Introduction

In 2015, the Duke University Graduate School and Senior Associate Dean Jacqueline Looney received an award from the American Historical Association for outstanding efforts in recruiting and supporting students from underrepresented groups. In their letters, the scholars and colleagues who nominated Looney for the award praised her as "the ultimate facilitator of the best work and the best people."

That phrase—"the ultimate facilitator of the best work and the best people"—also describes the role the Duke Graduate School strives to play. Broadly speaking, the school does not have its own faculty (except for the instructors in its English for International Students and Certificate in College Teaching programs), nor is its success best measured by its staff's publications or research grants. The essence of The Graduate School lies with its students, who serve as a needed leavening in Duke's academic community.

The Graduate School's mission, therefore, is to attract the best students, ensure that they receive a high-quality, research-based graduate education that prepares them for outstanding careers, and provide them with the resources and support to navigate the transition from learners and apprentices to scholars, junior colleagues, and professionals. Through this endeavor, The Graduate School also strengthens Duke's research enterprise, as the ability to recruit and support outstanding graduate students helps attract top-flight scholars and researchers to the university.

This mission is set against a backdrop of national and local changes that affect graduate education and graduate students. For instance, nationally, the rapidly evolving and diversifying job marketplace pushes us to re-imagine graduate education in order to prepare our students to thrive in a variety of careers. Locally, dramatic growth in Durham—particularly the area surrounding the university—has made Duke's home city more dynamic and appealing, but also an increasingly expensive place to live, particularly for graduate students who need to stay near campus. This is something that Duke must take into account when considering issues that affect graduate students' non-academic lives, such as financial support, transportation, parking, and student housing.

Taking those challenges into account, this plan lays out six major goals that The Graduate School will pursue over the next decade. Achieving these goals will help Duke not only maintain, but also enhance its position among elite private institutions of graduate education:

1. Provide robust support to compete for the best graduate students, help them thrive at Duke, and prepare them for success after Duke.
2. Assist the school's graduate programs in recruiting top students and providing them with the best possible educational experience.
3. Help create an inclusive atmosphere at Duke where students from all walks of life can succeed and diversity is valued as a strength and a means to achieving the university's mission.
4. Work university-wide to develop a vision and strategy to grow master's programs sustainably and ensure master's students receive a high-quality experience.
5. Continue to strengthen and grow The Graduate School's connections with its community of alumni and supporters.

6. Increase awareness of The Graduate School's resources, programs, and accomplishments among key audiences at Duke and beyond.

Of course, The Graduate School cannot accomplish these ambitious goals alone. Graduate programs, departments, campus services, and other units at Duke must be close partners in our endeavor, and The Graduate School will actively seek out such collaborations as we implement the strategies laid out in this plan.

The Graduate School's new strategic plan was created concurrently with the university's new academic strategic plan, which stated the need for a university-wide effort to re-imagine doctoral education at Duke and emphasized enhancing the graduate student experience. The Graduate School's strategic plan was designed to contribute to those efforts. Work on our strategic plan began in 2016–2017, the 90th year since The Graduate School was founded, and this plan will serve as a roadmap to ensure that the school reaches its centennial with a bright long-term future and in an even stronger position to facilitate "the best work and the best people."

Strategic Goal 1: Student Support

Provide robust support to compete for the best graduate students, help them thrive at Duke, and prepare them for success after Duke.

Overview

The Graduate School (TGS) is a school of students; for that reason, providing support for students is our top priority. Financial support, co-curricular programming, and student resources and support are key elements that contribute to graduate students' success. TGS's efforts in these areas will directly support one of the major goals in the university's academic strategic plan—providing a transformative education experience for all students and ensuring that every student have at their disposal the best that Duke has to offer.

Objective 1.1: Increase financial support

Generally speaking, The Graduate School provides tuition coverage and stipend support to Ph.D. students for five years and pays their health insurance premiums for six years. The university also provides sixth-year tuition scholarships for doctoral students who have made an effort to apply for external or departmental support for the sixth year. Duke is very competitive among its peers both in stipend level and the number of years of guaranteed support.

One focus of the school in recent years has been increasing summer funding for students, particularly those in the traditionally underfunded areas of humanities and social sciences. In 2014, the school began guaranteeing summer research fellowships to all first- and second-year Ph.D. students. That significantly reduced the number of students without summer funding and pushed Duke's year-round stipend for arts and sciences students into the top five among peer institutions. The move also has helped students who are beyond their first two years by opening up more of the school's competitive summer research fellowships to those students and spurring a number of departments to use their own endowment funds to provide summer support.

Despite this progress, the school must continue to enhance its financial support in order to keep competing for the best students as peer institutions raise their levels of support. This is also important given the rising cost of living in Durham, particularly in areas near campus. Looking beyond doctoral students, the school should also explore ways to provide some kind of aid to master's students, who, unlike their undergraduate and Ph.D. counterparts, receive little institutional assistance from Duke. As noted in the university's strategic plan, this lack of institutional assistance limits the diversity of the student body and constrains career choices after graduation.

Strategies
    A. Continue to work toward the long-term goal of providing year-round funding to all Ph.D. students for their first five years. Currently, 18 percent of arts and sciences doctoral students in years three through five do not have summer funding, down from 40 percent before 2014.

