Wisconsin-Madison

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Service

Advance graduate recruitment and admissions

- Produced a prospective student video, published interactive program data profiles, and grew a collection of print and electronic materials used at various stages in the recruitment timeline
- Provided support to programs throughout the admissions process, including new or updated technology for data, holistic admission review, and international processing

Bolster student funding

- Announced increases to stipend levels for graduate assistants, including a more than 20% increase for lecturer student assistants and an 11.7% increase for project assistants

- Participated in a campus-wide workgroup that added policy for research assistantships as well as a section on grievance procedures to the Graduate Assistant Policies and Procedures document, which had been published the previous year
- In addition to a variety of long-standing support programs, responded quickly to COVID-19 related need by disbursing \$1.2 million in new summer funding for graduate students

Promote academic excellence

- Approved six new graduate degrees and accomplished a high volume of governance actions through the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee
- Marked significant progress in program

adoption of the Graduate Student Tracking System, which is on track for campus-wide use by summer 2021

Support career success and professional development

- Published findings on PhD career trajectories, based on data gathered through participation in national efforts to understand graduate degree alumni outcomes for program improvement
- Led campus coordination of professional development activities for graduate students and developed new programming to address unmet needs, for example online and in-person training on intellectual property, resulting in overall hundreds of in-person and online opportunities

Diversity

Foster inclusive experiences

- Continued programming to support and retain underrepresented graduate students, including affinity group mixers and networking opportunities with faculty and staff of color
- Initiated mental health-focused programming, panels, and support groups for underserved populations of graduate students

Increase student diversity

- Achieved a significant increase in applications to the Summer Research Opportunity Program through a new online application system
- Continued institutional pipeline partnerships, joined the National Name Exchange, and participated in additional programs to facilitate recruitment of a diverse graduate student body

Celebrate achievement

- Marked the 10-year anniversary of the UW–Madison chapter of the national Bouchet Graduate Honor Society
- Recognized graduate student mentors through the Peer Mentor Program that promotes inclusion and retention of underrepresented and marginalized students

Engagement

Build awareness and connections

- Maintained an exemplary website with over 1.4 million pageviews, used as a platform to elevate student and alumni success stories and communicate with tens of thousands of prospective and current graduate students
- Increased social media engagement through a new Instagram account and by growing the number of followers across all social media platforms
- Disseminated frequent COVID-19 updates to the graduate education community about operational changes, policy flexibilities, and financial and wellbeing support for graduate students
- Together with the Office of the

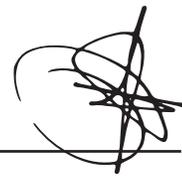
Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, convened a COVID-19 Graduate Education Fall 2020 Continuity Workgroup to make recommendations to senior university leadership for the various scenarios possible for the fall semester

