

College/School/Department: The Graduate College
Academic Plan 2017-2023

I. Introduction



State your department/school/college mission statement.

The mission of The Graduate College is to provide vision, leadership, and direction for excellence in graduate education at Texas State University with the aim of providing the appropriate infrastructure and learning environment for the training of innovative and successful scholars, teachers, and professionals. The Graduate College does so by

- a. articulating, promoting, and supporting the highest standards of quality in graduate education in keeping with the University's overall mission of teaching, research, and public service;
- b. constructing and maintaining an environment conducive to successful graduate education in concert with all graduate programs;
- c. supporting programs' efforts to foster a diverse student population who participate in a global society;
- d. promoting and supporting rigor in graduate education;
- e. providing key process and procedure guidance and support to graduate programs from admission to graduation;
- f. aiding in student recruitment, application processing, policy monitoring, and degree auditing;
- g. leading initiatives designed to provide best practices in graduate education leading to timely degree completion;
- h. providing graduate student support for creative and scholarly activities;
- i. offering professional development opportunities for graduate students at key stages in their graduate career and
- j. engaging in research on graduate education.

The stakeholders of The Graduate College include students, faculty, and staff involved in graduate education at Texas State University.

Outline briefly your “vision” for the 2017-2023 planning cycle.

The Graduate College is striving to help Texas State University achieve its goal of becoming a National Research University. We serve a vibrant graduate education community of about 4,000 graduate students (over 3,500 master’s students and close to 500 doctoral students) who contribute significantly to the mission of the university with their own research and creative activities, their assistantships, and service to campus and beyond.

The Graduate College’s goal is to continue to increase the number and quality of incoming graduate students on campus while simultaneously improving their educational experience on campus, increasing graduation rates and improving times to degree. In doing so, we are looking forward to collaborating with all of our stakeholders and support offices in San Marcos and Round Rock.

Using University goals and initiatives as a guide, list and briefly describe your top five priorities for the 2017-2023 planning cycle and indicate the university goal/initiative to which the unit’s goal is linked.

1. Provide tuition waiver scholarships and increase assistantship funding (Related University Goals: primarily 1.4, 3.1, but also 1.2, 1.3., 4.4).
2. Increase graduate student enrollment by creating new and innovative graduate programs and implementing curricular innovation of existing programs in San Marcos and Round Rock, combined with a comprehensive recruitment strategy for all graduate programs in collaboration with academic departments, University Marketing, the Texas State Office of Distance and Extended Learning Extension Studies, the International Office, Enrollment Management, and Round Rock (Related University Goals: primarily 3.2, 1.2, 1.6, 1.9, 2.1, 2.2 but also 3.1, 3.5).
3. Adoption/creation of an integrated, fully functional, and easy-to-use recruiting & admissions software (Related University Goals: primarily 1.2, 1.9, 2.6, 4.9 but also 1.1).
4. Promote student success by providing workshops for graduate students and faculty both in San Marcos, Round Rock, and online. (Related University Goals: primarily 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8, 2.7, 3.4, 4.2, 4.8 but also 1.1, 1.2, 1.13, 2.2, 3.1, 3.5, 4.5, 4.13).
5. Promote support and provide opportunities for graduate student research activities in San Marcos and Round Rock in collaboration with the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs. (Related University Goals: primarily 3.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5 but also 1.1, 1.4, 1.8).

Based on unit goals, list the number of new (not replacement) faculty lines you plan to request in the 2017-2018 academic year and in the remaining 2-6 years.

N.A., The Graduate College does not have any faculty lines and does not plan on requesting any.

Based on unit initiatives outlined in your plan, estimate the total amount of new funding that your unit will realistically need in the 2017-2018 academic year and in the remaining 2-6 years.