B. Increase the number of competitive awards for travel, language courses, project supplies, and other resources that enrich the education of both Ph.D. and master's students.
C. Make students more aware of internal awards that are available.
D. Increase students' awareness of and competitiveness for external funding opportunities. The school's own resources are not enough to be a panacea for students' financial needs, and students are expected to play a role in their financial support. The school must make students more aware of external funding opportunities and help them improve their chances of successfully applying for these opportunities, such as the grant-writing course that the school began offering in spring 2017.

Key Performance Indicators
A. Percentage of doctoral students with year-round funding in their first five years
B. Number of competitive awards for travel, language courses, project supplies, and other enrichment resources
C. Number of students applying for currently underutilized internal fellowships
D. Number of students applying for and winning internal and external fellowships

Objective 1.2: Continue to improve co-curricular programming

Aside from financial support, the school also must continue to emphasize providing professional and career development to prepare students for their future careers. Changes in the U.S. and global job market have made a graduate credential increasingly necessary for a growing number of professions. Duke has responded to these changes by offering an increasing number of master's programs over the past ten years, recognizing that many of our master's graduates seek the credential as an entry point to a career. Other master's students seek the degree as preparation for doctoral programs, even as the job market is changing in many disciplines for Ph.D.-qualified professionals. The shrinking number of tenure-track faculty positions in many disciplines, an ongoing trend that has been magnified by the 2008 recession, has meant that our Ph.D. students increasingly pursue broad career options beyond the traditional tenure-track path.

Recognizing these changes, and in response to campus-wide task forces convened in 2007 and 2011 to examine the career and professional development needs of graduate students, TGS in 2013 hired a full-time assistant dean for graduate student professional development, complementing the school's existing investments in programs to support students in teaching development and preparation for faculty positions. Since this time, TGS has instituted four new offerings to better support students in pursuing broad career options: the Professional Development Series, the Emerging Leaders Institute, Professional Development Grants, and the Professional Development Blog.

As the research master's population has grown over the past decade, TGS has responded with a greater variety of professional development offerings that are open to and appeal to master's students, such as the Professional Development Series of one-time events and the Emerging Leaders Institute. In particular, the Core Competencies series within the Professional Development Series focuses on skills such as communication, leadership, and self-awareness that are transferable to a variety of contexts.

That said, TGS currently offers a number of professional development programs essentially restricted to doctoral students, including the Certificate in College Teaching, the Bass Instructional Fellowships, and the Preparing Future Faculty program. Until 2017, TGS offered no parallel professional development program specifically aimed at master's students. TGS began to address this need in spring 2017, when it created a four-workshop Professional Development Series for master's students.

TGS's investment in professional development addresses a key area of emphasis in the university's new academic strategic plan—increasing opportunities for graduate students to apply their education to a growing array of career options. With TGS's full slate of professional development offerings moving beyond the startup phase, the school recognizes that continued support for professional development requires both more systematic resources—such as a registration and tracking system for students' participation in professional development events—as well as an assessment of co-curricular programmatic offerings to ensure that they are meeting the needs of TGS's students and to identify future directions for development. TGS also should explore ways to document student participation in professional development, as currently the only such documentation is a transcript notation for the Certificate in College Teaching, the Preparing Future Faculty program, Graduate School courses in college teaching, and Responsible Conduct of Research training.

Strategies

A. Implement a professional development registration and tracking system. With the increased number of professional development offerings and student participation, TGS lacks a systematic way to handle student registration and participation tracking, beyond the programs that result in a transcript notation (such as the Certificate in College Teaching, the Preparing Future Faculty, or the Responsible Conduct of Research degree requirement). Such a system could allow TGS to better assess student interest and participation in professional development topics and identify potential gaps in serving students (e.g., by year, by discipline)

B. Develop a list of competencies that graduate students must meet before taking on an instructional role. Work with departments to identify how to meet those competencies so that TGS programming is complementary to departmental effort.

C. Develop student learning outcomes and assessment tools for TGS co-curricular programming. Beginning with programs in Responsible Conduct of Research, Certificate in College Teaching, Preparing Future Faculty, and the Emerging Leaders Institute, lay the foundation for regular assessment of professional development offerings.

D. Evaluate the need for a professional development program specifically aimed at master's students.

E. Explore processes for documenting student participation in professional development. Once TGS implements a registration and attendance tracking system for other professional development offerings (Objective 1.2, Strategy A), other documentation options may become available. The launch of Duke OPTIONS, an online professional development planning tool for doctoral students, scheduled to pilot in fall 2017, should align with any new documentation efforts for professional development.

F. Expand professional development offerings to cover more core skills.

G. Continue to collaborate with other Duke schools to determine their graduate students' specific professional development needs.

Key Performance Indicators

    A. Implementation of a registration and attendance tracking system for professional development participation
    B. List of competencies for graduate students related to teaching and teaching-assistant roles
    C. Development of student learning outcomes and assessment plan for CCT, PFF, RCR, and ELI
    D. Assessment of master's program students, DGSs, and DGSAs to better understand professional development needs, preferred sources of professional development offerings, career goals, and time constraints
    E. Benchmarking survey of peer institutions' practices for documenting professional development participation

Objective 1.3: Provide student services and resources to support their academic success

The growth in the master's population and the changing landscape of employment options for master's- and Ph.D.-qualified professionals have also driven the need for changes to support students' academic success. Students may need support in multiple facets of academic writing, such as overcoming writing roadblocks, forming dissertation support groups, and practicing scholarly integrity.