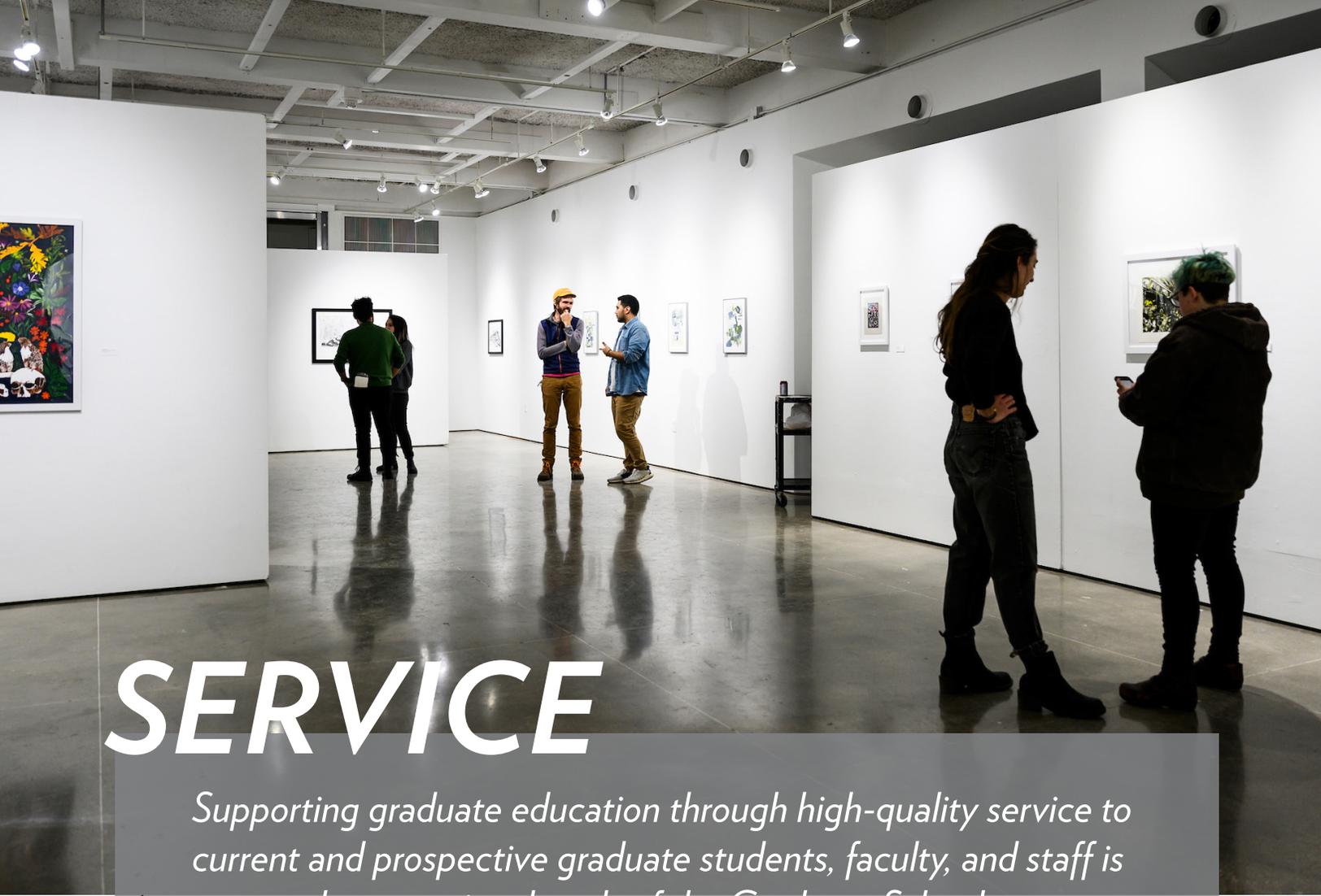
Support student wellbeing

- Advocated for and supported graduate students through mental health programming, centralized grievance procedures, and creation of a current doctoral student experience survey
- Largely due to COVID-19, tracked a 90% increase in the need for support offered by the Graduate and Professional Student Assistance

Specialist, a shared position with the Dean of Students Office

- Offered training for graduate program coordinators on mental health, implicit bias, career development, and more
- **Improve data access and transparency**
- Streamlined response procedure for data requests from campus stakeholders and published a new data resource webpage
- Collaborated across campus by developing a data visualization about postdoctoral first destination careers and by participating in the campus data community and governance
- Updated DataMart for admissions data to be more field-based and flexible





SERVICE

Supporting graduate education through high-quality service to current and prospective graduate students, faculty, and staff is core to the operational goals of the Graduate School.



Advance Graduate Recruitment and Admissions

In fall 2019, the Graduate School released a recruitment video to help prospective students answer the question, “Why Wisconsin?” The video has been used by programs to supplement their recruitment activities and has been discovered on video streaming platforms by prospective students. Since publication, the video has earned 2,685 unique plays on the Graduate School website, been viewed on Vimeo 624 times, and watched 918 times on YouTube.

Throughout the academic year, the Graduate School provided almost 2,000

folders with information about graduate school at UW–Madison to programs to support their recruitment activities. Of these, 760 folders were pre-application folders, aimed at prospective students who have not yet applied, and 1,159 folders were post-application folders, aimed at helping admitted students who had not yet committed to UW–Madison for graduate school.

