

2012-2013 Annual Report of the Graduate School

submitted by

**Karen P. DePauw
Vice President and Dean for Graduate Education**

The Graduate School has identified specific priorities and goals for '12-'13 which are in concert with the overall goals of the *Plan for a New Horizon*. These include:

1. Continue to implement and enhance the graduate students experiences through the Transformative Graduate Education (TGE) initiative*
2. Enhance interdisciplinary graduate education (e.g., IGEP, Individual Interdisciplinary PhD)*
3. Review and revise graduate education programs (degrees, certificates) portfolio especially for NCR and international partnerships
4. Implement an assessment plan for graduate education
5. Continue active support for office of Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives (ODRI) and achieving an inclusive and globally diverse graduate community*
6. Continue to implement a strong academic community and reconsider ways to provide programs and opportunities for graduate students
7. Continue to upgrade the use of technology in the Graduate School and for the graduate students*
8. Re-envision the organization of the Graduate School and redefine roles and responsibilities of GS staff

Significant progress has been made on these goals as well as the individual goals set by Associate Deans and Directors (Admissions & Academic Progress, Recruitment & Diversity Initiatives, Student Services, NVC) in the Graduate School. The accomplishments of the Graduate School reflect the collective efforts of Graduate School employees especially the Directors and Associate Deans. The reports are available and help indicate the extent of the effort. Please review these for a more complete picture of the roles, responsibilities and achievements of the VT Graduate School.

As requested in the July 1, 2013 memo, the “progress against the metric in the university scorecard” is reported later in the annual report. The diversity-related accomplishments are articulated primarily under priority #5. Although I’m more comfortable with WEAVE Online, I still find it to be cumbersome. I have entered some information regarding the goals, objectives, measures and findings for four of our goals which is similar to what is contained in this report (*goals also incorporated into WEAVE Online). The summary chart is attached. In addition, we have undertaken a couple of assessment projects which are summarized in tables and figures attached to this report. These are reported under Goal #4.

The VT Graduate School continues to be a leader in innovation in graduate education especially with the Transformative Graduate Education (TGE) initiative, the unique and

nationally award winning Graduate Life Center, global perspectives program and technology advancements for graduate education. Our efforts have been recognized by the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), graduate deans around the U.S and internationally through the European University Association (EUA).

Additional narrative and information is included in my [Individual Annual Activity Report](#) and my updated vita submitted previously. Earlier this year I successfully completed my second 5th year review and detailed information can be found at <https://blogs.lt.vt.edu/reviewkpd/>.

1. Continue to implement and enhance TGE initiatives; expand the global perspectives program

During '12-'13, we continued to offer a full complement of GRAD courses and added some new GRAD courses as articulated below:

- GRAD 5104 (3) Preparing the Future Professoriate (Fall & Spring) (taught by DePauw) annual enrollment = 110+
- GRAD 5114 (3) Pedagogical Practices in Contemporary Contexts (Fall & Spring) (taught by Fowler) annual enrollment = 110+
- GRAD 5204 (3) Citizen Scholar Seminar (Fall) (taught by Blieszner) annual enrollment = 20+
- GRAD 5124 (2) Information Literacy (Fall & Spring) (taught by Library staff), available as online course which different sections for selected disciplines
- GRAD 5004 (1) GTA Workshop (taught by Rankin) annual enrollment = 650+
- GRAD 5304 (3) Preparing the Career Professional (Spring) (taught by Rankin) annual enrollment = 20+
- GRAD 5314 (3) Preparing Scientist and Engineers for Industry (taught by R. Turner). annual enrollment = 15
- GRAD 5984 Communicating Science (Spring) (taught by Patty Raun) This will become a permanent course offering annual enrollment = 16
- GRAD 5984 (2) Cognition & Learning (Spring) taught by Fowler and Campbell. annual enrollment 7- 10
- GRAD 5214 (3) Global Diversity and Inclusion (Spring) taught by DePauw annual enrollment 10-15
- GRAD 5954 Study Abroad (May 2013) PFP: Global Perspectives seminar at CESA. The course was taught by K. DePauw with 13 graduate students selected to participate. This was the 8th year for this successful global perspectives experience which included the addition of global graduate student seminars with University of Basel students at UniBasel and CESA, UniBasel visit to the U.S. and global graduate education conference at the Swiss Embassy in Washington DC.

