Minutes of Graduate College Council Meeting, October 11, 2021
Unapproved as of November 2. To be approved at November meeting.

Meeting called to order 330PM

Attendees: Michael Alexo, Constantin Bacuta, Harsh Bais, Louis Bank, Bill Barnett, Libbey Bowen, Thomas Buckley, Terry Campbell (as alternate for Paul Laux), Clara Chan, Emily Davis, Lu Ann DeCunzo, Chelsia Douglas, Wendy Feller, Amy Griffin, Lars Gundlach, Aviva Heyn, Jill Higginson, Rebecca Hunting-Pompon, George Irvine, Jalena Jampolsky, Gregory Kane, Steve Kendus, Kelli Kerbawy, Cindy King, Bramie Lenhoff, Susan Lewis, Mary Martin, LaRuth McAfee, Luke Meacci, Michael Michaud, Joanne Miller, Ikem Okoye, Maria Anne Purciello, Bernadette Racicot, Charlie Riordan, Lou Rossi, Barbara Settles, Siyan Wang, Shuo Wei, Caroline Williams, Danilo Yanich, Ryan Zurakowski, Joshua Zide

Minutes of September meeting approved (as moved by Joshu Zide)
Agenda modification: The grad student report will be delayed until next month (as moved by Danilo Zanich)

Dean's report (Lou Rossi, see his slides)

- COVID update
  - Federal vaccine mandate applies to UD, messaging on needed steps will come from central administration
  - Delaware case counts have flattened, still progress to be made
  - Masking and vaccination are the path indicated by the science for eventual success
- Update on minimum stipends for grad students
  - Currently $21K for doctoral and $20K for contract masters students, over 9 months
  - Concerns have been raised by grad students about amount and process for adjustments
  - Dean convened a task force to investigate if the way we structure stipends should be adjusted (amount overall is more of a budget level decision)
  - Data gathering indicates that 9 month standardized stipends vary substantially across the university, with doctoral modes around $21K and $24K
  - Over 10 year history, minimum stipends have risen each year until the pandemic (when it became flat)
  - The task force opined
    - The minimum stipend is barely adequate as a living wage in our geographic area

- Difference between masters and PhD "makes no sense," better to have a flat minimum stipend
- Recommend that minimum rise as staff salaries rise, in a systematic fashion
- TAs who are instructors of record should be paid more based on this responsibility
  - Note on students who decline UD are cataloged on the slides, with notes as to the minimum stipend by the schools these applicants eventually attended
  - L. Rossi discussed all this with Provost and Deans. Minimum stipend to be increased by $500 and masters student differential eliminated. Will be revisited next fall.
  - Compared to the CPI, the minimum stipend rose each year in purchasing power, until the pandemic when it fell. Given recent and expected higher inflation, may expect the inflation-adjusted value of the stipend to be lower next year
  - This info will come out in the graduate newsletter and be communicated to program directors very soon
  - Question: Will stipends be moved to 12 months of support? Dean is looking into that, do not expect it to happen soon widely, but it is a priority
  - Question: Any analysis on the hourly-wage conversion of these numbers? A: Do not know, but will do so.  [Post-meeting info from the Dean: Answer is roughly $29/hr. depending upon how you do the calculation.]
- Update on conclusion of strategic plan process
  - Email with link to draft of plan recently sent out to Council
  - History: Mission mapped to 5 goals, 5 working groups convened to work up objectives and action items, feedback collected from multiple groups in multiple rounds, penultimate draft of plan released last week. Asking for another round of feedback in organized sessions and via survey (especially to get info on unintended consequences or priority mismatches)
  - Features: five year duration, ambitious and achievable, already in motion, signals to UD overall about actions
- Committee updates (Emily Davis, see her slides with listings of committee members)
  - Specific committees
    - Executive Committee fully constituted.
    - Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee needs members from CAS and CHS. Chairperson is not decided yet, and is needed very soon. Work is scheduled and needs to be done.
    - Graduate Student Life Committee needs an additional faculty member
    - Advisory Committee on Online Education is fully constituted
- Executive Committee update. EC has expressed its desire to focus on graduate student mental health this year. This is clearly a crisis in COVID times.
  - Some issues:

- summer care
- unequal workloads and effects on care
- child care
- processes if there are conflicts in a unit, or if cannot go to supervisor
  - To begin, Emily is reaching out to counseling services to talk with Council on processes, resources, etc.
    - Hope to have a continuing process over the year
  - Issues/items raised in discussion include:
    - housing is a major issue and especially considered together with the size of the stipends
      - Dean responds that Student Life is looking into this and GSG has raised this with them---Newark private housing is mainly built with undergraduates in mind, adding to the pressure
    - stress due to debt taken on in grad school
  - Emily lists some resources and broader issues (e.g., cultural climate and effect on stress) on her slides
- Awards and Fellowship Committee report (LaRuth McAfee, see her slides)
  - Membership listed on slides
  - Since July 2021, have been considering structure of awards, considering input from review committees that worked last year
  - Have 4 awards, on which committee has made recommendations (see slides for details)
  - Unidel Fellowship, currently includes higher stipend levels and special benefits
    - Propose to develop a clearer name for it, as the formal current name is much like that for some other awards
    - Clarify purpose, so that it is clear to all that this is the most eminent award
    - Add language to ask programs to clarify value of non-academic experiences when relied on in applications
    - Add expectation of conference presentation
  - University Graduate Scholar
    - Recommend award to be renewable for second year
    - Add $1K for professional development
    - Renewal letter must come from advisor
  - Doctoral Fellowship and Dissertation Fellowship
    - Committee recommends to merge these awards as have similar rationale and applicant groups
    - Require mentorship plan for all nominees
    - Each program can nominate at least 3 students (more for large programs)
    - Student may hold award for 2 years
    - Rationale for nomination can be in various categories, and nominators can choose which to support. (Diversity as well as academic excellence can be a criterion. Also leadership.)

- All recommendations would take effect next year if approved
  - New idea from committee: Breaking Barriers
    - Incentives for programs that recruit applicants from groups that have historically been underrepresented in their programs
    - Up to $4500 in first year, with chance to continue support if successful
    - Recruitment, retention and diversity building tool for programs
    - Would like to implement in Spring 2022 for 2 or so programs to use in next recruiting cycle
  - Committee slides include a generic rubric to show the linkage/setup of all the awards
- College of Engineering graduate programs report (Jill Higginson, Dean for Graduate and Post-Graduate Education, see her slides)
  - Overview
    - 7 departments, each with one or more PhD programs (12 total)
    - Many masters programs, including 5 that can be completed online
    - Several 4+1 programs
      - Various certificate programs, including many new 3 course programs that are accessible to both graduate and undergraduate students
    - Several 'stackable' masters programs are available (build your own style)
  - What's new and exciting?
    - Info session to explain to students the flexibility of this menu of offerings
    - Work on student services
    - Work on training and development to coordinate services
- New business
  - No new business
- Next meeting November 8 at 3:30PM
  - Awards and Fellowship proposal expected to be voted on
- Meeting adjourned

# Graduate College Council Meeting

10/11/21

3:30-4:30pm

# Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Secretary's Report  (Laux) – (1 min)
   a. Approval of ==(revised)== agenda
   b. Approval of minutes from September meeting
3. Dean's report and questions (Rossi) – (20 min)
   a. Update on Covid-19 and Vaccination Issues and Policies, Q&A period
   b. Graduate student minimum stipend
   c. Strategic plan update – announce feedback session 10/22 at 9am
4. Chair's update on committee staffing and year-long theme (Davis) – (5 min)
   a. Graduate Student Life Committee
   b. Interdisciplinary Curriculum Committee
5. ==Standing reports – (10 min)==
   a. ==Graduate student report on graduate priorities and concerns (Douglas)==
6. Committee reports – (15 min)
   a. Awards and Fellowships Committee (McAfee)
7. College Liaison report for COE (Higginson) – (5 min)
8. New business
   a. Nov 8, 3:30 meeting:
   b. Any Graduate Council Members may bring an item before council for discussion
9. Adjourn

# Dean's report and questions

(20 min)

Lou Rossi

# Chair's Update on Committees and This Year's Theme (10 min):

Executive Committee is fully constituted:

CANR – Harsh Bais

CAS – Emily Davis (chair)

Biden – Greg Dobler

CEOE – Saleem Ali

CEHD – Rena Hallam

COE – Julia Maresca (Bramie Lenhoff in fall)