	<u>2017-2018</u>	<u>2018-2023</u>
Tuition scholarships for full tuition for Fall/Spring/Summer (9,000 per student x 800 assistantship recipients)	\$7,200,000	\$7,200,000 annually
Integrated Admissions / Recruitment Software	\$80,000	\$80,000 annually
Student Tracking Software		\$80,000 annually
Second Research Coordinator (= External Fellowship Officer)		\$50,000 annually
Professional Development Coordinator	\$42,000	\$42,000 annually
Graduate College Recruiter		\$38,000 annually
Degree Audit Specialist		\$38,400 annually

Admissions Specialist		\$38,000 annually
Graduate Student Conference Travel Support	\$35,000	\$35,000 annually
Thesis /Doctoral Research Support Fellowships (we have awarded more than our budgeted \$93,000 from past carry-forwards. By the end of 2017, these carry-forward funds will be spent down. Thus, we are requesting an additional 85,000 for each academic year)	\$42,500	\$85,000 annually
Collaborative Research Initiative for graduate students & faculty	\$50,000	\$50,000 annually
Visualizing Research Initiative	\$10,000	\$10,000 annually

State the facilities (e.g. offices, research and lab space, classrooms) that will be required for anticipated growth and new unit goals.

None are anticipated for the years 2017-2023.

II. Process



Describe, in a brief paragraph, the process used to develop your plan, including the nature and extent of faculty involvement.

The dean of The Graduate College presented a report on accomplishments of the previous strategic plan to the Graduate Council (consisting of a faculty representative from each department housing a graduate degree). Jointly, the group discussed which of the goals were still relevant for the next strategic plan, and which new goals/needs had emerged. The dean of The Graduate College also had retained a list of needs/concerns/initiatives from previous years when they had emerged in conversations with graduate faculty, chairs, deans, and other administrators. The dean of The Graduate College then created a list of current and new initiatives centered on four areas: a) graduate student funding, b) recruitment, c) fostering degree success, and d) research. Through an electronic survey, input was then sought on this list of possible initiatives/priorities from all graduate faculty including graduate advisors and members of the Graduate Council, as well as from graduate advisor support staff and Graduate College staff. The survey was sent to just over 1,000 recipients, of which 166 individuals responded. The survey responses in combination with discussions with upper administration determined the top five priorities of the 2017-2023 strategic plan. We fine-tuned our strategic plan based on the thoughtful input from the Graduate Education Read-Across Committee.

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III. Program Maintenance

Maintenance Need	Reason for Need	Cost	Result of Funding
Funds for Graduate College Scholarships. The funding level would ideally be increased proportionally to the increase in the number of graduate students on campus.	This funding serves to recruit new students and retain current ones. We know that lack of funding is one of the main reasons students decide to not pursue a degree at Texas State or to drop out of a current program.	\$350,000 annually + proportional increase	This funding serves to attract and retain students while recognizing academic excellence on campus. It ultimately leads to increased enrollments.
Funds for Thesis and Doctoral Research Support Fellowships	Frequently, students incur costs related to their thesis/dissertation research (for travel to obtain research results, to purchase equipment and supplies, to pay human subjects, etc.). As stated above, we have funded this initiative at higher amounts from past carry overs.	See table IV	More students are likely to complete a thesis as the barrier of costs related to research is removed; students who have received such funding are more likely to obtain external funding. Thus, this funding supports the research/creative activity mission of the university.
Funds for Merrick Fellowships	These recruitment fellowships (at \$9,000 for doctoral students and \$2,500 for master's students) help us attract the best and brightest students to Texas State, many of whom receive competing offers from other institutions.	\$100,000 per year	This funding serves to recruit new students. We have multiple reports from past recipients that this scholarship has made the difference between attending Texas State and completing their degree program elsewhere. It ultimately leads to increased enrollments.
Student Conference Travel Support from Student Service Fee	Each year, increasing numbers of graduate students are travelling to conferences and exhibitions to present research and creative works. Current funding from the Student Service Fee only serves to fund student trips from Sept 1-mid February. We then supplement from Graduate College funding. It is vital that we retain the current minimum budget.	See table IV	The funding contributes directly to the research expenditures of the University, and thus contributes to our research mission and our path to NRUF. Moreover, Texas State research is publicized and students are making vital research connections.