TGS has already begun to address this issue by developing an elective course that debuted in fall 2016 to help students in the natural sciences with dissertation writing, as well as a spring 2017 course to help students in the humanities and social sciences develop their grant-writing skills. It will be important to build upon such resources, as well as efforts by other Duke schools, as TGS works to be a leader on campus and among its peers in providing the support to enable all graduate students to succeed in their academic goals.

Strategies
    A. Provide anti-plagiarism software and the necessary training for faculty advisers. In 2015–2016, TGS researched, recommended, and received approval for anti-plagiarism software for all faculty at Duke. This resource is intended to help faculty advisers and their students identify potential plagiarism problems before a dissertation/thesis is submitted to TGS. This is not intended to be punitive, but rather as a resource to help faculty and students avoid punitive measures that would be necessary if plagiarism is found after submission. The system is being rolled out in 2017-2018.
    B. Explore and identify feasible mechanisms to support students in all stages of graduate research and writing (e.g., partnership with the Thompson Writing Program and other Duke entities, dissertation writing workshops, writing advisers, ultimately a graduate writing center). Currently there are no resources at Duke to help graduate students with dissertation/thesis writing.
    C. Explore opportunities to collaborate with and contribute to campus services and resources that serve students of The Graduate School, such as DukeReach and the Thompson Writing Program.
    D. Partner with campus units that serve graduate students to track usage of their services by TGS students.

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Implementation of anti-plagiarism software and development of training for faculty

B. Extension of partnership with the Thompson Writing Studio to provide support for domestic as well as international graduate students in writing projects

C. Exploration of additional forms of research and writing support through partnerships with campus units such as the Libraries, the Thompson Writing Program, and The Center for Philosophy, Arts and Literature

D. TGS collaborations with and contributions to campus services and resources that support TGS students

E. Data on TGS student usage of campus services and resources

Objective 1.4: Continue to provide and enhance services and resources that support students' wellbeing.

Research and the Graduate School staff's experiences have shown that students' success in meeting their academic goals is often directly affected by the quality of their overall experience at the university. The students' quality of life while at Duke can also affect their success after they graduate and move into careers and leadership roles in academia, industry, and public service. The quality of students' experiences also greatly influence their attitudes and loyalties toward Duke, as well as the university's ability to attract future students of the same high quality.

Therefore, TGS has been strongly committed to enhancing support for the wellbeing of the whole student—social, emotional, mental, physical—so as to remove barriers to success. The university has a number of services and resources that address student wellbeing, such as Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), DukeReach, the Women's Center, and the Student Wellness Center. The Graduate School's role is primarily one of coordination. TGS staff work independently with students and, depending on each student's situation and needs, coordinate the appropriate support from university services, off-campus resources, and various TGS departments.

TGS and other support services on campus have witnessed a steady increase in demand for wellness support. In 2016, TGS's Office of Graduate Student Affairs handled 39 student cases, most of which were related to some aspect of student wellbeing. While this constitutes only about 1 percent of the TGS student body, it is part of a trend that has seen GSA's caseload increase by approximately 50 percent over the past decade. Over roughly the same time period, CAPS also reported a steady increase in graduate/professional students using its services, rising by an average of 5 percent per year. CAPS has also reported a significant increase in the number of clients who are international students, a rapidly growing part of TGS's student body.

Strategies

A. Work with university support services to assess the campus's climate of wellbeing for graduate students and students' awareness and usage of resources that support their wellbeing

B. Increase graduate students' awareness and usage of on-campus resources as needed

C. Continue to develop partnerships and programming that address student-wellbeing challenges, such as a Responsible Conduct of Research seminar, in collaboration with university services

such as DukeReach, Counseling and Psychological Services, The Student Wellness Center, Student Health Services, the Women's Center, and the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity
D. Continue to track and analyze student cases that involve some aspect of students' wellbeing

Key Performance Indicators
A. Implementation of assessments such as surveys and small focus groups to measure students' wellbeing and their awareness and usage of on-campus resources
B. Communication and outreach efforts to increase student awareness and usage of campus resources, guided by results from the assessments
C. Number and effectiveness of partnerships and programming developed in collaboration with campus services, such as the creation of a Responsible Conduct of Research seminar addressing wellbeing challenges
D. Analyses of tracked student cases and prescribed actions based on those analyses (e.g., identifying a common issue and developing support to address that issue)

Objective 1.5: Increase the quality and visibility of the English for International Students program

The English for International Students (EIS) program provides English-language instruction and support to international graduate students at Duke. In response to an external review, which identified both strengths and areas in need of improvement, EIS initiated a comprehensive restructuring process that focused on four main areas: curriculum, staffing, outreach, and enrollment management. Following the hire of a new assistant dean/director and program coordinator in 2015, efforts are underway to improve practices and procedures, with the overarching goals being to increase the quality and visibility of the program. As part of this process, EIS has conducted needs assessments with Duke faculty, administrators, and students and has begun the transition to a discipline-specific curriculum.