Graduate School admissions staff gained skills in new areas, with more staff becoming Designated School Officials (DSOs) for I20 processing as well as cross-training in credential evaluations. The staff held training sessions for graduate program coordinators including one-on-one consultations, new coordinator orientation, and peer-to-peer coordinator training.

Graduate Admissions 2019-2020

17,511 applicants
5,509 admissions
2,794 enrollments

31.5% of applicants are admitted
50.7% of admitted students enroll

Staff achieved technology improvements in graduate admissions, such as new, flexible features in Applicant Review



SERVICE (cont.)

and DataMart to encourage holistic admission review, which programs can customize to fit their needs. The Graduate School initiated a pilot program with Kira Talent, a vendor that facilitates holistic admission review practices through online interviews.

Staff became more efficient with the campus-wide Terra Dotta System for international I20 processing. Programs now send financial letters directly to students without routing them through the Graduate School, and international

applicants can upload required documents through Terra Dotta. The school also changed its process to admit international applicants before receiving funding information. Both changes result in faster admission decisions.

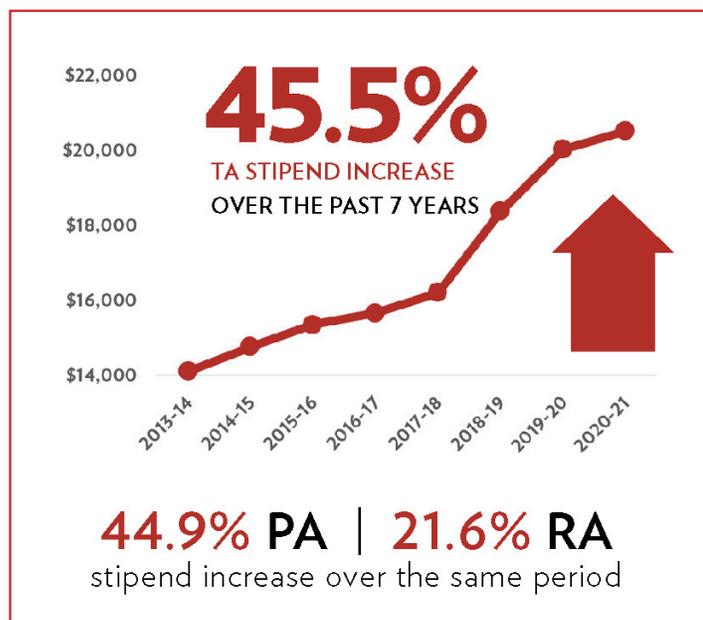
COVID-19 related disruptions had a tremendous impact on graduate admissions in spring 2020. GRE and TOEFL sites closed around the globe, universities transitioned to online operations resulting in applicant

difficulties obtaining transcripts and other required documents, and U.S. embassies and borders were restricted making it difficult for international applicants to schedule visa appointments. To mitigate these factors, Graduate School staff allowed for flexibility with admissions and fellowship deferrals, continued to work on-site to process I20s, and extended the summer application period for applicants who opted to pursue graduate study due to loss of employment.

Bolster Student Funding

The Graduate School has a number of funding mechanisms to attract and retain highly qualified graduate students. Many of these are open to all, such as the Graduate Student Support Competition (GSSC) and the Student Research Grants Competition; others target underrepresented populations, such as the Advanced Opportunities Fellowship (AOF) supported by the Advanced Opportunity Program (AOP) and Kemper Knapp Fellowships.

The Graduate School supplements state support from AOP with Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) funding to support the Graduate Research Scholar (GRS) Communities. AY2019-20 saw a \$1M increase in support for AOF. This year, customized data reports for campus review of the



GRS communities included data on the communities both individually and collectively for comparison purposes.

The university increased stipends for graduate student project assistants (PAs), teaching assistants (TAs), and lecturer-student assistants (LSAs). PAs



SERVICE (cont.)



received an 11.7% increase in minimum stipend levels over the previous year's rate, effective July 1, 2020, for annual appointments, TAs received a 2.5% increase, and LSAs received a 20.8% increase. Departments and graduate programs with grant, gift, or other funding sources can set higher rates for graduate assistants, giving flexibility to be competitive with peer institutions in specific fields of study.

