VERSION 5 (Oct. 9, 2017)

Where Shall our SIUC Graduate Education Go? Strategic Priorities* *

I. History and Background

Our graduate education at SIU has a long and dynamic history, and probably a very bright future. On July 15, 1943, the State of Illinois passed the Crisenberry Bill, granting the university master's degrees in education. Soon enrollment began to climb, with the graduate school reaching 101 students in 1946 (Mitchell, 1993). Then, SIU President Delyte Morris instituted doctoral programs during the 1950s (e.g., the Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Speech Correction, in Government, in Education and in Psychology) and during the 1960s (e.g., Ph.D. degrees in Sciences and Liberal Arts—see Da Silva & Morrill, 1982).

In the book by Betty Mitchell**, *Delyte Morris of SIU* (1988),** SIU's Board of Trustees approved President Morris' proposal to establish the Graduate School on Sept 15, and it was effective on Sept 25, 1950 (Mitchell, 1988, p. 34). The Graduate School has a history of 77 years. We hope to collaboratively and effectively make graduate education stronger and better in its future.

Nationally, today's graduate education faces a challenge. According to Leonard Cassuto's (2015) book entitled *The Graduate School mess: What caused it and how we can fix it*, much discussion will be needed with regard to graduate admissions, coursework, the comprehensive exam, advising, professionalization and future job markets. While American higher education also faces many challenges, it is productive and still is one of the best systems in the world (see Labaree, 2017). As Dr. David Labaree, a higher education professor at Stanford, puts it, "**The American system of higher education is enormously productive and useful, and it is a great resource for students, faculty, policy makers, employers, and society. What makes it work is not its substance but its form. The form makes no sense to outsiders but it's enormously effective. So we need to avoid the urge to remake it in a more rationalized form**" (p. 194). Though "**it is an organized anarchy, a perfect mess**," (p. 196), his conclusion is that the American higher education system "**responds with great vigor, and to great effect, to policies that aim to feed it rather than to reform it"** (p. 196).

Briefly, we focus on "**excellence and enrollment**" (EE) or "**quality and quantity**" (QQ). First, to be a research competitive flagship institution, we definitely must enhance graduate education excellence and support our doctoral programs. As a Carnegie research institution, SIU's graduate education and research play an important role in producing doctoral students and promoting our academic reputation (see Koropchak, Rice, Mead, & Wilson, 2003). Second, because there is less of a state budget, we have to be innovative and entrepreneurial by increasing more tuition paying professional graduate students, and also by helping our graduate students to get jobs.

II. Philosophy: Total Quality Care for our Graduate Students

Without graduate students, there is no graduate faculty; nor is there graduate education or a Graduate School. Conceptually or philosophically, we will and should support and serve our graduate students fully —i.e.,
- Pre-Graduate School (Recruitment and Admission: Quality and Quantity)
- During Graduate School: Excellent academic engagement, mentorship, and training
  - Getting resources and support for graduate students

- Helping them in their successful degree completion and career preparation
- Helping them to get jobs
- Post-Graduate School (Alums)
  - Connection and reconnection as alumni→$ giving back

III. Mission and Vision of the Graduate Education

The main mission of the Graduate School is:

To serve and support our graduate students and graduate faculty members in all graduate programs academically, financially and culturally; and also to comply with the policies set by the University and the Graduate Council to promote excellence, integrity, diversity and equity, from recruitment, admission, and retention through graduation.

More specifically, "the primary concerns of the Graduate School are graduate instruction and research. The Graduate School therefore plays an essential role in development of instructional and research programs, in acquisition of funds, and in procurement of facilities necessary to encourage and support research by members of its scholarly community. Through graduate faculty, staff, and students, the Graduate School makes its contribution to the public welfare of the region, state, nation, and international community." (see SIU Carbondale's Graduate Catalog—page iii http://gradschool.siu.edu/_common/documents/catalog/catalog-16-17/chapter-1-intro.pdf).

Our vision is: "**To be one of the best Graduate Schools in the world**." As we know, our Graduate School has been recognized as one of the 100 best graduate schools in the nation (http://news.siu.edu/points-of-pride/ehs.php), and some of our graduate programs are ranked as outstanding nationally and internationally. Continuously we are inspired to provide excellent graduate education to current and future graduate students around the world--see the table of SIU Graduate School's Peers (P or Research 2—i.e., R2 institutions) and Aspirational Peers (AP or Research 1—R1 institutions) at the end of this document.