Strategies
A. Identify the linguistic needs of international graduate students on campus and subsequently refine/expand the program's course offerings and services to meet these needs.
B. Increase the number of full-time faculty and staff with advanced degrees in TESOL and/or applied linguistics.
C. Strengthen the visibility of the program through participation in meetings, collaborations with campus partners, and a heightened web/social media presence in order to educate students, faculty, and staff about the value of EIS programs.
D. Develop a more efficient student database and ensure that students placing into EIS courses take them within the required timeline.

Key Performance Indicators
A. Data from conversations with DGSs/DGSAs and a survey-based needs analysis, make specific changes to current courses, and create new courses and services
B. Hiring of new full-time faculty and staff with appropriate degrees
C. Participation in meetings on campus, develop and implement new initiatives in collaboration with campus partners, make updates to the EIS website, and create an EIS Facebook page and listserv

D. Development of a new database and collection of statistics on students completing courses within specific time periods

Objective 1.6: Coordinate a cohesive graduate career services strategy across Duke

In its news academic strategic plan, the university noted that Duke must enhance advising and career services to help students make more informed employment decisions. It also emphasized the need to make sure graduate students benefit from such enhanced services, and TGS will need to play an active role in helping Duke accomplish these goals.

Strategies
A. Assess students' career-search needs and how well they are being met by current resources, such as the Duke Career Center, The Graduate School, and individual departments.
B. Ensure that prospective students receive information on the career outcomes of their programs' graduates so that their career expectations are aligned with the training they will receive.

Key Performance Indicators
A. Data on student satisfaction with the career advising they receive at Duke
B. Inclusion of career outcomes information in recruitment materials, such as on departmental websites

Strategic Goal 2: Support for Academic Programs

Assist the school's graduate programs in recruiting top students and providing them with the best possible educational experience

Overview

A multitude of factors affect the quality of The Graduate School's academic programs. TGS will focus its resources on two significant aspects to help provide the support its programs need to compete for the best students and to prepare them to be leaders in contemporary society:

1. Helping programs and departments with their recruitment and marketing efforts.
2. Cultivating a culture of assessment within the departments and programs to ensure that the education received by students is of the highest quality.

Objective 2.1: Help departments and programs with recruitment and marketing

A key mission of the school's Office of Graduate Student Affairs (GSA) is to coordinate, supplement, and expand the recruiting efforts of graduate departments and programs. Each year GSA participates in recruitment fairs across the country to meet potential graduate students and to answer questions they might have about Duke's graduate programs. GSA also coordinates visits to campus requested by schools to bring talented undergraduates from across the country. Activities during these visits typically include seminars on graduate admissions and financial aid, panel discussions with faculty and graduate students, departmental visitations, and informal gatherings. The Graduate School should explore how to build upon these current efforts.

Strategies
    A. Ascertain our programs' recruitment needs and define TGS's role in meeting those needs by meeting with DGSs and DGSAs in August of each year to discuss recruitment needs and strategies.
    B. Develop consistent communication with departments and programs after each time The Graduate School participates in recruitment events such as fairs, student visits, and national consortia.
    C. Integrate a new customer relationship management system (tentatively slated to roll out in 2018 for The Graduate School) into existing Graduate School recruitment workflow. The CRM will enhance the school's ability to collect leads, track prospective students, and share that information with departments and programs.
    D. Explore ways to collaborate among Graduate School units to streamline the school's interaction with directors of graduate studies and their assistants.
    E. Develop templates and toolkits that programs can easily incorporate into their materials for recruitment, grant applications, and other purposes.

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Annual assessment of the recruitment needs of each program

    B. Sharing of lists of prospective students with relevant departments and programs after each recruitment event

    C. Integration of new CRM system into the school's recruitment workflow

    D. Efficiency gained in potential streamlining of school interactions with DGSes and DGSAs

    E. Creation of templates, toolkits, and boilerplate language that programs can incorporate into their materials

Objective 2.2: Make assessment part of the culture within all graduate programs

With more than 70 degree-granting master's and doctoral programs, cultivating a culture of assessment in The Graduate School is essential to preparing Duke graduate students to be societal leaders. The following strategies and key performance indicators ensure that the education received by students achieves two aims. First, a culture of assessment offers graduate programs the opportunity to continually refine the content and quality of offerings so as to address the central issues confronting graduate education nationwide (e.g. access, retention, satisfaction, engagement, student success, and career outcomes). Second, a culture of assessment helps ensure that the quality of education received by students is the finest in the country.

Strategies

    A. Improve the quality and utility of student learning outcomes assessment by programs.

    B. Begin to systematically assess The Graduate School's professional development offerings.

    C. Continue to promote and refine ongoing assessment practices, such as course evaluations.

    D. Develop and pilot an online system that graduate programs can use, if they choose to, for their graduate course evaluations.