In fall 2019, the university added to the Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (GAPP) document a process for addressing alleged violations of GAPP, which was published the previous spring to provide formal guidance, clarity, and transparency on employment-related matters for TAs, PAs, and their supervisors. In early 2020, research assistantship (RA) policy was added to GAPP, signifying the completion of a three-year collaborative process involving a workgroup of graduate students, faculty, staff, and administration.

In late 2019 the Graduate School developed a new webpage showing the university's investment in graduate assistantships, to be used for external communication and recruitment. This resource highlights that UW–Madison TAs have received a 45.5% stipend increase over the past seven years, placing the university above the estimated Association of American Universities (AAU) peer median. The page illustrates that a compensation package for a graduate assistantship totals over \$43,000 annually with

stipend, tuition remission, and employer contributions toward health insurance.

The Student Research Grants Competition (SRGC) Travel Award, administered by the Graduate School, provides graduate students \$300 to \$1,500 for research travel and \$300 to \$1,200 for conference presentation travel support. Funding for these awards comes from the Vilas Trust and WARF. This year, the school awarded a total of nearly \$800,000 to graduate students through SRGC.

With the shutdown of most in-person campus experiences in summer 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many students that are funded on 9-month appointments lost access to their typical on-campus sources of summer income. This loss of employment has been especially challenging for international students, whose visa status does not allow them to seek off-campus employment. In response, the Graduate School assessed summer funding needs and distributed over \$1.2 million in summer funding to programs with doctoral students on 9-month appointments. This funding came from Steenbock endowment funds and WARF funding. Students received the funding as research scholarships, allowing them to continue progress toward their degree.

The Graduate School supports students in their pursuit of external grant funding, automatically supplementing many external fellowships through the provision of funding for health insurance, segregated fees, and

Graduate programs

(2019-20)

Master's: 158
Doctoral: 109

Enrollment

(Fall 2019)

Total enrolled: 9,211
Master's: 4,108
Doctoral: 5,305
International: 2,770
Targeted minority: 925
Female: 4,620
Male: 4,591

Degrees conferred

(2019-20)

Master's: 2,068
MFA: 35
Doctoral: 774

partial tuition. Programs can request supplementation for external fellowships that are not automatically supported. The Graduate School also assists students in applying for external fellowships, for example to the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Fellowships.



SERVICE (cont.)

Promote Academic Excellence

In 2019-2020 the Graduate School conferred 774 doctoral degrees, 35 MFAs, and 2,068 master's degrees. This year UW–Madison was ranked third in the nation by the National Science Foundation for the number of PhD degrees awarded, based on 2018 data. Although numbers of degrees awarded fluctuate annually at all institutions, UW–Madison consistently ranks highly each year for PhD degree conferral, demonstrating the breadth and depth of doctoral degree programs offered.

Excellence in graduate education was also recognized by the U.S. News & World Report's Best Graduate Schools guide, ranking many of the UW–Madison graduate programs highly. The School of Education was ranked fourth nationwide and the School of Pharmacy seventh. Two graduate programs within the School of Education were ranked first nation-wide: curriculum and instruction, and printmaking. Other ranking highlights include: the microbiology program being ranked first in the nation, women's history and Latin American history both ranked second nationally, and sociology sixth in a two-way tie.

The number of programs that have adopted the Graduate Student Tracking System (GSTS) continues to grow. GSTS is an advising tool that allows program faculty, staff, and students to automatically track a student's progress

toward degree completion. Program feedback has been very positive, with 35 individual programs fully integrated into GSTS, over 70 underway with configuration and testing, and nearly 95 engaged in initial planning meetings. The Graduate School aims to meet its goal of fully onboarding all graduate programs by the end of summer 2021. When complete, the system will track student progress for approximately 350 program plans and subplans.