Annually, ~1000 students enroll in these classes with very positive feedback and significant student credit hours generated. Enrollment comes from all 8 colleges. Approximately 10-12 students per year “apply” for the graduate certificate in the Future Professoriate. A selected number of GRAD courses or Future Professoriate graduate certificate are required by academic departments (e.g., Eng Ed, Building Construction,

ASPECT) and others have incorporated GRAD courses into their degree programs (e.g., CEE, Counselor Ed, ISE, ME). These courses and TGE initiatives are often included in grant proposals (e.g., NSF IGERT, GANNN).

A new aspect of TGE was implemented for the second year - [Communicating Science](#), a program developed by Alan Alda at SUNY - Stony Brook. The Graduate School and CLAHS have joined forces to become a Communicating Science university. Patty Raun has agreed to lead this effort and she is preparing the permanent course with variable credit (1-2) for Communicating Science.

2. Enhance interdisciplinary graduate education at VT (e.g., IGEP)

The third (and final) year of the initial Interdisciplinary Graduate Education Program (IGEP) proposal resulted in three additional IGEPs for Fall '13. This brings the total to 13 IGEPs – details can be found on the [interdisciplinary website](#) – please visit <http://interdisciplinary.graduateschool.vt.edu/>

- Sustainable Nanotechnology
- Translational Plant Science
- Water INTERface: INTERdisciplinary Research Transcending Boundaries of Engineering Science, and Human Health (WATER)
- Multi-Scale Transport in Environmental and Physiological Systems (MultiSTEPS)
- Genetics, Bioinformatics, & Computational Biology
- Macromolecular Science and Engineering
- Translational Obesity Research
- Regenerative Medicine
- Remote Sensing
- Computational Tissue Engineering
- Interfaces of Global Change
- Bio-Inspired Buildings
- Human Centered Design

The initial proposal called for each new IGEP to be awarded four GRA positions and funding for recruitment, operations, and administrative costs. Full funding was provided by the Provost Office in year one and only partial funding for IGEPs in year 2 and year 3. The initial funding request was for 3 IGEPs per year but the generous support from Fralin and ICTAS have provided for the two additional IGEPs. ISCE also provided partial funding in year 3. The Graduate School has continued to provide temporary funding to the IGEPs until base funding can be secured in future years. The IGEP program has been very successful to date. This year the first cohort will undergo evaluation for continuation of funding. In August '13, Dr. Mauro Borrego (Associate Professor, Eng Ed.) will assume the position of .50 Associate Dean and Director of Interdisciplinary programs to assist with the further development of the IGEP program and coordinate interdisciplinary graduate education including the individual interdisciplinary PhD program.

During the '12-'13 academic year, the Graduate School prepared a proposal for an individualized interdisciplinary PhD program. The proposal moved through governance and was approved by University Council in Spring '13. Although consultation with

SCHEV, it was determined that the University through the Graduate School already had the capability to offer such an individualized degree and therefore, we moved into the implementation phase beginning Fall '13.

3. Review graduate education programs (degrees, certificates) portfolio especially NCR and international partnerships

The Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD) is updated annually and incorporates new degrees, existing degrees to be extended to another location, new graduate certificates, and collaborative degrees with U.S. and International partner universities. A copy of the IPGD is shared in the spring with senior academic leadership. This year, the undergraduate process was developed and the two were merged into one process for better coordination among the new degree proposals and degree management in general. Relatedly the process for reviewing and approving international partnerships including the signing of MOUs was agreed upon for electronic implementation.

As part of the University's strategic plan, we examined growth areas for graduate education. This resulted in a general distribution of 75% doctoral students, 75% growth in STEM-H degrees (masters' and doctoral), and 75% in Blacksburg contained within the Provost's [implementation plan](#). Dr. Wong, the Director and Associate Dean in NCR has assumed the responsibility for helping to identify growth in the National Capital Region.

4. Establish an assessment plan for graduate education

In '11-'12, I re-assigned a Graduate School staff member to gather data regarding graduate students and prepare them to presentation on the Graduate School website. The initial launch of the "By the Numbers" occurred in Fall '12 and the data contained therein was expanded throughout the year. The data are available for potential students as well as academic units and the Graduate School for understanding trends in graduate education at VT. Examples of the data include the following: applications, admits and enrollments by department, college, campus and university; graduation rates; international & domestic students; part-time & full time enrollments; demographic distributions with more to come. For more information, see "By the Numbers" on the Graduate School website <http://graduateschool.vt.edu/numbers/trend.jsp>.

In keeping with the university's request for administrative quality and improvement (AdQI), Monika Gibson led an effort to evaluate student traffic patterns within the Graduate School lobby for possible reconfiguration and adjustments to staffing patterns. Attached are the data slides. In addition, Janice Austin conducted some assessments of work in the admissions and academic progress area. Three goals were met and the fourth was partially met. Report is attached.