IV. Key Functions and Strategic Priorities
(in the three to five years)

1. Strategic Priority 1 is to Increase our Enrollment.

As we know, we face enrollment challenges. Decreased graduate enrollment and no state budget makes our graduate education more difficult now than ever.
- Spring 2017 and Fall 2017=3000 or so
- Fall 2016=3170
- Fall 2015=3568
- Fall 2014=3840
- Fall 2013=3978
- Fall 2012= 4023

The Graduate Enrollment Task Force provided us with some important recommendations for our enrollment strategies (summary only and more information to be available upon request). We think it is necessary to publicize and/or also implement those recommendations by the Task Force as possible initiatives-e.g.:

- Increase masters-level tuition paying graduate students in those professional programs.

- Encourage faculty to develop more full-online graduate programs for both domestic and international students.
- Establish a policy for both domestic (American) undergraduate and graduate students to pay in-state tuition.
- Increase and support our international students as part of our long tradition on campus, including international partnership agreements (e.g., 3+2 or 4+1 accelerated programs)
- Encourage faculty to get more grants and ask them to consider budgeting their tuition as part of their grants in their proposals.
- Promote and support the development and growth of marketable interdisciplinary graduate programs.
- Discuss a realistic plan and implementation on the possible suspension of certain graduate programs with no or low enrollment in the past seven years.
- Have a discussion with Academic Deans and other constituencies about how to consolidate graduate programs to make it more marketable to increase student enrollment and future job opportunities (including job placement).
- Strongly support the recruitment and retention of our graduate faculty members. Losing graduate faculty members means loss of the number of our graduate students and affects our quality of graduate education.

2. ==Strategic Priority 2 is to Maintain High Quality—i.e., to Support Graduate Education Excellence and Student Success.==

    As a research university, we will definitely advocate and support our Ph.D. programs—as required by our Carnegie status. Perhaps the number of doctoral programs and the requirements of both doctoral and masters-level programs need revisiting by our graduate faculty members, chairs and graduate directors. Below are some examples of initiatives.

- Promote graduate learning communities and engagement for academic excellence (including theses, dissertations and other research innovation and creativity).
- Build a very strong mentorship program for graduate faculty members as mentors and graduate students as mentees (also see Priorities 3 and 4).
- Determine viable solutions to encourage faculty members to bring in more direct entry Ph.D. students.
- Build a bridge and strong relationship between excellent graduate and undergraduate education. Strong and excellent graduate education means strong undergraduate education because TA's teach undergraduate students.
- Financially attract and retain excellent graduate faculty and graduate students to be nationally competitive.
- We are held accountable to different constituencies—Assessment, Program Review and Accreditation (regulation compliance; strategic need).
- We support the discovery, innovation and creativity of STEAM graduate students (i.e., to include both STEM and Arts-humanities areas).
- Promote excellence via new initiatives—e.g., Graduate Saluki Stories (GSS), Faculty Mentor Award of Excellence, 3 Minute Thesis/Dissertation (3MT/D) , Willis Swartz Awards.
- Continue to promote the Outstanding Thesis Award and the Outstanding Dissertation Award.
- Support graduate students financially for conference presentations.
- Enhance academic ranking and research reputation of graduate programs.

3. <mark>Strategic Priority 3 is to Promote Diversity, Equity, and Communication</mark>.

We will work together to promote diversity and fairness/equity. We will also engage and communicate with graduate students, faculty, staff, the Graduate Council, graduate alums, the SIU Graduate School Advisory Board and other friends and constituencies who advocate our graduate education. Possible initiatives may include but are not limited to the following:

- Promote different fellowship programs—e.g., Proactive Recruitment of Multicultural Professionals for Tomorrow (PROMPT) or Graduate Deans, and Native American Scholarship. We support all underserved groups and diverse graduate students and graduate faculty.
- Work with the University Diversity office and Graduate Council to promote diversity training, advisement, recruitment and retention for graduate students and faculty members.
- Promote a more welcome and friendly learning environment for all our graduate students.
- Use more social media and other modern technology and communication to advocate our graduate education (including marketing and branding).
- Publish *Graduate Saluki Stories* twice a year.
- Recruit and train graduate students from diverse or underserved backgrounds.
- Support different mentorship programs and regular training sessions/workshops about how to mentor graduate students from diverse backgrounds (also see Priorities 2 and 4).
- Enhance the role of the Graduate School in becoming a "voice" with more visibility both on and off campus.