The Graduate School and the Division of Continuing Studies redesigned the Master's Exit Survey to include program assessment questions for students enrolled in non-pooled programs. The

survey is now required for master's degree completion, which will improve data coverage, reporting, and validity of analyses.

Accommodations related to COVID-19 included temporarily halting academic probation actions based on spring 2020 grades, as well as extending dissertators' 5-year time limit by 8 months. The Graduate School Dean encouraged programs to demonstrate flexibility and compassion for graduate students during this unprecedented and challenging time, as well as to do wellbeing check-ins with graduate students.

The Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) sustained its commitment to high academic standards for graduate study at UW–Madison. Its governance actions include:

- Approved 6 new degrees, a significant increase from recent years
- Established 30 new awards: 6 degrees, 20 named options, 3 capstone certificates, and 1 doctoral minor
- Approved 4 Notices of Intent to plan new degrees
- Restructured 1 master's degree; changed admitting status of 4 programs; changed academic home of 2 master's degrees, 2 doctoral degrees, and 2 doctoral minors
- Renamed 1 master's degree and 2 named options
- Suspended admissions of 2 master's degrees, 7 named options, 1 capstone certificate, and 1 doctoral minor
- Discontinued 1 PhD degree, 2 master's degrees, 13 named options, 1 graduate/professional certificate, 1 capstone certificate, and 3 doctoral minors
- Approved 15 program reviews and 5 three-year check-ins



SERVICE (cont.)

Support Career Success and Professional Development

The Graduate School continued to administer large-scale surveys of current PhD students and alumni as an institutional participant in the Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement project run by the Council of Graduate Schools. These surveys collected a range of data on career plans and aspirations among students as well as employment outcomes among alumni. This initiative will help inform program efforts to expand and improve career readiness training.

In fall 2019 the Graduate School published a data brief that examines the extent to which the career aspirations of PhD students at UW–Madison align with the career outcomes of PhD alumni, as well as a second brief in summer 2020 on the professional development participation and how those relate to career paths.

Professional development programming from the Graduate School continued to address a range of skill-building and career topics within the DiscoverPD framework. For example, in response to graduate students' desire for increased programming on communication, the school partnered with the DesignLab to offer workshops on design principles for creating posters and presentations

to represent research data. The school held an interactive workshop titled "Punch Up" Your Presentations: Storytelling Skills for Life and Work, focused on how to frame research as an understandable story that can be adapted for various audiences. Punch Up Creative of Chicago, run by a Wisconsin alum, covered how to adapt information to different circumstances, think creatively, and improvise when faced with the unexpected. Participants praised the workshop as "fun, engaging, activity-based, and creative" and said they left with new communication strategies. In addition to central programming, the school continued a competitive grant awarded to graduate programs and student organizations to host discipline-specific professional development activities.

Together with the Libraries, the Graduate School released a number of new online learning opportunities. With these latest additions, the collection of micro-courses includes: Introduction to Intellectual Property; Copyright and Fair Use; Introduction to Research Data Management; Responsible Data Planning, Use, and Sharing; and Graduate Research. In partnership with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, the Libraries, and WARF, the Graduate School hosted an in-person presentation about intellectual property with a focus on how students determine if they have an invention and how to disclose it.

The Graduate School started a new membership with Aurora by Beyond the Professoriate, an e-learning platform

with on-demand, self-paced learning modules that allow PhD students and postdoctoral scholars to explore career options and discover ways to apply skills acquired through graduate education. The university continued its institutional membership with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, through which graduate students can participate in webinars on key skills for thriving in the academy, lectures from guest experts, dissertation success resources, the 14-day Writing Challenge, and a weekly Monday Motivator email.

Due to COVID-19, in spring semester, three events were canceled or postponed, and Dissertation Writing Camp was held online with strong, positive feedback from students at various locations worldwide. Planning began early for a fully online professional development lineup for the fall 2020 semester, with the expectation that opportunities will be high quality and broadly accessible.