CHS – Tom Buckley

Lerner – Paul Laux (secretary)

Grad rep – Chelsia Douglas (Biden)

# Graduate Student Life Committee:

Three Faculty Members:
1. Amy Griffin (CAS)
2. Ryan Zurakowski (COE) – chair
3. TBA

Three Graduate Students:
1. Susan Lewis (CEHD)
2. James Korman (CAS)
3. Caroline Williams (COE)

Dean's rep – LaRuth McAfee

Vice Pres. for Student Life or designee – TBA

## Advisory Committee on Graduate Online Education:

George Irvine (chair)
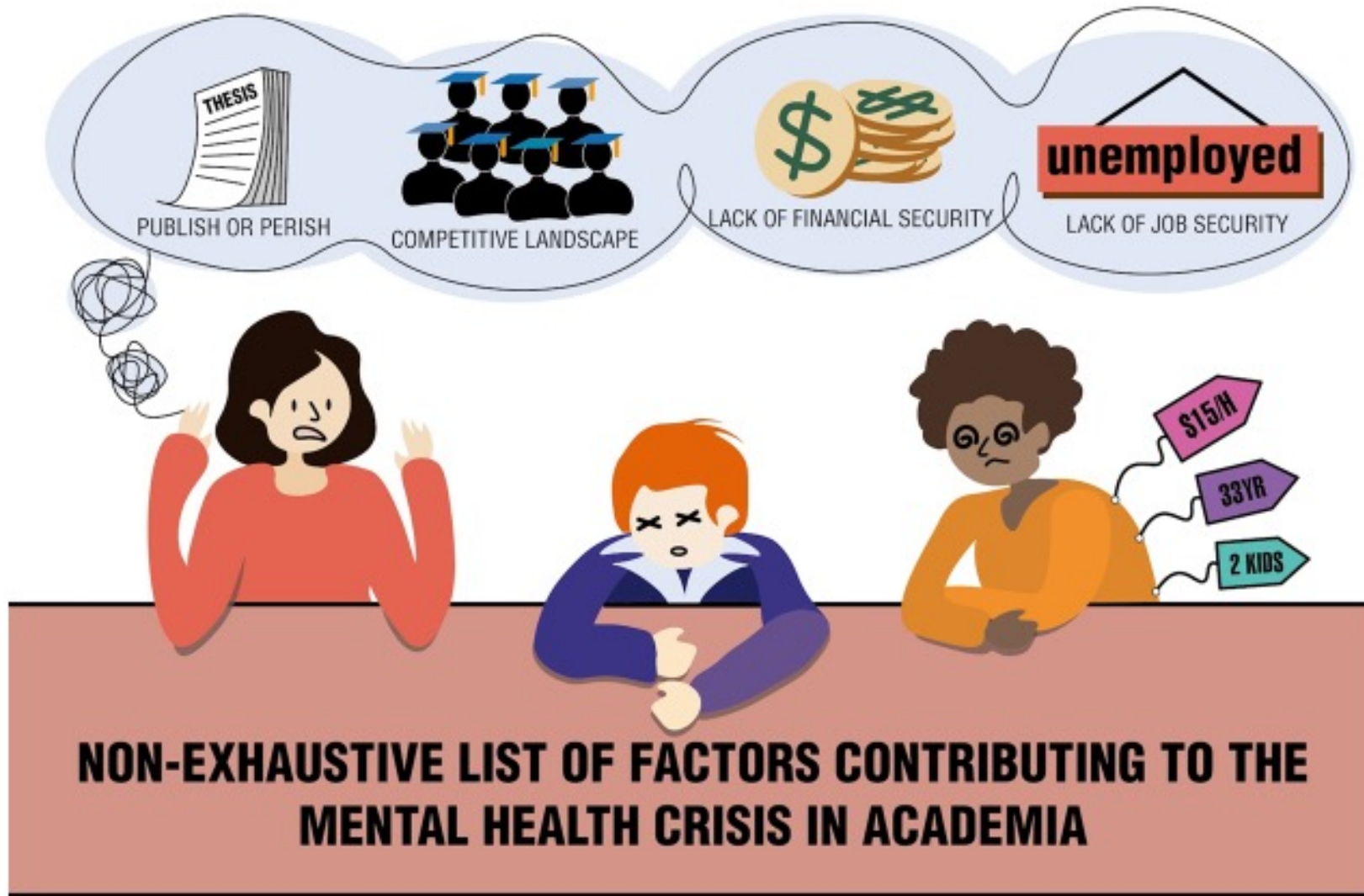
1.    Jack Baroudi, Lerner
2.    Nigel Caplan, ELI
3.    Rachel Klein, School of Education
4.    Jill Higginson, COE
5.    Changqing Wu, CANR
6.    Aviva Heyn, Grad College/PCS