5. Continue active support for office of Graduate Student Diversity Initiatives and efforts of inclusion; implement a diversity scholars program

The Graduate School's commitment to diversity and inclusion remains quite strong. We have adopted an integrated approach throughout all of the Graduate School activities (full report is appended). Thus, only a few are highlighted here:

- Continued the expansion of programs to recruit and retain graduate students of diverse backgrounds including:
 - Campus visits and "preview" weekends

- Open Houses
- Monthly gatherings including Graduate Women's Luncheon, American Indian Heritage Celebration luncheon, Black History Month Celebration, HBCU connect, Hispanic Latino Celebration Month, Jewish Awareness Month, LGBTQ, and more
- Summer REU pizza gatherings
- Sponsored or attended numerous graduate recruitment fairs and internal events
- Sponsored or coordinated outreach events such as Black alumni reunion, Gay in Appalachia, McNair undergraduate research conference, and VCCS Chancellor Fellowship program
- Revived and expanded the Coordinated School Visits Program
- Assisted with the graduate course on GRAD 5214 Diversity and Inclusion in Global Society
- Established strong collaborations with offices around campus such as Cranwell Center, McNair Scholars, VT-PREP and IMSD, REU programs and more
- Continued support for the Hispanic commencement, Lavender Graduation for LGBT students, Ebony Affair, and Donning of the Kente
- Completed a second successful year of the Diversity Scholars program. ORDI selected 13 Scholars to participate the first year. As a group, the Scholars accomplished the goal of increasing the awareness of diversity issues around campus and had their work highlighted on the Graduate School website and the VT News pages.
- ORDI partnered with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Graduate Student Board of Visitors Representative, and the Division of Student Affairs to host a Graduate Student Climate Survey. The survey was administered and results are being analyzed.

A major success this year was re-establishment of the relationship with GEM and our ability to accept and funding for GEM recommended students. The GEM relationship strengthened this year with the involvement of Associate Dean Jack Lesko. He agreed to match funds with COE money, and to encourage graduate coordinators in his college to take more of a lead in the recruitment and admission of the GEM prospects.

In order to enhance our recruitment efforts, ORDI purchased HOBSONS Connect, a client management system. The system took a team of Graduate School directors to build over the course of 6 months. In March 2013, the system was implemented and departments were trained. The system will help to manage the prospective students and applicants by department to include a VIP page per student and an individualized communication plan.

6. Continue to implement a strong academic community and reconsider ways to provide programs and opportunities for graduate students

As one of its themes, the Graduate School actively seeks ways and provides programs and opportunities to implement a strong academic community. These programs and services apply to U.S. and international students. These include activities/events including regularly scheduled events such as career services, counseling services,

immigration services and workshops, coordinators workshops, Graduate Education Week, new student orientations, social gatherings & receptions, photo contests, and much more. We have continued and refined the GLC fellows program through which we organize and provide programs under the supervision of Monika Gibson, GSSO. Examples of these programs are highlighted below (for more detailed information, see full report):

- GLC café weekly in Reading Room
- Availability of LISA (statistics advising service) in GLC
- Availability of Writing Center services
- New workshops for graduate students such as stress management, SafeZone training, advising workshop and more
- Ethics common
- Potluck for 100+ students during Thanksgiving and Spring breaks is now a tradition

After 5 years of full operations of the GLC, we undertook an analysis of our operations and our space (Graduate School and GLC). Examples of upgrades include the following:

- GLC side patio paved, furniture installed
- New furniture for mezzanine and Auditorium corridor
- Improvements to Graduate School lobby (120)
 - Adjustments to advising stations and receptionist desk
 - Banner on receptionist desk
 - Posters in mezzanine and 120
 - Adjustments to staffing based on tracked traffic patterns

Another important component of the Graduate School operations is the Office of the Graduate Student Ombudsperson. There is a dotted line connection between this office and the Graduate School to allow for some “distance” between the office and the Graduate School but the office is housed on the first floor of the Graduate School. The Ombudsperson is actively engages with orientations and workshops throughout the year but perhaps the most important purpose of the office is availability and consultations with graduate students (220+ unique visitors in office, by phone and email) throughout the VT locations. The following general categories of issues were presented, in rank order:

- Relationships with advisors or other faculty, staff, and peers (advisor conflicts were the number-one issue)
- Communication difficulties
- Academic progress
- Incivility/bullying
- Funding concerns (e.g., loss of funding and, often, ramification on immigration status)
- Ethics
- Policies and procedures

One additional note here. Early in the Fall ‘12, the owners of First & Main approached the Graduate School to seek input about the creation of what they originally called the Blacksburg Intellectual Village. The intent was to build a graduate housing complex in

proximity of campus and they wanted our assistance. Throughout the year, we met frequently to discuss possibilities and held gatherings of graduate students to seek their input. In May, the actual location was revealed – rugby fields at First & Main for graduate housing complex with child care facility. This project continues and the plan is for a 2015 opening.

