

Task Force on Graduate Education
Process and Timeline
February 15, 2006

Goals and objectives: The Task Force on Graduate Education will review current and future funding of graduate education at East Carolina University and make recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies.

Phase I (Feb – April 2006)

1. The Task Force will identify high priority graduate education issues. A preliminary list is given below.
 - Efficient and effective use of graduate assistantship (GA) funds
 - Distribution of GAs
 - Adequacy of GA stipends
 - In-state and out-of-state tuition remissions
 - How many are needed?
 - Balance between graduate distance education and on-campus graduate education
 - Balance between doctoral education and masters education
 - Graduate student credit hour production (regular terms and summer sessions)
 - Recruiting, student body characteristics
 - Criteria for financial support
 - Use of Administrative GAs
 - Cost of replacing with other types of employees
 - Purpose of GA expenditures
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Scholarships
 - Health care benefits
 - Can current plan be improved?
 - Better plan needed for recruiting doctoral students, even if deans have to pay more for it
 - Other important issues that may be identified by the Task Force
2. The Task Force will gather institutional data and comparative data from selected peer institutions and disseminate a summary of the data to campus constituencies.
3. The Task Force will communicate with the campus community during Phase I to report on high priority issues identified and to receive preliminary feedback to ensure all important issues are identified. This may include preliminary surveys or meetings.

Notes on Phase I: The process of identifying issues and gathering data will be an iterative process. As issues are identified and background information is gathered, new issues may be uncovered. During the early stages of the Task Force's work, there may be short term fixes that can be applied quickly to improve support for graduate education prior to release of the full report. Where feasible, the Task Force may recommend some short term solutions to high priority issues.

Phase II (Aug – Oct 2006)

1. The Task Force will develop survey instruments during the summer and disseminate them at the beginning of the fall semester to campus constituencies to gather feedback on the issues it seeks to investigate. Preliminary findings and background data from Phase I will be disseminated with the survey. Four main constituencies will be surveyed:
 - Deans and Associate Deans
 - Department Chairpersons and Directors of Graduate Programs
 - Graduate Faculty
 - Graduate Students
2. After gathering information from the campus surveys, a preliminary report with recommendations will be drafted and widely disseminated to the campus community during the early fall semester.
3. The Task Force will hold campus focus group meetings with the four constituencies identified above to receive feedback on the Task Force's preliminary report.
4. A final report with recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School and the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Studies will be completed by mid October 2006.

Notes on Phase II: It is anticipated that a new Dean of the Graduate School will be selected and working on campus midway during the summer so he/she will be able to help guide the formulation of surveys and attend focus group meetings. The timeline for issuing the final report has been set early enough in the fall semester so that it can be used for making decisions on Graduate Assistantships prior to the start of the Fall 2007 graduate student recruiting season.

Please direct any questions to Paul Gemperline, PhD, Chair, Task Force on Graduate Education (gemperlinep@ecu.edu) or 328-9479.

Members of the Task Force: Paul Gemperline, Paul Tschetter, Kris Smith, Ron Newton, Rick Niswander, George Kasperek, Catherine Rigsby, Martha Engelke, Jeffery Elwell