# Year-Long Theme: Grad Student Mental Health

The executive committee has proposed a series of presentations and discussions over the course of this year about graduate student mental health, which allows us to consider a variety of intersecting concerns: quality and accessibility of counseling services for graduate students, 12-month funding, housing, campus climate around race and other forms of diversity, child care, equalizing workloads across colleges, arbitration processes for conflicts within units, confidential reporting mechanisms, etc.

We will work in collaboration with the graduate student life committee, as well as the GSG reps from each of the colleges to consider actionable ways to improve mental health support for graduate students and resources for the faculty they work with.

We will aim to bring a representative from a relevant office on campus to provide information about one of these areas at most meetings for the remainder of the year. Questions? Suggestions?
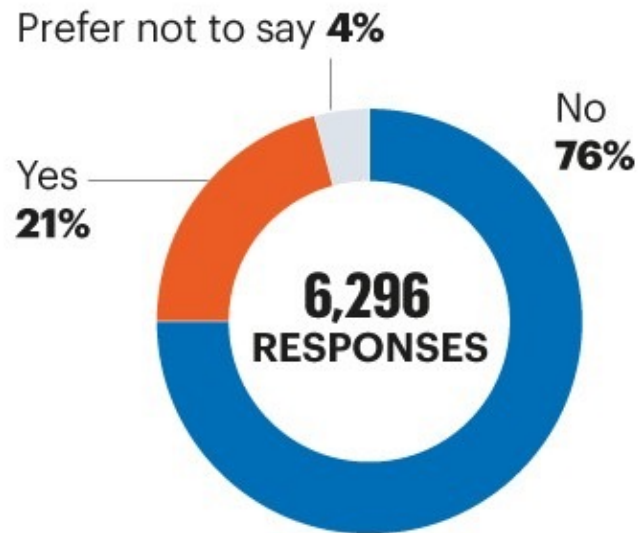
NON-EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS IN ACADEMIA

https://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2021/the-mental-health-crisis-in-science/
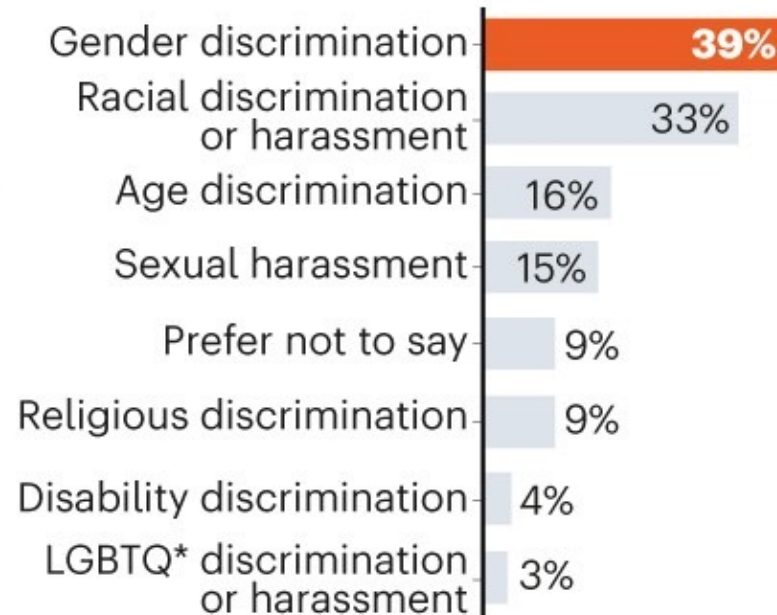
**BAD BEHAVIOUR**

Instances of harassment and gender or racial discrimination remain distressingly commonplace. The most frequently reported perpetrators are supervisors.