    E. Explore ways to bring online course evaluation system into conversation with annual assessment efforts.

    F. Participate in national conversations regarding best practices for tracking career pathways of graduate alumni.

Key Performance Indicators

    A. Develop appropriate rubrics that measure the quality of assessment reports

    B. Collaborate with relevant assistant deans in the assessment of The Graduate School's offerings, which may include Professional Development, Certificate in College Teaching, English for International Students, Preparing Future Faculty, and Responsible Conduct of Research

    C. Maintain 100 percent compliance in annual assessment of student learning outcomes.

    D. Pilot online course evaluation system

    E. Continue to meet with and offer individually tailored feedback to all Directors of Graduate Studies (DGS) and, when possible, Directors of Graduate Studies Assistants (DGSA) regarding the annual assessment process

    F. Articulate potential separate and individualized strategies for tracking and reporting master's and doctoral student career outcomes

    G. Align articulated career outcome tracking strategies with implementation recommendations from relevant national bodies, such as the Council of Graduate Schools

Strategic Goal 3: Environment of Inclusion and Support

Create an inclusive environment where students from all walks of life can have a sense of belonging and the support they need to succeed, and where diversity is valued as a strength and a means to achieving the university's mission

Overview

The Duke Graduate School is dedicated to and benefits from a student population diverse in background, culture, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and work and life experiences. The school's focus is not only on assembling a diverse student body, but also creating an inclusive environment in which students from all walks of life can feel like they belong at Duke and thrive once they get here.

The school has an established history of addressing the needs of students from underrepresented races and ethnicities, as well as the needs of LGBTQ students. It has achieved some success on those fronts. Its students from underrepresented groups generally graduate at the same rate and in the same amount of time as the school's general student population. In 2015, The Graduate School was recognized by Duke's Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity for its efforts in creating inclusive spaces for the LGBTQ community. In the same year, the school also received an award from the American Historical Association for two decades of success in recruiting and graduating history doctoral students from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

The school recognizes, however, that there is still significant progress to be made. Duke at large understands this as well, as the university's new academic strategic plan spoke of the need to strengthen efforts to diversify its graduate and professional schools and address issues of access and affordability.

To achieve both its own goals and the university's goals, TGS needs to continue its efforts to recruit more students from underrepresented groups. It also should continue collaborating with units across campus to make those students an integrated part of the Duke community and provide them with the support and resources they need to succeed. Furthermore, the school recognizes that there are other groups of students at Duke who may need additional support, such as graduate student veterans, first-generation graduate school students, and students with disabilities. As the needs of various groups evolve, the school must position itself to address those needs.

Objective 3.1: Communicate the value of diversity and inclusion through training and education for faculty, staff, and students

Strategies
  A. Conduct implicit bias training for DGSs and faculty on an ongoing basis
  B. Continue to enhance the diversity and inclusion section on the school website, providing resources for students, faculty, and staff
  C. Identify national leaders in diversity and inclusion and invite them to Duke to share their perspectives with faculty and staff
  D. Continue to include in RCR training relevant topics such implicit bias, Title IX, and campus climate

Key Performance Indicators

    A. Have at least one TGS staff member complete "train-the-trainer" program for implicit bias through the Duke Office for Institutional Equity when that becomes available

    B. Launch of expanded diversity and inclusion section on gradschool.duke.edu

    C. Campus visits from national leaders in diversity and inclusion efforts

    D. Inclusion of diversity- and inclusion-related topics in RCR training

    E. Addition of significant implicit bias training in all four required RCR orientation sessions to give all TGS students meaningful, early introduction to that topic

    F. Addition of implicit bias training at RCR orientation for graduate students at Duke Kunshan in consultation with DKU leadership and faculty

Objective 3.2: Foster a sense of belonging and connection across the increasingly diverse populations of students, faculty, and alumni

Strategies

    A. Provide programming, coursework, and counseling to support the whole student

    B. Empower students with knowledge and skills to thrive in diverse environments

Key Performance Indicators

    A. Annual offerings of courses and workshops

    B. Evaluation of existing programming

    C. Feedback from students

Objective 3.3: Promote the success of students from traditionally underrepresented groups

Strategies

    A. Increase enrollment of students from traditionally underrepresented groups

    B. Provide students with sufficient funding to complete their graduate studies in a timely manner

    C. Promote an academic and social environment where these scholars can flourish

    D. Use data on student success to identify areas for improvement

Key Performance Indicators

    A. Aggregate and program-specific data on the success of underrepresented groups of students, such as application, admission, matriculation, retention, completion rate, time to degree, and placement

    B. Data from Duke OPTIONS about students' professional development

    C. Student participation in TGS programs

Strategic Goal 4: Master's Programs

Work university-wide to develop a vision and strategy to grow master's programs sustainably and ensure master's students receive a high-quality experience.

Overview

Between 2004 and 2015, Duke's master's enrollment grew by 1,200 students (51 percent), rising to 3,750, and that number is projected to increase by another 350 in the next three to five years. Accompanying this increase is a shift in the makeup of the master's student population, as it comprised 29 percent international students in 2015 versus 17 percent in 2005.

Within The Graduate School, there were more than 700 master's students in fall 2015, up by more than 80 percent from a decade ago. In fall 2015, master's students made up about 23 percent of The Graduate School's enrollment. Also, 55 percent of The Graduate School's master's students were international, significantly higher than the percentage in Duke's overall master's population.

The Graduate School has already begun efforts to better understand the effect of the rapidly growing master's population on various aspects of Duke. Going forward, we will continue to gather relevant data, which will be useful in helping university leadership develop a clear philosophy for Duke's master's programs. Such a philosophy is critical to the ability of The Graduate School's master's programs to grow smartly and sustainably.