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IV. Planning Goals (University Goal Statements)

Dept.	Unit Goal	1 yr	2-6 years	New Resources Required	Cost	Source of Resources	Assessment Criteria	University Initiative
University Goal 1: Promote the success of all students.								
The Graduate College	Offer tuition scholarships and raising assistantships to support students and increase enrollment (\$9,000 per student per year x 800 students on assistantships).	X	X	\$7,200,000	\$7,200,000 annually	Provost	Increase in enrollment, increase in retention, higher caliber student	1.4, 3.1,
The Graduate College	Promote and incentivize student success by providing workshops, orientations, and Graduate Student Appreciation Week activities for graduate students in San Marcos, Round Rock, and online. Collaborate with support units on campus to offer these.	X	X	\$42,000 (hire of professional development coordinator)	\$42,000 annually \$2,000 annually for certificate of completion for workshops \$10,000 for Graduate Student Appreciation Week Activities	Provost The Graduate College The Graduate College	Increase in student retention and improvement of time to degree	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8
The Graduate College	Collaborate with Faculty Professional Development to provide regular	X	X	None	None	The Graduate College	Increase in student retention, increase in application	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6

	workshops on topics related to graduate education (mentoring, working with distressed/distressing students, recruiting, etc.) for faculty in San Marcos, Round Rock, and online.						numbers, improved responses on student surveys	
The Graduate College	Increase the diversity of students, particularly of Hispanic students, in collaboration with stakeholders (i.e., by forging ties with existing national initiatives such as McNair, Peace Corps Coverdell program, by supporting underfunded students in the application process, by recruiting at venues with diverse undergraduate student body, etc.).	X	X	None	\$10,000	The Graduate College	Increase in student diversity	1.2, 1.3, 1.4
The Graduate College	Establish minimum requirements for professional development course all graduate assistants enroll in and work with support units to provide some teaching modules.		X	None	None	The Graduate College	Increase in graduate student teaching evaluations, better responses on graduate student satisfaction surveys	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8
The Graduate College	Continue to work with the Graduate Council (faculty) and the Graduate House (student representatives) to identify campus-wide issues for graduate students and help address them.	X	X	None	None	The Graduate College	Increase in student retention, better responses on graduate student satisfaction surveys	1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 1.8

University Goal 2: Offer high quality academic and educational programming.								
The Graduate College	Work with departments, the AVP Office for Academic Affairs to create new and innovative graduate programs that meet the needs of the state and implement curricular innovation (including study abroad, ties to external agencies & industries, executive programs, etc.) of existing programs in San Marcos, Round Rock, and online.	X	X	See Academic Colleges' Strategic Plans \$38,400 annually to hire graduate admissions specialist \$38,400 annually to hire graduate admissions specialist \$45,000 annually to hire proposal writing / marketing specialist	See Academic Colleges' Strategic Plans \$38,400 annually \$38,400 annually \$45,000 annually	Provost	Increase of number of graduate programs and graduate students	2.1, 1.2, 1.6, 3.1, 3.2
The Graduate College	Continue to hold regular workshops with the AVP for Academic Affairs on new program development / THECB requirements. Collaborate with the AVP Office for Academic Affairs to improve guidelines and instructions for programs submitting proposals.	X	X	None	None	Graduate College, AVP for Academic Affairs	Increase in proposals, shortening time to produce proposals	2.1, 1.2, 1.6, 3.1, 3.2
The Graduate College	Develop and implement a comprehensive recruitment strategy for all graduate programs in collaboration with academic departments, University Marketing, the Texas State		X	\$38,000 annually to hire Graduate College Recruiter	\$170,000 (this figure only includes Graduate College spending on recruitment)	Restructuring of how funds for recruitment are currently spent by the offices	Increase in number of applications, admissions, and enrolled students	2.1, 1.2, 3.1, 3.2