**Q: Have you experienced discrimination or harassment in your PhD programme?**

Prefer not to say **4%**

No **76%**

Yes **21%**

**6,296 RESPONSES**

**Q: If yes, which of the following have you experienced?**

Gender discrimination — **39%**
Racial discrimination or harassment — 33%
Age discrimination — 16%
Sexual harassment — 15%
Prefer not to say — 9%
Religious discrimination — 9%
Disability discrimination — 4%
LGBTQ* discrimination or harassment — 3%

*People from sexual and gender minorities.

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https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03459-7

# Committee Report from Awards and Fellowships Committee

## (15 minutes)

LaRuth McAfee (chair)

**College Liaison Report for COE**

(5 minutes)

# Jill Higginson

**Professor**

Mechanical Engineering

**Director**

Center for Biomedical Engineering Research
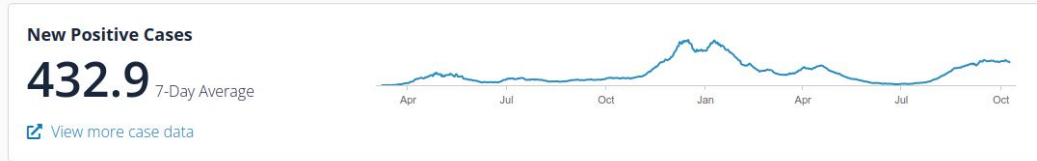
# Graduate College Council

Dean's Remarks
11 October 2021

# Update: COVID 19

- New federal guidelines apply broadly to UD: Implications for all UD employees. Stay tuned.
- We know masking reduces transmission and vaccination reduces infection rates and severe symptoms.

**Percentage of Tests Positive**

**7.7%** 7-Day Average

Jan  Mar  May  Jul  Sep

## OTHER KEY COVID METRICS

**New Positive Cases**

**432.9** 7-Day Average

Apr  Jul  Oct  Jan  Apr  Jul  Oct

View more case data

NEWS

## University of Delaware announces vaccine mandate for employees
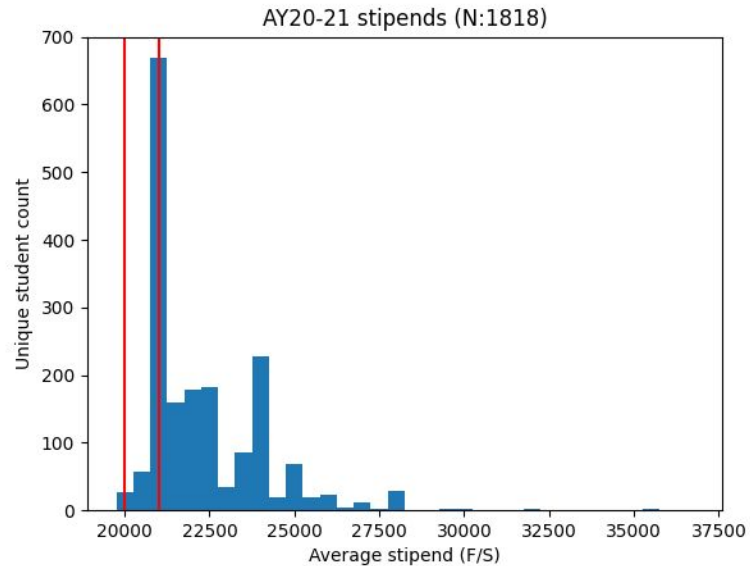
By Josh Shannon jshannon@chespub.com
Oct 8, 2021

University of Delaware employees are now required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by Dec. 8, UD President Dennis Assanis announced Thursday.

# Graduate student minimum stipend

Based on a 9-month contract.

