VISION: The Graduate School is a driver in the development and execution of innovative academic programs and transformative research at Wichita State University.

MISSION: The Graduate School provides strategic leadership, assessment, and support to ensure excellence in research and graduate education. Moreover, the Graduate School supports interdisciplinary activities through innovative educational programs and research collaborations to create new opportunities for the intellectual, economic, and social growth of our community.

The Graduate School oversees all aspects of graduate study at the University, including establishment of standards for admission, graduate program quality, and recommends students who have completed requirements for graduation to the Kansas Board of Regents. In addition to its oversight responsibilities, the Graduate School will take a proactive role in the development and execution of the University's strategic goals. To that end, the current Graduate School strategic plan is a mix of aims focused on big picture ideals and the process improvements needed to support them. The goals are summarized below:

- Development and support **innovative academic programs** at WSU
- Create a **vibrant and engaged graduate community** that promotes social, cultural, and professional development within our students, faculty, and staff
- Emphasize data in all key resource allocation decisions as guided by program specific **Graduate Enrollment Management** plans
- Optimize **Graduate School processes** to promote increased admissions, retention, and graduation rates

---

GOAL 1: Develop and support innovative academic programs at WSU

This goal is composed of a set of strategies to improve both the quality and professional alignment of WSU's graduate programs. Being open-ended, it maps to several of the University's strategic goals, specifically:

University Goal 1:   Guarantee an applied learning or research experience for every student by each academic program

University Goal 2:   Pioneer an educational experience for all that integrates interdisciplinary curricula

University Goal 3:   Capitalize systemically on societal and economic trends that increase quality educational opportunities

University Goal 4:   Accelerate the discovery, creation and transfer of new knowledge

Strategy 1.1: Develop and support interdisciplinary and professionally oriented graduate programs that more directly prepare students for the modern workforce

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the number of program applicants, program enrollment, and graduation rates
- Increase the number of professional degrees, including Professional Science Masters and badges offered
- Increase the number of nontraditional returning professionals in WSU graduate programs
- Collaborate with the Institute of Interdisciplinary Creativity to ensure success of interdisciplinary degrees
- Improve doctoral program quality, including applicant quality, job placement upon graduation, and number of externally funded assistantships

---

Additional Resources Needed:
- Start-up fund to support development, marketing, and recruiting for new graduate programs
- Marketing and recruitment funds to promote existing graduate programs

Source of Additional Resources:
- Various (President's New Initiatives Fund, Academic Affairs, Colleges, and Graduate School)

Evaluative Process:
- Establish dashboard of Graduate Enrollment Management metrics and targets
- Tiered periodic review process that includes program evaluation at the departmental, college, and graduate levels
- Federal, State, and LinkedIn data to determine job placement statistics
- Amount of external research support and assistantship expenditures

Strategy 1.2: Establish 'modular' graduate programs based on stackable credentials that lower entry barriers to returning professionals and increase program customizability

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the number of modular degrees where alternate credentials can be stacked to satisfy the degree requirements
- Increase the number of program applicants, program enrollment, and graduation rates
- Increase the number of nontraditional returning professionals in WSU graduate programs

Additional Resources Needed:
- Start-up fund to support development, marketing, and recruiting for new graduate programs
- Marketing and recruitment funds to promote existing graduate programs

Source of Additional Resources:
- Various (President's New Initiatives Fund, Academic Affairs, Colleges, and Graduate School)

Evaluative Process:
- Establish dashboard of Graduate Enrollment Management metrics and targets
- Tiered periodic review process that includes program evaluation at the departmental, college, and graduate levels

Strategy 1.3: Promote opportunities for applied learning or research experience for every graduate student

Metrics and Targets:
- Work with the Wichita community and Innovation Campus partners to increase accessibility to graduate student internships
- Increase the numbers of graduate programs that require an applied learning experience (e.g., as required by Professional Science Masters degrees)
- Increase the numbers of graduate students reporting an applied learning experience in their exit survey

Additional Resources Needed:
- Not applicable

Source of Additional Resources:
- Not applicable

Evaluative Process:
- Establish dashboard of Graduate Enrollment Management metrics and targets
- Tiered periodic review process that includes program evaluation at the departmental, college, and graduate levels

GOAL 2: Create a vibrant and engaged graduate community at WSU

This goal is composed of a set of strategies to promote a rich and diverse graduate student community, including strategies to create a culture of professional development. This goal and the strategies therein map to the following University goals:

University Goal 5: Empower students to create a campus culture and experience that meets their changing needs

University Goal 6: Be a campus that reflects—in staff, faculty and students—the evolving diversity of society

Strategy 2.1: Promote social and cultural community through events at, or supported by, the Graduate Student Center

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the number of graduate community and cultural events
- Increase the number of graduate students participating in community and cultural events
- Increase the number of faculty and staff participating in community and cultural events
- Create and promote a dedicated contact within the Graduate School to serve as ombudsmen for graduate student issues

Additional Resources Needed:
- Physical space for the Graduate Student Center + remodeling budget
- Director of the Graduate Student Center
- Graduate Student Center operating budget

Source of Additional Resources:
- Various (President's New Initiatives Fund, Donor, Academic Affairs, and Graduate School)

Evaluative Process:
- Annual reporting on Graduate Student Center activities
- Graduate Student Center faculty steering committee

Strategy 2.2: Increase the number of supplemental professional development training opportunities available to graduate students

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the number of professional development training events at WSU
- Increase the number of graduate students participating in Graduate Student Center professional development training events
- Increase the number of collaborative events with Career Development Services
- Increase the number of community and Innovation Campus partners that deliver professional training seminars and workshops

Additional Resources Needed:
- Same as 2.1

Source of Additional Resources:
- Same as 2.1

Evaluative Process:
- Annual reporting on Graduate Student Center activities
- Graduate Student Center faculty steering committee