The rapid growth of master's programs and the changes accompanying that growth affect many aspects of the Duke experience, not only for master's students, but also for Ph.D. and undergraduate students. In 2014 and 2015, The Graduate School and the Master's Advisory Council conducted a comprehensive study of the growth in master's programs at Duke. The study was prompted in part by faculty concerns about the effect of the growth on the academic environment and whether new programs were being created as revenue sources. The results of the study were reported to university leadership in spring 2015.

The study found that while revenue was a factor, the creation of new master's programs at Duke also has been spurred by growing and interesting new fields being driven by faculty initiatives. Duke is below the median among its peers in the number of master's programs and degrees awarded, but has been adding new programs at a much faster pace. The study found that the effect of the growth in master's programs on school or department hiring, research, and operations, and campus services were not well understood.

Within The Graduate School, there is increased administrative strain from the rising number of master's students. This strain comes in part from additional staff time needed for assisting students with financial and academic matters, as well as handling an increased case load involving issues such as mental health, sexual assault, student conflicts, and illness. From 2009 to 2014, such nonacademic incidents grew at a faster rate among master's students than among Ph.D. students.

Among its recommendations, the report from the study suggested that the growth of master's programs should be better integrated into the university's strategic and budget planning. It also recommended developing improved processes to evaluate new and existing programs and to discontinue unnecessary degree programs, as well as offering greater support for student services.

The Graduate Board of Visitors reviewed the study's findings at its fall 2015 meeting and developed a list of recommendations. That list has been submitted to Provost Sally Kornbluth, and The Graduate School has been discussing the recommendations as part of its efforts to explore ways to address the issues related to the growth of Duke's master's programs. Going forward, The Graduate School will collect and analyze relevant data on the university's capacity to accommodate growth in master's programs and assist the vice provost for academic affairs in efforts to manage the size and number of master's programs at Duke.

Beyond the size and number of its master's programs, TGS also needs to consider the support available to its master's students. As noted in the university's new academic strategic plan, master's students are largely responsible for their own cost of attendance. The scarce availability of institutional support hampers the diversity of Duke's master's population and limits students' career choices after they graduate. Aside from financial support, TGS and Duke also must pay attention to master's students' other needs, such as resources to support their professional development and wellbeing.

Objective 4.1: Better integrate master's programs into university-wide planning

Strategies
    A. Assist university leaders in developing an overall philosophy that provides guidance on how master's programs should fit in the Duke model while making allowances for differences across programs
    B. Incorporate that philosophy into TGS operations
    C. Explore ways to better account for individual master's programs' effect on TGS and the university
    D. Collect placement information for graduates of master's programs

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Development of a philosophy for master's programs' role at TGS and at Duke
    B. Adherence to that philosophy in operations
    C. Assessment and implementation of mechanisms to better account for the effect of individual master's programs on TGS and other areas of the university
    D. Implementation of system to collect placement data for master's graduates

Objective 4.2: Assess the university's capacity to accommodate growth in The Graduate School's master's programs

    A. Collect and analyze data on how TGS master's programs consume, provide for, and budget for university-wide services such as housing, library, parking and transportation, CAPS, English language support, career services, and information technology
    B. Examine effects of the increasingly international makeup of the TGS master's student population

    C. Continue to assess effect of master's programs on undergraduate and doctoral programs

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Analysis of TGS master's programs' effect on university-wide services
    B. Report on how the increase in international master's students affect Duke and The Graduate School
    C. Analysis of the effect of master's programs on undergraduate and doctoral programs

Objective 4.3: Work with the vice provost for academic affairs to manage the size and number of master's programs

Strategies
    A. Create criteria and best practices for starting and growing master's programs
    B. Make sunsetting a program a possible outcome of the review process and establish a process and criteria for sunsetting

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Development of criteria and best practices for starting and growing master's programs
    B. Development of process and criteria for sunsetting programs

Objective 4.4: Evaluate support of master's students, including mental and physical health, financial, and career

Strategies
    A. Commit resources toward professional development for master's students
    B. Use a portion the Annual Fund to provide financial support that enhances the experience of master's students, such as travel or equipment grants

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Amount of professional development programming for master's students
    B. Amount of support for master's students from the school's Annual Fund

Strategic Goal 5: Development and Alumni Engagement

Continue to strengthen and grow The Graduate School's connections with its community of alumni and supporters

Overview

Maintaining a strong financial support package is crucial to The Graduate School's ability to compete for the best students. This requires the school to continue strengthening its development and alumni-engagement efforts in order to increase its financial resources.

A more engaged alumni base would yield other benefits as well, such as increased alumni participation in the school's professional development programs. A stronger connection with Graduate School alumni would also contribute to several of the university's strategic goals, such as bolstering intellectual communities for students and fostering a global network of learning and research.

The Graduate School has a goal of raising $20 million in the university's Duke Forward campaign, which was launched publicly in September 2012 and will end in June 2017. TGS surpassed its campaign goal nine months before the end of the campaign. This was a significant accomplishment for the school because, as is often the case at universities around the country, graduate education traditionally has not been a high-visibility area for giving at Duke. In fact, Duke Forward marks the first time that The Graduate School was presented as its own entity in a fundraising campaign.