Doctoral: $21,000

Masters: $20,000
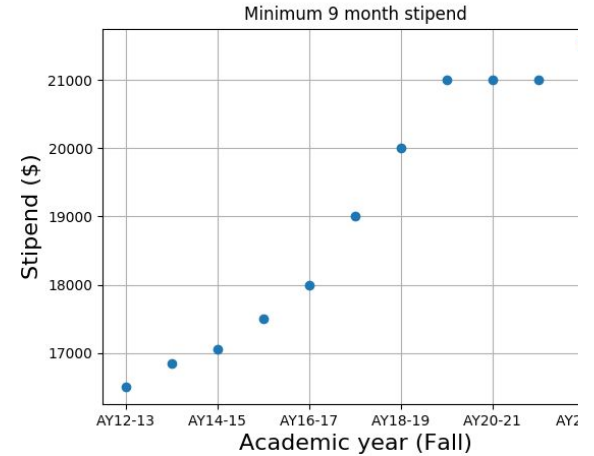
# Graduate student minimum stipend

Condensed task force observations and recommendations:

- The minimum stipend is sufficient as a **living wage**…but just barely.
- The **difference between master's and Ph.D. stipends** makes no sense.
- The task force recommended a **single flat minimum stipend** because they could not determine a fair and transparent way to measure ability or experience aligned with the diverse TA duties on campus.
- The task force recommended that the minimum stipend increase be the **same as staff raises**.
- TAs who are asked to be **instructors-of-record** should be paid more because it involves more responsibility and commitment.

# People who declined admission to UD

Top decliners in Fall of 2020 were:
1. University of Pennsylvania. They do not have a published minimum.
2. Boston University. Minimum stipend of $23,340 in a much more expensive location.
3. Penn State. Minimum stipend of $31,185.
4. Rutgers University. Minimum stipend of $29,426.
5. Virginia Tech. Complex step structure.
6. University of Maryland. Minimum stipend of $17,980.

# AY22-23 minimum stipend

Collaborative process involving the Provost and all deans, led by the Graduate College.

College budgets remain very tight and tuition dependent.

We will revisit the minimum stipend again next year.
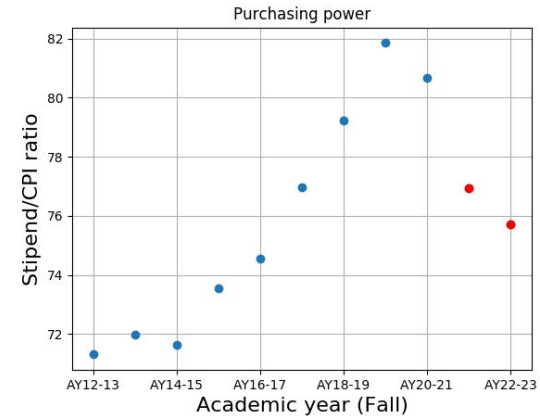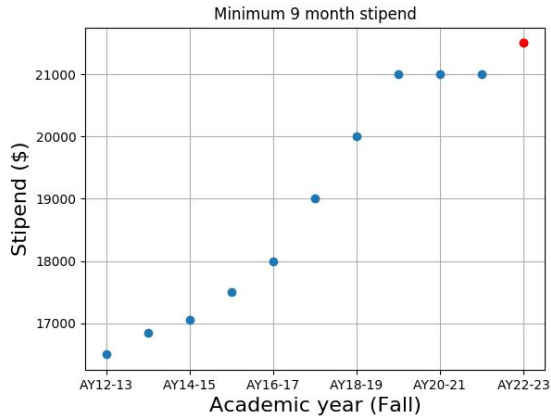
# Strategic plan update

**Fall 2020:** Mission → Goals. Five working groups consisting of students, faculty and staff from across the university examined each goal. Goals → Strategies.

**Spring 2021:** Goals → Objectives and action items.

**Spring/summer 2021:** We collected more feedback from the community on priorities.

**Fall 2021:** Released the penultimate draft to the Graduate College Council, Graduate students, staff and deans' offices.

**Oct 2021:** Feedback sessions and a qualtrics survey.

https://shorturl.at/ilyJP

SEPTEMBER 2021

GRADUATE COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN
Academic Years 2021 through 2026

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GRADUATE COLLEGE

# Strategic plan update

**Features:**

- Five year duration.
- Ambitious and achievable.
- Already in motion.
- Signals the entire UD community including alumni and partners.

https://shorturl.at/ilyJP

SEPTEMBER 2021

GRADUATE COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN
Academic Years 2021 through 2026

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# Strategic plan update

**GRADUATE COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

Academic Years 2021 through 2026

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**GRADUATE COLLEGE**

Oct 13th 1600-1700: Student feedback session

Oct 18th 0900-1000: Staff feedback session

Oct 22nd 0900-1000: Faculty feedback session

Focus group engaging URM grad students and community based GSOs

All groups can submit feedback via a qualtrics form

October: Individual meetings with other college deans

After Oct 22, we will make final revisions based on feedback and release a final strategic plan.