Strategy 2.3: Improve the overall graduate research assistant experience at WSU

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the time to completion of research-based graduate degrees
- To provide improved access to mentorship training to WSU faculty and staff
- To increase the numbers and amounts of graduate research assistantships

Additional Resources Needed:
- Increased assistantship funding

Source of Additional Resources:
- Various (Mill Levy and Academic Affairs)

Evaluative Process:
- Dashboard of graduation, retention, and transfer rates
- Annual report from the Graduate Student Ombudsmen
- Assistantship expenditures

Strategy 2.4: Professionalize the Graduate Program Coordinator positions

Metrics and Targets:
- Provide best-practices training to all program coordinators
- To work with the academic deans to provide a (relatively) uniform set of expectations, workload, and compensation for program coordinators
- Establish a Dean's Graduate Coordinator Advisory Council to counsel on day-to-day issues the coordinators are dealing with

Additional Resources Needed:
- Will vary depending on extant structure (increased funds for coordinator compensation for summer work will be stressed)

Source of Additional Resources:
- Colleges

Evaluative Process:
- Annual reporting by the Dean's Graduate Coordinator Advisory Council

Strategy 2.5: Reactivate the Graduate Student Council to give students a voice regarding the future of graduate education at WSU

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase student participation in the Graduate Student Council events
- Increase communication between the Graduate School and Graduate Student Council
- Create an expectation that the Graduate Student Council will investigate and provide policy and/or action recommendations for at least one major issue per year

Additional Resources Needed:
- Not applicable

Source of Additional Resources:
- Not applicable

Evaluative Process:
- Annual reporting on Graduate Student Council activities

GOAL 3: Develop data-driven mechanisms to reward graduate program innovation

This goal creates a structure to guide Graduate School resource allocations according to program generated Graduate Enrollment Management (GEM) plans. This goal and the strategies therein map to the following University goal:

University Goal 7:   Create a new model of assessment, incentive and reward processes to accomplish our vision and goals

Strategy 3.1: Help each program create an individual GEM plan that identifies program specific targets and goals

Metrics and Targets:
- Build and rollout program specific GEM dashboards that includes historical data and what if scenario forecasting
- Increase the number of number of programs with an up-to-date GEM plan, with the goal of 100% completion within 2-3 years
- Increase the number of program applicants, program enrollment, and graduation rates
- Increase the diversity within programs, with a particular focus on recruiting and yielding more international graduate students
- Increase visibility of graduate programs and the role of the Graduate School in the campus Strategic Enrollment Management process

Additional Resources Needed:
- Second Associate Dean to oversee the GEM process
- IT support to help design, build, and rollout the GEM dashboards

Source of Additional Resources:
- Various (Academic Affairs and Graduate School)

Evaluative Process:
- Tiered periodic review process that includes program evaluation at the departmental, college, and graduate levels
- Create a GEM Working Group composed of Graduate School representation and the academic college Associate Deans to oversee and refine the process

Strategy 3.2: Use data to support all investments from the Graduate School with a particular focus on how the funds support the program's GEM goals

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the number of programs making obvious progress towards their GEM goals
- Increase the number of program applicants, program enrollment, and graduation rates

- Increase the diversity within programs, with a particular focus on recruiting and yielding more international graduate students
- Increase the quality of graduate students within our programs

Additional Resources Needed:
- Recruiting and marketing budget

Source of Additional Resources:
- Various (President's New Initiatives Fund, Donor, Academic Affairs, and Graduate School)

Evaluative Process:
- Same as 3.1

GOAL 4: Optimize Graduate School processes to promote increased admissions, retention, and graduation rates

Unlike the above big-picture goals, this goal is focused on Graduate School processes. Currently, all processes are primarily paper-based, highly manual, and overly complex. As a consequence, the Graduate School itself is often a bottleneck to student and program success. All processes will be scrutinized, refined, and ultimately migrated to a technology solution. Because our processes underlie every Graduate School function, this goal is critical to the graduate education component of all seven University goals.

Strategy 4.1: Identify and implement a new graduate admissions system

Metrics and Targets:
- Identify, purchase, and implement as soon as possible a new admissions system that is easily customizable and meets the heterogeneous needs of graduate programs that have a shared decision process

Additional Resources Needed:
- IT Support

Source of Additional Resources:
- Graduate School (cost of admissions system)
- Academic Affairs (IT support)

Evaluative Process:
- Create an admissions system working group to oversee and evaluate the process

Strategy 4.2: Develop and execute graduate student recruitment plans for the community, I-35 corridor, and international applicants

Metrics and Targets:
- Increase the number of program applicants, program enrollment, and graduation rates
- Increase the diversity within programs, with a particular focus on recruiting and yielding more international graduate students
- Increase the quality of graduate students within our programs

Additional Resources Needed:
- Recruiting Specialist position within the Graduate School

Source of Additional Resources:
- Graduate School

Evaluative Process:
- Tiered periodic review process that includes program evaluation at the departmental, college, and graduate levels
- Create a GEM Working Group composed of Graduate School representation and the academic college Associate Deans to oversee and refine the process

Strategy 4.3: Reorganize the Graduate School and optimize processes to provide better service to applicants, students, and programs
Metrics and Targets:
- Evaluate each Graduate School position and process
- Update position descriptions to reflect our goals going forward
- Update reporting lines so that the Graduate School organizational chart is flatter with more clearly defined functional units and has redundancy built into the structure

Additional Resources Needed:
- IT support

Source of Additional Resources:
- Academic Affairs

Evaluative Process:
- Annual evaluation by the Graduate School Dean and Associate Deans, with comments provided by the Program Coordinator Advisory Committee