The Graduate School has taken some steps in recent years to ramp up its development and alumni-engagement operation. In 2010, the school established a Board of Visitors. In 2013, it added a senior public affairs officer to oversee communications efforts. In 2015, it hired a full-time assistant director of development, the first gift officer at Duke dedicated wholly to The Graduate School. Also in late 2015, the Duke Alumni Association created and filled the position of senior director of graduate and professional school alumni affairs, a role that has worked closely with The Graduate School on alumni engagement, such as events during its 90th anniversary celebration in 2016.

These new resources, coupled with the final push of the Duke Forward campaign, present the school with opportunities to forge closer bonds with its alumni and supporters, as well as cultivate current students as future alumni with stronger connections to the school.

Objective 5.1: Improve information on alumni and friends

The Graduate School has approximately 24,500 active alumni. Of those, about 55 percent have a valid email address on file in Duke's alumni database. That percentage must improve as an initial step toward better alumni engagement. The other strategic objectives outlined in this section start with the school being able to communicate with its alumni more effectively, and that will not happen unless we know how to contact them. Additionally, the school needs to have better career outcomes information about its alumni for reporting and assessment purposes.

Strategies
- A. Participate in the rollout and marketing of the new Duke Alumni Network, particularly through non-email communication, as a means to locate graduate alumni and encourage them to reconnect with Duke.
- B. Encourage graduating students to set up their alumni.duke.edu email or to leave a valid email address on file.
- C. Develop a system to gather contact and first-destination career information from students when they graduate and periodically thereafter.

Key Performance Indicators
- A. Inclusion of The Graduate School in rollout and marketing of Duke Alumni Network, particularly in non-email communication
- B. Percentage of records in the alumni database that have at least a valid email address
- C. The development of mechanisms to remain in permanent contact with graduating students
- D. Implementation of system to gather graduating students' contact and first-destination career information

Objective 5.2: Increase school and departmental engagement with alumni and students

Unlike undergraduate and professional students, The Graduate School's students are embedded in departments distributed throughout the university rather than within The Graduate School itself. This means that the students' affiliation with the school is often secondary to their affiliation with the department in which they are embedded. The Graduate School should work to help facilitate stronger alumni engagement through the departments. At the same time, the school also needs to increase the level of awareness among its current students and alumni of their affiliation with the school, as well as the benefits and resources that accompany that connection.

Strategies
- A. Explore how to organize the school's various alumni-relations and development efforts into a cohesive program to maximize their effectiveness.
- B. Develop a more robust marketing plan for the Annual Fund, alumni engagement efforts, and school events.
- C. Use the school's 90th anniversary celebration efforts to gauge what level of alumni engagement efforts the school can realistically support.
- D. Explore ways to increase alumni engagement around the school's professional development events.
- E. Explore ways to use the new Duke Alumni Network to facilitate engagement among alumni and students.
- F. Develop engagement activities aimed at young alumni.
- G. Establish regular communication to students at strategic points in their Duke careers, such as welcome emails to new students or congratulations letters to new graduates.
- H. Create regular communication pieces aimed at alumni.

I. Conduct regular surveys to gauge student and alumni awareness of the school's events, programming, and resources.

J. Track and record alumni involvement in the Duke Alumni and Development Database.

Key Performance Indicators

A. Development of marketing plan for the Annual Fund, alumni engagement efforts, and school events

B. A review of the 90th anniversary efforts to identify which components may be sustainable

C. Development of alumni-focused communication pieces

D. Development of communication to students at specific points in their Duke careers

E. A plan on how the school might use the Duke Alumni Network for alumni and student engagement

F. Development of engagement efforts aimed at young alumni

G. Creation of communication pieces for students at various stages of their careers

H. Development of regular communication pieces for alumni

I. Results from student and alumni surveys about their awareness of the school's events, programming, and resources

J. Analytics on alumni involvement

Objective 5.3: Double the Annual Fund

The school's Annual Fund supports a number of resources and efforts that are critical to the school's mission, such as financial support, professional development opportunities, and mentoring support among Ph.D. and master's students. In addition, supporters of the Annual Fund are often the best prospects for volunteers and part of the pipeline for major gift support.

Although The Graduate School has the second largest alumni base among Duke's 10 schools, it has the lowest Annual Fund goal. The Graduate School's Annual Fund goal for fiscal year 2015-16 was $240,000, and 6.7 percent of Graduate School alumni currently contribute to the fund. The school is aiming to increase its Annual Fund goal to $500,000 and have 3,000 donors by fiscal year 2020-21. In addition, the school aims to carry forth the momentum generated by the Duke Forward campaign and increase the number of leadership donors to 120 (up from approximately 70 as of 2017) by the end of fiscal year 2021.

Strategies

A. Identify and retain leadership-level donors (gifts of $1,000 or more), in part by activating development officers across Duke to make sure that Graduate School alumni are being solicited specifically for the school's Annual Fund.

B. Through Annual Fund outreach, identify individuals who are interested in engaging with TGS more broadly so as to increase the school's cohort of volunteers and supporters

C. Cultivate a strong tradition of giving among our recent alumni, thereby producing a pipeline of volunteers and supporters for the future

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Annual Fund goal and results
    B. Increased participation in Annual Fund giving

Objective 5.4: Expand the pool for major gifts

Historically, philanthropic support of graduate education has not been a high priority at Duke or at similar universities nationwide. Increased pressure on both internal and external funding of graduate students has brought more widespread emphasis on developing programs to successfully fundraise for graduate education. A recent commitment of personnel and resources by The Graduate School, Duke University Development, and the Duke Alumni Association is putting Duke in a position to be a leader in the area of graduate fundraising. The goal of this investment is to identify new and existing Duke donors who would be interested in supporting graduate education at the major gifts level ($100,000) and to build a deeper and broader prospect pipeline over time.