7. Continue to upgrade the use of technology in the Graduate School and for the graduate students especially Web 2.0 technology (e.g., website, Facebook, vGLC, Twitter, Blogs using WordPress)

The VT Graduate School continues to be seen as a leader in technology among the graduate schools nationally and as such, we are frequently asked to provide sessions at regional and national conferences (e.g., CGS, VCGS, CSGS). In December '12, we received an invitation for several of the VT to present a workshop entitled “Up Close and Personal with Technology: Virginia Tech”. This was the second time for the VT team which is highly unusual. Some of the uses of technology are highlighted below:

- “By the numbers” visualization
- Recruitment efforts such as school visitation, open houses, and on campus visits
- Interactive Graduate School Catalog
- Use of “card swipes” for event registration and GTA workshop
- Use of WordPress blogging tool with Global Perspectives program (e.g., Global Perspectives, Switzerland, Interdisciplinary, Diversity and Inclusion, etc.)
- Increased the visibility and program offerings through the virtual GLC (vGLC)
- Enhanced communication with the graduate community via social media:
 - Graduate School Blog
 - Use of Graduate School Wiki
 - Graduate School Face Book with 2800+ “fans”
 - Twitter

Finally after 6 years of efforts, we were able to finalize the electronic signature system (ESS) verification for use in Graduate School processes. The first phase of the implementation of ESS was the final examination scheduling form and ETD submission process which was successfully launched in Fall '12. Over 1000 examinations were scheduled using the process within the first months of its launch. Efforts will now be extended to other processes within the Graduate School such as preliminary exam scheduling, Plan of Study and more.

In addition, we were finally able to secure university commitment and support to revise our application system. The in-house application is almost complete and was initially tested during summer '13.

8. Re-envision the organization of the Graduate School and redefine roles and responsibilities of GS staff

After sharing my initial reflections of the progress of the VT Graduate School, re-envisioning the Graduate School (2.0+ - 3.0) and setting a tone for positive change, several opportunities were set in motion. Graduate School employees were invited and

shared multiple “doodles” (creative thinking suggestions) and gathered with me for small group conversations. These resulted in small but effective changes. Selected directors (G5) were empowered to convene and suggest modifications and changes. This group met regularly, offered workshop for staff development and information sharing within the Graduate School, solicited input and suggestions for improving the physical space as well as the operations, and more. Their efforts continued for 2 years with success. In April '13, I challenged other staff members to convene around topics and suggest advancements and enhancements to the Graduate School. I continue to see greater communication among the staff, a stronger sense of shared community within the Graduate School, and positive interactions with the broader university community.

Personnel changes during '12-'13

The Graduate School (Graduate School 1.0) has achieved much in the last 10 years, especially the last 5 years in the GLC (2.0) and we are moving toward a 2.0+ operational structure for the Graduate School. Toward this end, we hired a receptionist to serve in the Welcome Center, retitled Admissions & Academic Progress staff as advisors, and physically changed the main entrance to the Graduate School to be more user-friendly and efficient.

During spring '12, Janice Austin was appointed interim and then Director of Admissions and Academic Progress replacing Jacqueline Nottingham. Jacqueline assumed a temporary appointment as Director, Data Management until she left the university in spring '13. Due to the need for such a position, the position will be continued for the next few years as a .80 FTE and will be filled by a current employee who desired a change in duty. As a result, a new Immigration specialist was needed and was hired in spring '13. The new Director of Budget and Operations began work at VT in December '12 replacing Roberto Mayorga.

Initially Kenneth Wong was appointed interim Director of the NVC and Associate Dean of the Graduate School in May 2012 for a final decision about the NVC Director/Associate Dean's position during the fall 2012 semester. After feedback and discussions with various constituencies, the interim title was removed and Dr. Wong offered the position on a permanent basis.