The school surveyed all UW–Madison master's students about interests and involvement in professional development programming. Survey results will help the university understand why students enroll in master's programs, which professional development topics and formats are of interest to them, and what barriers to participation they encounter. In response, the Graduate School offered a mini-series in spring 2020 on presentation skills, a high-interest topic, with additional actions planned for 2020-2021 in response to students' reported needs and interests.





DIVERSITY



The Graduate School aims to increase enrollment of students from underrepresented backgrounds while supporting students to be as successful academically and fulfilled personally as their majority counterparts.

Foster Inclusive Experiences

Efforts toward achieving this goal include: creating multicultural spaces through which graduate students can build communities across campus, as well as spaces for graduate students to connect with others from their own and similar cultural backgrounds; and providing learning and professional development opportunities to support graduate students from the beginning to end of their graduate programs.

The Graduate School continued programming aimed at supporting and retaining underserved populations. This included a Multicultural Graduate Network (MGN) Welcome Reception, various panel and professional development events, and an MGN Symposium on networking, negotiation, and research presentation. Also prominent in the school's diversity programming was a series of identity-focused, affinity group mixers and luncheons, which facilitate community-building and introduce graduate students to faculty and administrators of color who share their experiences navigating graduate school and careers. Additional events included a Mental Health and Wellness panel, as well as a support group hosted as a partnership between the MGN and University Health Services. For the 2019-2020 academic year, the school hosted over 20 events for underserved populations with a total of 599 student participants.

Due to COVID-19 closures, the MGN canceled four events, shifted to virtual check-ins with the student community, and relied on its newsletters to foster connections and share resources. To understand COVID-19 impact, pressing needs, and realities of graduate students of color, the MGN conducted a small survey.

During summer 2020 the MGN title will be discontinued, and instead, the school will continue diversity and inclusion programming and support from the Graduate School Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Funding. This re-branding will raise awareness of these opportunities and resources, as well as make a clear statement to campus of the value that the Graduate School places on diversity and inclusion.

Increase Student Diversity

A key graduate school preparation and recruitment effort is the annual Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP), through which approximately 120 students participate in a 10-week summer research experience at UW–Madison. The Graduate School and program partners lead the selection process and day-to-day activities for participants, and the Graduate School

Diversity (cont.)

allocates \$200,000 across eight to ten SROP programs. This year the school implemented a new application system and received 1,050 applications, a 60% increase from the previous year and a record high. Most SROP programs had to change their format or cancel programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Graduate School assisted the programs that moved to an online format and worked with the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) to develop professional development modules for those students.

To lessen barriers to graduate education, the Graduate School offers an application fee grant program. Eligible applicants include those from pipeline programs and institutions, those who are of special recruitment interest to programs, and who have encountered devastating circumstances such as natural disasters. This year, 1,091 application fee grants were offered and 948 were used, resulting in 244 students admitted to UW–Madison.

Additional recruitment programs include membership in the Institute for the Recruitment of Teachers, the National GEM Consortium, and the National Name Exchange, as well as receiving prospective graduate student names from the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program through membership in the Council of Graduate Schools. Through the Graduate Student Support Competition, the Graduate School distributes recruitment funds directly to programs, allowing them to engage in efforts to diversify the student population.

University Graduate School Associate Dean and Professor of History, whose research and teaching covers African American studies and black intellectual history. Additionally, Graduate School Dean William J. Karpus and Deputy Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion Patrick Sims gave remarks. To-date UW–Madison has inducted 50 Bouchet members in the chapter’s ten-year lifetime, 46 of whom were graduate students and four postdoctoral researchers.

The Graduate School continued to support and fund the Graduate Student Peer Mentor Awards, which emphasize mentorship that promotes inclusion and retention of underrepresented and marginalized students. The school co-sponsored the Bucky’s Awards and recognized three students with Peer Mentor Awards. The ceremony was canceled due to COVID-19 but awardees were celebrated virtually instead.

