

**Report from the Sub-Committee on the Establishment of a
College of Graduate Studies at Salisbury University
April 3, 2017**

BACKGROUND

During the Fall 2016 semester, a sub-committee of the Graduate Council met to explore the creation of a separate school of graduate studies. This initiative is part of the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan.

Sub-Committee Members:

Diana Wagner, Chair, MEd

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PROCESS

1. The sub-committee met to complete an initial SWOT analysis included here. This analysis provides an overview of internal strengths and weaknesses and external threats and opportunities surrounding the creation of a graduate school.
2. The sub-committee met with current Dean of Graduate Studies Clifton Griffin to discuss his perspective on the creation of a separate school or college of graduate studies

RATIONALE

There are compelling and numerous reasons to consider the creation of a School of Graduate Studies, notwithstanding the significant resource commitment that will be required:

Establishing a separate graduate school has the potential to:

- raise both the profile and credibility of graduate programs
- create a focused unit for advancement and fund-raising dedicated to graduate programs
- create a naming opportunity
- reflect the increasing growth (currently 10% of overall enrollment) and complexity of our graduate offerings
- May help focus university resources for graduate students (e.g., Registrar, Writing Center)
- May help clarify reporting lines
- Would create a focal point for graduate students and faculty

- Would give the graduate dean a voice equal to other deans
- Would create a centralized method for focused recruiting across programs
- May allow for more focused resources for satellite sites

CURRENT STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The prospect of creating a School of Graduate Studies is bolstered by significant strengths already in place:

- Favorable perception on-campus of developing a graduate school
- Mechanism in place for internal recruitment of graduate students
- Well-established graduate studies office
- Capacity in place to handle administrative jobs of a graduate school
- Leadership structure already in place
- Admissions logistics already centralized
- Existing focus on expansion in Strategic Plan
- Record of successful programs
- Ability to generate revenue
- Budgeting already de-centralized to programs
- Established relationships at satellite campuses
- Program accreditations increase credibility for programs

The creation of a School of Graduate Studies also presents new opportunities

- Creation of a graduate school shows growth to external stakeholders
- Expands on the already respected SU brand
- May increase international education opportunities
- Carnegie recognition for doctoral programs in the school could elevate university status
- There are numerous unmet workforce needs
- Can focus resources to attract locals wanting personal attention

CURRENT WEAKNESSES AND THREATS

The sub-committee believes that the creation of a School of Graduate Studies will require some substantial resources in order to address current program weaknesses:

- This change will require full budget planning/resource analysis across campus before implementation
- There is an internal perception that the GS office is already at full capacity; may require additional human resources
- Lack of high tech and innovative resources and support for robust hybrid/online programs
- Disconnected/under-funded marketing plans among programs

- Currently need a strategic recruiting plan for graduate programs across the university
- Don't have a dedicated admissions person for graduate admissions
- Programs aren't generally nimble enough to respond quickly to workforce needs
- Lack of on-campus graduate culture
- Exorbitant course fees make recruitment/retention difficult
- Application processing can be cumbersome
- Funding equity needs to be examined across programs
- SU, but not graduate programs, have been branded
- No graduate student services on campus
- University doesn't operate on graduate student-friendly hours (e.g., until 6 pm in offices)
- Programs under-utilize existing satellite sites
- Quality control in hybrid/online environments
- No targeted career services for graduate students
- Role of Graduate Student Council is unclear

The sub-committee also identified several external threats to the successful creation of a School of Graduate Studies:

- Lack of state/public funds would mean significant efforts needed to secure private donations
- Public perception that we should be undergraduate-focused
- Increasing competition from online universities
- Name recognition is confined to region
- Difficulty recruiting faculty

A College Graduate Studies at Salisbury University would include all present and future master, doctorate, post-baccalaureate, and post-master certification programs:

Post-Baccalaureate Certificates:

Advanced Technology for Enterprise Systems

Higher Education

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) (Cert)

Master's Programs:

Applied Biology (M.S.)

Applied Health Physiology (M.S.)

Athletic Training (M.S.A.T.)

Business Administration (M.B.A.)

Conflict Analysis & Dispute Resolution (M.A.)

Education (M.Ed.)
English (M.A.)
GIS Management (M.S.)
History (M.A.)
Math Education (M.S.)
Nursing (M.S.)
Master of Education in Educational Leadership
Reading Specialist (M.Ed.)
Social Work (M.S.W.)
Teaching (M.A.T.)

Post-Master Certificates:

Advanced Study in Educational Leadership
Literacy Educator
Successful Completion in Educational Leadership

Doctoral Programs:

Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Contemporary Curriculum Theory and Instruction: Literacy

Post-Doctoral Programs:
Post DNP-FNP Certificate of Completion

Should the establishment of a School of Graduate Studies be undertaken, the sub-committee recommends a Fall 2018 opening, assuming sufficient fiscal and human resources have been acquired.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are substantial and necessary budget implications for creating a new College of Graduate Studies. A graduate dean and some support staff are already in place, but the sub-committee believes that additional support would be needed in order to focus graduate student services:

- Budget line for admissions and a dedicated recruiter
- Budget line for dedicated support staff in Registrar's Office
- Budget line for dedicated instructional design support for graduate programs
- Budget line to bring GA stipends up to national levels
- Budget line for dedicated Writing Center support
- Budget line for dedicated Career Services
- Budget line to provide professional development and support to Teaching Assistants across programs

SPACE IMPLICATIONS

Programs would remain in their current locations. The current Graduate Studies Office would need additional space for new staff and would benefit from a more visible location on campus.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

During its discussions, the sub-committee emphasized repeatedly that the creation of School of Graduate Studies must be more than a door plate or letterhead change. Should this transition be undertaken, the University leadership will need to provide sufficient resources so that the university is in a position to provide graduate-focused resources across campus.

Respectfully submitted,
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