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| To: | Faculty |
| From: | R.W. Kamphaus, Dean and Professor |
| CC: | Staff, Graduate School |
| Date: | 18 January 2019 |
| Re: | Doctoral Student Enrollment Planning for AY 2019-20 |

**Enrollment Planning Goals**

Our goals include,

* Recruiting students who enrich our academic experience because they bring diverse expertise, knowledge bases, backgrounds, languages, cultures and traditions, academic preparation, etc.,
* Competing successfully for the best doctoral students nationally and internationally,
* Guaranteeing funding for four years so that students can focus on their studies and less on employment transitions,
* Ensuring equitable faculty workloads, and
* Managing personnel expenses associated with doctoral education.

**Background and Rationale**

At my request, our academic department heads and deans met on October 10, 2018 to begin making plans for the current admission cycle. Among other consultations, I met with members of our Faculty Advisory Committee on January 14, 2019 to obtain their counsel.

There are many reasons to engage in enrollment planning. For example, we have highly variable and heavy faculty doctoral advising workloads (See Graph 1). (Please note that Graph 1 also includes career track faculty who have been approved by the graduate school to supervise dissertations).

**Graph 1**

Some examples of workload variability include,

* Five assistant professors do not have doctoral advisees,
* Eight assistant professors have doctoral student advising workloads ranging from one to eight students, and
* Seven tenured associate professors or professors do not have doctoral advisees.

The overall doctoral student advising loads of some of our faculty are among the highest on campus. And, these advising loads do not include Master’s and undergraduate student advising as is expected by our tenure-related faculty workload policy.

Given that student advising and mentoring load is complex and individualized, I have asked department heads to work with their individual faculty to ensure that doctoral student advising loads are fair, and serving our students well. In the end, we all agreed on the general principle that all tenure-related faculty should be advising doctoral students.

Among other potential reasons to engage in planning, our substantial increase in doctoral enrollments during the past five years has served the goals of our graduate school and university well. We increased our doctoral student census from 174 in AY 2014-15 to 198 in 2018-19. Graph 2 reflects this trend. Please note that this graph represents an unduplicated head count, including both Ph.D. and D.Ed. students, and excluding non-registered students (i.e., those on internship).

**Graph 2**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
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**Enrollment Planning Considerations**

Owing to the increased awareness across campus of our high level of productivity, the graduate school increased funding for our GE allocations from 55 academic year positions last year to 60 for the 2019-20 academic year. This figure, however, still falls far short of what we need to fund our typical census of full-time Ph.D. students seeking funding. Our faculty and students have been able to fill this funding gap with GE positions across campus, grant funding, new faculty start-up funds, graduate school fellowships, and special allocations from the Offices of the Provost and the Vice President for Research and Innovation, among other sources.

The combination of new GE funding from the graduate school and university, and our history of finding alternative GE positions for our large number of doctoral students gives me the confidence to improve our funding commitment to new students. We will now commit multiple years of graduate employee funding - four years - to all newly admitted Ph.D. students for the 2019-20 academic year. I am confident that our faculty and students can continue to access the other sources of GE funding that will be necessary to honor our four-year funding commitment. On the other hand, this multi-year commitment will require us to better predict and monitor our GE costs on an ongoing basis in order to ensure that we have the financial resources necessary to maintain this commitment in the years ahead.

**Admission Targets for Entering Ph.D. Class of AY 2019-20**

There are multiple countervailing forces that need be considered when creating enrollment targets for the current admission season. On the positive side, there are,

* Available TTF who are not currently advising doctoral students,
* Likely to be three new TTF hires,
* New grants and contracts that will support more GE positions, and
* We were awarded five new university-funded GE positions.

On the challenging side,

* Several students will have to find new advisors as a result of TTF who have retired or resigned,
* Several existing faculty have excessive (i.e., double digit) doctoral student advising loads,
* We have to find funding for a record-setting large cohort of Ph.D. admits from AY 2017-18, and
* We have only enough university-funded GE positions to fund a portion of our current Ph.D. enrollment.

Balancing these opposing factors, I remain confident that for AY 2019-20, we can admit 34 new Ph.D. students as shown in Table 1. These admission targets will represent the second largest incoming class of Ph.D. students in the past five years.

These GE funding limits are based on considerable consultation and deliberation by faculty, department heads, and deans. For the EMPL DEd program, for example, departmental faculty voted to move to an alternate year admission cycle in order to give themselves more time to make curricular improvements, and manage existing heavy faculty advising loads.

Overall, we considered,

* Historical admission rates,
* Growing some programs where there is more available TTF FTE for doctoral student mentoring and dissertation supervision (CDS),
* Maintaining reasonable advising loads in academic program areas with stable TTF FTE (CPSY, CSSE, PREV, CPSY, QRME), and
* Reducing doctoral advising loads for programs where TTF are currently oversubscribed (SPED, SPSY).

Please contact your department head with any questions about these targets were reached or the deliberations undergirding them.

**Table 1**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | AY 2019-20 Admission Goal |
| CDS | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| CPSY | 7 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| CSSE | 2 | 5 | - | 7 | - | 7 |
| QRME |  |  |  |  | 3 | 2 |
| PREV | - | - | 4 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| SPED | 9 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 6 |
| SPSY | 6 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| PhD Total | 25 | 26 | 31 | 39 | 29 | 34 |

Coordinated, college-wide enrollment planning is a new process for our college. We will have to work through the details of the process together as the admission process unfolds.