Ongoing and additional administrative responsibilities of Graduate School Dean, Associate Deans, Directors, staff (representative and not exhaustive). (please see individual reports)

- Ongoing daily activities and operations of the Graduate School (recruitment, admissions, academic progress through alumni, international graduate students, development and fund raising, student support services, etc.)
- Immigration services and advice for international graduate students (increase in enrollment of international graduate student)
- Institutional Plan for Graduate Degrees (IPGD) was updated annually reflecting institutional priorities.
- Ultimate responsibility for university-wide graduate education (VT: National Capitol Region and Commonwealth campuses)
- Continued annual 2012 Graduate Alumni Homecoming attended by 100+ alumni
- Continued positive working relationship with the Commission for Graduate Studies & Policies (CGS&P)
- Worked closely with other Commissions and university governance
- Continued positive collaborations with Graduate Student Association (GSA). Served as Advisor to GSA (DePauw). Regularly assist with the transition from current officers to new officers and other leadership activities
- Continued a positive working relationship with the Graduate Student Representative to the BOV.
- Served as advisor to Interdisciplinary Research Society (IDR) and Alpha Epsilon Lambda (AEL) (DePauw); advisor to Graduate Honor system (Gibson)
- Increased international collaborations with partner universities (with J. Niles and G. Ghosh)
- Re-invigorated fundraising effort; new Director of Development was hired in Spring 2012
- Publications and presentations on graduate education (state, regional, national and international)
- Presentations regarding VT graduate education for international and national visitors as well as to various constituency groups within VT (AdvanceVT, Commissions, Committees, Department Heads council, CARS/CAGS, etc.)
- Served as PI, Co-PI and consultant to externally funded grants (e.g., NSF AGEF, IGERT)
- Serving on search committees – multiple individuals serving on multiple search committee at the Graduate School, college and university levels

Graduate School at a glance

- Graduate Certificates – 56+ official
- Master’s and Doctoral degrees in 75 academic fields including interdisciplinary programs; 56 official graduate certificates. Degrees include PhD and EdD, EdS, MA and MS in multiple departments, and numerous professional degrees including MACIS, MEng, MArch, MBA, MFA, MAEd, MPIA, MPA, MPH, MLA, MIT, MEA, MNR, MURPL, and MF.
- Total graduate students university-wide remain steady: 64% in Blacksburg, 29% part time/full time students at extended campuses, 40% doctoral students, 26% international graduate students representing 100+ countries, and 22% of total university enrollment are graduate students and 17% in Blacksburg
- [Scorecard data](#) are shared under separate link and showed positive performance

Descriptive data – Fall 2012 (see [By the Numbers](#) for trends)

Applications

Applications:	9544
Offers:	2977
Enrolled:	1861
Yield (Enr/Off):	62.51%

Mean GRE & GPA*

GRE Quantitative:	157
GRE Verbal:	154
Undergraduate GPA:	3.42

*New ETS scale went into effect for 2012, 130-170 is acceptable

Enrollment headcount (6808)

	Number	Percent
Full-time	4477	65.76%
Part-time	2473	34.24%
In-state	3521	51.72%
Out-of-state	3287	48.28%
On-campus	4620	67.86%
Off-campus	2188	32.14%
Masters	3792	55.70%
1 st Year PhD	226	3.32%
Doctoral	2790	40.98%
Domestic	4982	73.18%
International	1826	26.82%
Female	2787	40.94%
Male	4006	58.84%
Not Reported	15	.22%

Race	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	.012%
Asian American	331	4.86%
Black or African American	373	5.48%
Hispanics of any race	183	2.69%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3	.04%
White	3887	57.09%
Two or more races	103	1.51%
Not Reported	94	1.38%
International	1826	26.82%

Priorities and goals for '13-'14 (general goals, units have identified specific goals as well)

The Graduate School has assumed a leadership position toward helping the university achieve the goals and aspirations for graduate education articulated in the *Plan for a New Horizon 2012-2018*. As such, our efforts will be focused on:

- Increasing graduate enrollment,
- Developing new innovative and globally relevant graduate programs,
- Maintaining the quality of existing graduate education including degree offerings,
- Continuing to enhance and expand graduate education with professional development courses and activities,
- Supporting and encouraging interdisciplinary and collaborative opportunities,
- Enhancing a strong, diverse and globally inclusive graduate community, and
- Improving efficient and effective operations.

Graduate School specific priorities and goals for '13-'14 would include:

1. Initiate plan for increasing graduate enrollment over the next 6 years
2. Continue to review and revise graduate education programs (degrees, certificates) portfolio especially for NCR and international partnerships
3. Continue to implement a strong academic community and reconsider ways to provide programs and opportunities for graduate students
4. Continue to implement and expand Transformative Graduate Education (TGE) initiatives
5. Enhance interdisciplinary graduate education at VT (e.g., IGEP)
6. Continue active support for office of Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives (ODRI) and achieving an inclusive and globally diverse graduate community
7. Continue to enhance Graduate School operations through use of technology and human resources.