Strategies
    A. Leverage resources across The Graduate School, University Development, and the Duke Alumni Association to engage alumni and friends in order to establish a new and growing baseline of donors
    B. Provide resources to colleagues to help them effectively communicate The Graduate School's funding priorities and identify individuals with a potential interest in supporting graduate education
    C. Increase opportunities for one-on-one engagement within The Graduate School for volunteers and donors
    D. Work with development colleagues to prioritize or elevate fellowship giving so that it is a more consistent and widespread priority across all schools
    E. Continue to increase staff to support development efforts

Key Performance Indicators
    A. Number and amount of major gifts brought in annually
    B. Number of major gift donors to The Graduate School
    C. Growing cadre of key volunteers involved with The Graduate School, graduate programs, and students
    D. Size of staff supporting The Graduate School's development efforts

Strategic Goal 6: Raising The Graduate School's Profile

Continue efforts to make The Graduate School a leader among its peers and on the Duke campus in discussions concerning graduate education

Overview

The Graduate School has received significant positive attention in media sources, the broader academic community, and within our own university. We are proud of this recognition and have developed a broad set of initiatives to further our distinctions at multiple levels. Through these, The Graduate School is furthering its commitment to remain an industry leader in the areas of graduate education and leadership. Doing so will help the recruitment of students, improve our graduates' competitiveness on the job market, and give Duke a larger role in national discussions on transforming graduate education.

Outside of Duke, we plan to pursue a set of strategies to put forth our initiatives and programs as a model of leadership. This includes targeting publications which highlight the development of our programs and advance these as models to be utilized by other graduate schools. We also plan to maintain a strong presence at national working group meetings and conferences, engaging with leaders in many fields to not only share our own achievements but also to learn about and apply new practices to make our own work better.

On our own campus, we plan to expand our role as an active participant in issues that affect the broader university community. We are very proud that in 2015 The Graduate School became the first unit at Duke to be recognized with the Outstanding Department Award from the Duke Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity. The commitments that earned us this distinction will remain a focus for us as we look to engage in campus conversations on remaining a leader in these and other areas. Furthermore, we plan to more effectively communicate the accomplishments, initiatives, and programs of The Graduate School to the Duke community in a number of ways. These will not only be for the benefit of our current students, but will also help us to expand our reach to alumni and other entities at the university.

Objective 6.1: Sustain and enhance The Graduate School's external profile

Strategies
   A. Share information about The Graduate School's programs and best practices in media sources commonly used by our peer institutions, such as the "Elements of a Model" series that the school developed for the Council of Graduate Schools.
   B. Develop tools and processes to better document and assess the school's programs and initiatives, such as a registration and participation-tracking tool for professional development (see Objective 1.2, Strategy A).
   C. Launch Duke OPTIONS, an online tool intended to provide an online professional development experience for doctoral students that will be the first of its kind in the U.S.
   D. Use Duke OPTIONS to collect data to help investigate how Duke OPTIONS and, more broadly, professional development affect recruitment, admissions, diversity, persistence, and completion rates.

E. Analyze and employ assessment and tracking models used by other institutions.
F. Be an active participant in national working groups and conferences on issues in graduate education, such as recruitment, professional development, and English language support.
G. Monitor funding opportunities (such as the CGS/ETS grant that funded the development of Duke OPTIONS) and participate in initiatives with campus and institutional partners to support Graduate School efforts.

Key Performance Indicators
A. Media placement of stories and information about The Graduate School's programs and practices
B. Creation of tools and processes to help document TGS work and assess the effectiveness of initiatives and programs
C. Implementation of Duke OPTIONS
D. Data collected through Duke OPTIONS and the research based on that data
E. Improvement in the assessment of existing and new programs
F. Improvement in the quality of career outcomes data on alumni
G. Instances of other schools modeling their programs after TGS's

Objective 6.2: Raise the school's profile within Duke

Strategies
A. Continue to lead or participate in campus conversations on key issues. Some of the school's recent efforts on this front have included organizing student and faculty workshops on diversity and inclusion in the sciences, leading conversations about working with non-native English speakers, and launching the Certificate in College Teaching program to provide enhanced graduate student teacher training.
B. Produce an annual report on The Graduate School's programs and accomplishments and disseminate it to students, alumni, and campus departments and programs.
C. Develop ways to allow departments to easily include in their recruitment process The Graduate School's value-added for the graduate student experience (see Objective 2.1, Strategy E).
D. Continue to collaborate with campus student organizations to organize professional and social events.

Key Performance Indicators
A. Participation in campus conversations relevant to graduate education
B. Production and dissemination of annual report
C. Inclusion of TGS programs, services, and resources in departmental communication to prospective and current students
D. Student participation in TGS events and utilization of TGS programs, services, and resource
E. Recognition of The Graduate School's achievements, honors, initiatives, and programs on university communication channels, such as Duke Today.