	Office of Distance and Extended Learning Extension Studies, the International Office, Enrollment Management, and Round Rock.					named in the goal.		
University Goal 3: Achieve significant progress in research and creative activity as measured by national standards.								
The Graduate College	Collaborate with Office of Research on Federal Relations and University Advancement to promote graduate student research with an initiative called "Visualizing Graduate Student Research."	X	X	\$10,000	\$10,000	Provost, Graduate College, VP for Research	Feedback from stakeholders, increase in donations to graduate education, increase in research activity of students	3.3, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5, 1.1, 1.4, 1.8
The Graduate College	Provide research support services for graduate students.	X	X	None, if resources for faculty can be extended to thesis and doctoral students	None, if resources for faculty can be extended to thesis and doctoral students	IIRDA (making IIRDA available to graduate students)	Increase in thesis and research productivity of students, better time to degree	3.1, 3.3, 3.5
The Graduate College	Create funded interdisciplinary research projects between graduate students and faculty (with graduate students as leads).		X	\$50,000	\$50,000 annually	Provost, donors, AVP for Research, Graduate College	Increase in graduate student presentations / publications, increase in external funding applications	3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 1.6
The Graduate College	Continue to increase graduate student conference travel support (current funding level from student service fees (\$21,000 in permanent funding and \$15,000 in one-time funding is much exceeded).	X	X	\$35,000 in addition to current funding of \$36,000	\$71,000	Provost, Student Service Fee	Increase in student conference participation, increase in visibility & reputation of university	3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 1.1, 1.4

The Graduate College	Continue thesis / doctoral thesis support fellowships (current funding level is much exceeded and carry-forward funds are running out).	X	X	\$85,000 in addition to current funding of \$93,000 annually	\$178,000 annually	Provost, donors	More theses, higher quality theses and dissertations, less student debt	3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 1.1, 1.4
The Graduate College	Continue current activities promoting student research (research conference, 3-minute thesis competitions, thesis/dissertation/mentor awards, etc.) and seeking donor funding for such activities.	X	X	\$20,000	\$20,000 annually	The Graduate College (seeking donor funds)	Increase in graduate student presentations/ publications, increase in external funding applications, increase in reputation of university	3.1, 3.3, 3.5
The Graduate College	Raise funding for graduate students by hiring a second research coordinator to help students apply for external scholarships, fellowships, and grants.		X	\$50,000 annually	\$50,000 annually	Provost	Increase in research expenditures, increase in funded graduate students	3.1, 3.2, 3.4
University Goal 4: Provide the necessary services, resources, and infrastructure to support the university's strategic direction.								
The Graduate College	Provide integrated Recruitment / Admissions Software that is fully functional & easy to use (either third party or improved in-house product).	X	X	\$80,000 annually	\$80,000 annually	IT / possibly raise application fee	Evaluation by stakeholders, rise in applications / admissions	4.9, 1.1, 1.2, 1.9, 2.6
	Provide integrated "Graduate Student Tracking System" from recruitment to graduation.	X	X	\$80,000 annually	\$80,000 annually	Provost	Evaluation by stakeholders, rise in student retention, shorter time to degree	
The Graduate College	Continue to assess and improve Graduate College policies, support services,	X	X	None	None	The Graduate College	Increase in enrollment and graduation rates	4.3, 4.10, 4.11

	and processes.							
The Graduate College	In conjunction with University Advancement, explore the creation of a Graduate College Advisory Board (University-external members for fundraising purposes).		X	None	None	The Graduate College	Increase in funding for scholarships and other initiatives	4.4, 1.4
The Graduate College	In conjunction with University Advancement, continue to explore and implement appropriate crowdfunding initiatives to raise funds for students and initiatives.	X	X	None	None	The Graduate College	Increase in funding for scholarships and other initiatives	4.4
The Graduate College	Continue to improve web and social media presence, resources made available online, and brochures.	X	X	\$14,000 for graduate assistant to help publications writer	\$14,000 annually	The Graduate College	Increase in applications and student retention	4.9, 4.10, 4.11