Celebrate achievement

In November 2019, the Graduate School celebrated the 10-year anniversary of the UW–Madison Chapter of the Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society. The milestone was marked by a symposium with keynote speaker Pero Dagbovie, Michigan State

Graduate student enrollment data by racial/ethnic category and sex



	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019
Total	9,402	9,263	9,114	9,133	9,121	9,211
Domestic Non-targeted	5,909	5,728	5,633	5,619	5,567	5,516
Domestic Targeted	849	860	866	895	908	925
International	2,644	2,675	2,615	2,619	2,646	2,770
Male	4,906	4,798	4,660	4,681	4,594	4,591
Female	4,496	4,465	4,454	4,452	4,527	4,620



ENGAGEMENT

By fostering strong, collaborative relationships with partners across the university, the Graduate School is instrumental in advancing shared goals in a decentralized environment.

Build Awareness and Connections

The Graduate School website continues to be a central hub of information for prospective and current graduate students, with over 1.4 million pageviews this past year. Much of the website traffic is focused on the admissions and preparation pages, with information about funding and assistantships also rounding out the top 10 most popular pages. Mobile traffic on the Graduate School website has increased as a percentage of overall traffic, from 23% in 2018-2019 to 28% in 2019-2020.

In fall 2019, the Graduate School provided over 7,549 printed pieces to programs to support new student orientation activities. These include

important information on academic policies, support from campus, professional development and upcoming events, and funding opportunities.

The Graduate School continues to highlight the contributions and accomplishments of graduate students on campus through news stories published on its website and shared across campus. Topics in the past

year have included graduate students who are involved in the invention and patent process with their advisors, a group of students who designed and implemented a toxicology curriculum for the University of Sierra Leone, and other examples of the varied and impactful research that graduate students pursue across disciplines. Stories also highlighted student organizations like Brilliant and Diverse Graduate Research



The Graduate School continued to grow its social media community, including by introducing a new Instagram account.

- Twitter – 215 new followers; total of 2,296 followers
- Facebook – 103 new page likes; total of 654
- Instagram, new account followers since January 2020 – 258



Engagement (cont.)



Scholars (BADGRS) at the Wisconsin Institutes of Discovery to help connect these initiatives with others on campus who want to create similar groups modeled after their programming.

Starting in the 2019-2020 academic year, the Graduate School partnered with the Wisconsin Initiative for Science Literacy (WISL) to provide additional funding and recognition for the WISL Award for Communicating PhD Research to the Public, expanding eligibility to the award to all PhD students in the biological and physical sciences. The award encourages doctoral candidates to submit a PhD thesis chapter describing their research to non-specialist audiences, helping students develop crucial communication skills and share their accomplishments with their family, friends, and community.

In addition to campus-wide highlights, the Graduate School aids national advocacy for graduate education by partnering with the Council of Graduate Schools on the GradImpact initiative. In November 2019, the GradImpact Gallery featured a Graduate School profile on a master's student who is creating a cultural and resource center for veterans in Lake Geneva as a Public Humanities Scholar with the UW-Madison Center for the Humanities.

Engagement with internal campus audiences is also core to the Graduate School's mission. The school moved its orientation program for new graduate program coordinators, called JumpStart, to a virtual format as a Canvas

course. Since its inception in May 2019, JumpStart has received 28,980 pageviews, and 223 staff have enrolled and taken a total of 579 quizzes. The school also partnered with the Office of Undergraduate Advising to initiate an award recognizing graduate program staff who demonstrate excellence in graduate student support; awardees will receive a professional development grant and be recognized at an upcoming awards ceremony. In September 2019, the Graduate School initiated a tracking system to record visits to its front desk, located at room 217 Bascom Hall. Desk staff interacted with 2,670 individuals: 46% of the visits related to current students' concerns and 42% to prospective graduate students.

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the Graduate School sent frequent updates to the graduate education community. These included announcements about operational changes from in-person to virtual services, policy flexibilities to mitigate negative impacts on graduate students, financial and wellbeing support available to graduate students, and more.

Together with the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, Graduate School leadership convened the COVID-19 Graduate Education Fall 2020 Continuity Workgroup to make recommendations to senior university leadership for the various scenarios possible for the fall semester. In developing recommendations, faculty, staff, and graduate student workgroup members from across the university prioritized

health, safety, and equity, as well as student fulfilment of program requirements and progress towards degree. They assessed campus readiness for alternative delivery of graduate education in light of needs specific to academic divisions and on the basis of five rubrics: classroom-based and experiential instruction, critical facilities and shared resources, and cohort-focused aspects of graduate education, and infrastructure.

