

Description of Responsibilities and Resources for Graduate Program Directors

The role of the Graduate Program Director is an important leadership position for the university, critical to the success of the graduate program. It is also an opportunity for faculty to develop leadership skills that may be useful in other administrative assignments later as well as a great opportunity for more senior faculty to ensure the health of the graduate program for the department. The Graduate Program Director with the assistance of other graduate faculty in the department is responsible for the administration of the graduate program(s) and also serves as the liaison with the Graduate School. The Program Director's responsibilities may include academic advising of graduate students, admissions recommendations, the allocation of assistantships, tuition awards, and fellowships, and the appointment of graduate faculty to student committees. The Graduate Program Director should also communicate Graduate School policies to the department faculty, students and staff and communicate departmental decisions and recommendations for graduate programming to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School, University of North Carolina Charlotte

The position of graduate program director (GPD) is central to the success of that graduate program. This document outlines the general responsibilities and duties of a GPD and addresses the resources (including remuneration) that should accompany these responsibilities. The GPD coordinates these efforts with the chair of that department.

Administrative Responsibilities of Graduate Program Directors

Program Curriculum and Courses

- work with graduate faculty to develop curriculum and courses
- stay abreast of developments in the discipline and guide program accordingly
- enhance program by monitoring and improving applicant quality, time to degree, retention, graduation rates, and overall student satisfaction
- maintain Graduate Catalog materials as pertains to program
- maintain program's web site

Recruitment

- coordinate all recruitment activities for the department, develop and distribute recruiting pamphlets, poster, other materials
- attract, identify candidates via posters, correspondence, GRE Search, McNair Scholars Program, or other (e.g., Gradschools.com.)
- staff program booths at conferences
- travel to other campuses as necessary to recruit
- speak to groups of prospective applicants
- respond to inquiries from prospective applicants
- follow-up, nurturing of prospects via mail, phone, sponsor campus visits (recruitment weekends, etc.)

Management of Applications

- bring completed applications to departmental admissions committee
- tap supplemental funds available through the department, college, or Graduate School for strong applicants
- follow through with admission recommendations to Graduate School
- extend financial offers to accepted applicants
- maintain all graduate student records
- facilitate arrival of matriculating students by providing information regarding housing, registration, financial arrangements, I-9 forms, etc.

Management of Graduate Assistants

- assign duties to graduate assistants (scheduling of teaching, research, other services)
- assure that graduate assistants are adequately trained to fulfill their assignments
- assess work performance of graduate assistants

Mentoring

- provide orientation (both academic and social) for incoming students
- serve as resource for academic advisement, especially before major professor assumes this role
- oversee constitution of students' advisory committees
- provide information regarding internship/practicum arrangements
- oversee administering of qualifying exams, oral exams, internship and practicum exams
- oversee dissertation/thesis process in program
- provide information regarding employment opportunities following graduation
- serve as advocate of graduate students, individually and collectively, within program, assuring fairness of treatment; involves interaction with program's representative to the Graduate Student Association
- responsible for discipline/sanctioning of graduate students

Communications

- Serve as a point of contact and authority for graduate students enrolled in the program
- Serve as a liaison between program faculty, college administration, the Graduate School, and students by communicating policies, procedures, and other information
- Track student progress and coordinate written assessments of students
- Track and report enrollment and completion data of students

Budgetary

- develop stipend and tuition budgets

Graduate Program Directors - Draft

- argue needs for additional graduate assistant positions and for increased funding
- manage graduate budget
- process stipend and tuition authorizations in timely fashion, keeping graduate assistants apprised of this process

Promotion of Scholarship

- serve as an example of scholarship by publishing regularly and with students when advisable
- serve on thesis committees (and dissertation committees where applicable)
- provide information about grants suitable for graduate students
- encourage graduate-student participation in professional meetings
- assist in securing funding for graduate students to participate in professional meetings
- pursue assorted activities, such as organizing academic symposia

Resources for Graduate Program Directors

In order to attract and retain capable faculty who will pursue the above responsibilities enthusiastically, certain resources must be provided. The level of resources made available to the GPD should vary by the size and complexity of the graduate program, just as it does for department chairs. **All program directors should be given a *minimum of at least one semester of quarter-time reassignment for managing the program and a summer stipend equivalent to one month's salary.* The Colleges should develop criteria for granting additional reassigned time and stipends to graduate program directors, as deemed appropriate. Further, the minimum responsibilities for program directors should be similar across campus.**

Appointment and Evaluation

Appointment of the GPD is made by the appropriate college dean(s) upon the recommendation of the chair of the department in consultation with the dean of the Graduate School. Appointment as GPD is usually for a fixed term but not to exceed five years. Graduate Program Directors should be evaluated annually by the appropriate supervisor in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School. In the final year of the term of service, the GPD will be given a performance review evaluated by the program faculty, by the supervising administrator. The decision to renew is based on annual evaluations submitted by the supervisor and the Dean of the Graduate School to the dean of the college or school in which the program is located. Evaluation criteria are described in the "duties and responsibilities" section of this document.

Graduate Program Directors Advisory Board

A board of Graduate Program Directors should be formed to advise the Office of the Graduate School and Dean on issues affecting graduate education. This Board may also be asked to review and provide feedback to the Graduate Council on draft policies and major curriculum items.