4. <mark>Strategic Priority 4 is to Advocate and Improve our Graduate Education Best Practices and Efficiencies.</mark>

We will be open to all kinds of innovative ideas to improve the efficiencies and best practices in our graduate recruitment, admission, requirements/pre-requirements and degree completion based on the needs of the future job market; also in compliance with accreditation and all different regulations/policies internally and externally. Below are some possible initiatives:

- Identify and address barriers to timely or early decision of those graduate applicants.
- Revisit prerequisites to graduate programs which may be roadblocks (to assure our entry requirements for specific requirements are comparable to those at competing or peer institutions).
- Comply with the polices set by the Graduate Council, the University and the State/Nation; follow the Graduate School's Operating Paper and Catalog, Graduate Assistants United (GAU) contracts, etc.
- Offer various workshops and training sessions for graduate students, graduate faculty and directors.
- Discuss and revisit our graduate tuition waiver policies.
- Allocate resources to support and review the effectiveness of graduate mentorship programs (also see Priorities 2 and 3).
- Advocate and recognize graduate teaching assistants' importance after they are well-trained.
- Address grievances based on the policies of the Graduate School and University.

We will work together to seek internal and external resources for our graduate students. Some initiatives are listed below as examples:

- Secure and protect resources to support our Ph.D. students.
- Fundraise for Graduate Education—endowments—e.g., more endowed chairs and endowed professors.
- More grants/contracts to support graduate education (see Koropchak, Rice, Mead, & Wilson, 2003, p. 23).
- Reconnect with graduate alums by working with the SIU Graduate School's External Advisory Board, other groups and friends who support graduate education.

V. Conclusion and Acknowledgement

This paper of strategic priorities was written and has been revised several times by Dr. Lee, Dean of the Graduate School, based on the meeting input and feedback from various constituency groups and individuals. They primarily include the Graduate Enrollment Task Force with four committees and their reports (2015-2017: domestic and diversity committee, international committee, technology and online education committee, and internal efficiency and best practices committee), the Graduate Council and Graduate and Professional Student Council's members, the Graduate School's staff members, Chairs and Directors, Academic Deans, the Provost's Office and the Chancellor's Office in 2016-2017 and many other colleagues and friends in the summer and early Fall of 2017. We thank them for their initial ideas and efforts (i.e., those four groups of the Graduate Enrollment Task Force). We are especially appreciative of the following constituencies for their input--chairs, directors, and Graduate Council leaders at two meetings on March 30 and 31, 2017 (approximately 60 attendees), Vice Chancellor of Research's Office, Graduate and Professional Student Council leaders, and Graduate School Dean's National Advisory Board, many other graduate students, colleagues and friends both on and off campus. This is the outcome of collective and collaborative efforts in the past years. The strategic planning is an on-going process. Best wishes to SIU Carbondale's Graduate Programs and Graduate Students.

VI. References cited

Cassuto, L. (2015). *The Graduate School mess: What caused it and how we can fix it*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Da Silva, R. & Morrill, P. (1982). *The development of the University graduate program*. SIUC Archives. http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ua_docs or http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1028&context=ua_docs

Koropchak, J. A., Rice, P. M, Mead, J. & Wilson, D. (2003). Reinventing the mid-level research university. *Journal of Higher Education Strategists, 1*(1), 11-31.

Labaree, D. (2017). *A perfect mess: The unlikely ascendancy of American higher education.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Mitchell, B. (1988). *Delyte Morris of SIU*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Mitchell, B. (1993). *Southern Illinois University, a pictorial history*. St. Louis, MO: G. Bradley Publishing, Inc.

SIU Carbondale's Graduate Catalog 2016-2017 http://gradschool.siu.edu/_common/documents/catalog/catalog-16-17/chapter-1-intro.pdf

SIU CARBONDALE Graduate School's Peers (P) and Aspirational Peers (AP)

Investigated and Identified by Dr. Yueh-Ting Lee (R1=Highest Research Activity Institutions; R2=Higher Research Activity Institutions)

Based on SIU Carbondale's Peer Institutions: Southern at 150 Peers (N=13)

http://www.irs.siu.edu/webRoot/Peer/p.asp?Cate=7&submit=Submit&sort=state&old=020&new=000)

Graduate School's Peers (P) and Aspirational Peers (AP)

P	AL	Auburn University - Main Campus (R2)	Public
AP	CO	University of Colorado - Boulder (R1)	Public
AP	IA	Iowa State University (R1)	Public
	IL	Southern Illinois University Carbondale (R2)	Public
AP	KS	Kansas State University (R1)	Public
AP	KY	University of Kentucky (R1)	Public
AP	LA	Louisiana State University & Ag & Mech (R1)	Public
AP	MO	University of Missouri - Columbia (R1)	Public
P	OH	Ohio University - Main Campus (R2)	Public
P	OK	Oklahoma State University - Main Campus (R2)	Public
AP	TX	Texas Tech University (R1)	Public
AP	WA	Washington State University (R1)	Public
AP	WV	West Virginia University (R1)	Public