Support Student Wellbeing

From programming to policies to data, the Graduate School is situated as a campus leader on advocating for graduate student wellbeing and mental health, demonstrated through a variety of efforts this past year.

The Graduate School hosted Welcome Week for new and continuing graduate students, which featured workshops on productivity tools, time management, mental health, inclusion, and career development. Dr. Fatimah Williams kicked off the week by presenting Starting Strong and Staying On Track. She shared goal-setting strategies and tools for planning a successful graduate school experience. Over 750 new graduate students attended New Graduate Student Welcome, and the annual Graduate School Degree Dash run/walk/roll event drew nearly 700 students, staff, faculty, and family members. Other Welcome Week events included Cool Tools: Apps and More to



Engagement (cont.)

Increase Productivity, Recognizing and Reducing Implicit Bias, Flourishing in Graduate School, and Time Management for Graduate Students.

In recognition of the need for a centralized and standardized repository of program grievance policies, the Graduate School led an initiative throughout the 2019-2020 academic year to collect these policies from each program and include them in the Guide. At the outset of this effort, only 51% of graduate programs had grievance policies in their handbooks or websites, but coordination from the Graduate School has led to 100% of programs' Guide pages having at least central appeal and reporting resources available to graduate students. In 2020-2021 the school will continue to work closely with programs to strengthen their local grievance procedures.

The Graduate School designed and launched a new online Doctoral Student Experience Survey to collect information from PhD students earlier in their careers at UW–Madison. Students take the survey when they complete their preliminary exam, usually after 3 years in the program. The survey collects valuable information from all PhD students on their academic experiences, personal wellbeing, and participation in professional development activities at the university. Data will be used in conjunction with the Doctoral Exit Survey for program analysis and improvement efforts.

The Graduate and Professional Student Assistance Specialist, a shared position between the Dean of Students Office and the Graduate School, has seen a dramatic increase in demand for support from graduate students: from fall 2018 to fall 2019 a 67% increase and from spring 2019 to spring 2020, a 90% increase. This increase includes many COVID-19 related concerns, including financial, career, mental health and wellness, and academic issues.

Additionally, the school offered training opportunities for graduate program coordinators, to further develop their skills in supporting graduate students. Topics included mental health resources, mitigating implicit bias, and coaching graduate students to rise above imposter syndrome, among others.

Improve Data Access and Transparency

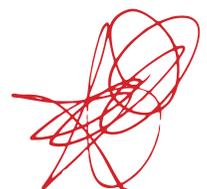
The Graduate School continues to support multiple campus stakeholders with custom data queries and reports related to graduate programs at UW–Madison. Data was used for a variety of purposes including program assessment and review, grant preparation and reporting, and faculty tenure review.

Staff streamlined the data request response process by launching a new service email account and data request web form. The school's website improved access to data via

publication of a new data resource page, which functions as a one-stop-shop for all graduate education data, currently housing data briefs, the Graduate Explorer, and resources for data requests. The graduate admissions DataMart was updated so that individual data fields can be selected to return only information that is needed.

An interactive data visualization was created by the Graduate School for the Office of Postdoctoral Studies reporting the first career destination of postdoctoral researchers after appointment completion at UW–Madison. Collaboration with the UW Survey Center to collect career data via LinkedIn and other online sources proved to be successful in compiling the data needed to understand the career trajectory of postdoctoral researchers.

Members of the Graduate School served on campus data community and governance bodies to develop common, standardized data definitions, tools, and reporting conventions. These groups include the Business Intelligence Community of Experts, Tableau Developer Community, and the UW–Madison Reporting and Analytics Project.





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Photos: University Communications | Design elements: University Marketing
See the Graduate School Data Explorer at grad.wisc.edu/data for additional data
on admissions, enrollment, funding, and degrees.

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