# Questions?

# *Overview*

- Members recruited in Spring and Summer 2021
- Committee has been meeting since July 2021, considered updates to major awards administered by the Graduate College

- **Membership** – Yendelela Cuffee (Epidemiology), Anne-Marie Nowak (Chemistry & Biochemistry), Lauren Petersen (Art History, CAS Associate Dean), Maria Purciello (Music, GCC Member)

# Also Considered Input from Review Committees

| Name | Program | Name | Program |
|------|---------|------|---------|
| Ben Bagozzi | Political Science & International Relations | John McNutt | Biden School |
| Bert Tanner | Mechanical Engineering | Kali Kniel | Animal & Food Sciences |
| Bridgette Johnson | Human Development & Family Science | Karen Rosenberg | Anthropology |
| Dawn Fallik | English | Karin Silbernagel | Physical Therapy |
| Del Levia | Geography & Spatial Sciences | Maria Purciello | Music |
| Eric Rise | Sociology & Criminal Justice | Neal Zondlo | Chemistry |
| Erica Selva | Biological Sciences | Neil Sturchio | Earth Sciences |
| Evan Usler | Communication Science | Stephanie del Tufo | Education |
| Freda Patterson | Behavioral Health & Nutrition | Tom Powers | Philosophy, Biden |
| Harsh Bais | Plant & Soil Sciences | Wendy Bellion | Art History |
| Jean-Philippe Laurenceau | Psychological & Brain Sciences | X. Lucas Lu | Mechanical Engineering |
| John Madsen | Earth Sciences | | |

\* While some of last year's reviewers will be invited to return, support from the GCC to identify new members would be appreciated

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# *Unidel Fellowship – Current*
### *https://grad.udel.edu/graduate-community-portal/faculty/unidel-grad-scholars-award/*

- Only available to prospective doctoral students who will start in Fall term
- Nominations must include at least one of program-level mentoring plan or student-level plan
- Fellowships at higher stipend levels ($34k/year), provide additional $3k/year discretionary funds
- Awards for five-year periods
- Recipients must submit at least one fellowship or grant proposal to an external organization while in graduate school
- Fellows encouraged to attend semesterly gatherings, other activities sponsored by Graduate College
- Non-first-year recipients expected to present research at Graduate Research Forum in Spring

# *Unidel Fellowship – Proposed Changes*

- Change formal name to minimize potential confusion with Graduate Scholar Awards (e.g., Unidel Presidential Fellowship or Unidel Dean's Award)

- Clarify purpose – "This is the premier award offered to doctoral students by the University of Delaware. It is used to 1) recruit exceptional doctoral students from diverse backgrounds and training to UD, and 2) provide matriculated students with intellectual and professional experiences that foster the development of disciplinary and community leaders."

- Add language in nomination instructions to clarify value of programs translating value/attractiveness of nominees with non-academic backgrounds

- Add expectation of fellow presenting research at a professional conference relevant to student's career aspirations at least once during doctoral program

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# *University Graduate Scholar Award – Current*

- Nominees may be prospective doctoral or master's students, as well as currently-enrolled students

- Nominees must come from populations traditionally underrepresented/marginalized in graduate education

- Nominations must include at least one of program-level mentoring plan or student-level plan

- Awards typically include opportunity to be renewed for second year, although special awards made in June 2021 were non-renewable

- Awardees encouraged to attend monthly gatherings, other activities sponsored by Graduate College

- Non-first-year recipients expected to present research at Graduate Research Forum in Spring

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# Graduate Scholar Award – Proposed Changes

- All awards come with opportunity to be renewed for a second year

- Funding should be made available so awardees have access to $1k/year for professional development needs

- Renewal nomination letter must come from advisor

# *Doctoral Fellowship – Current*

- Fellowship specifically for doctoral students in years 3+
- Nominations must include at least one of program-level mentoring plan or student-level plan
- One-year funding commitment, recipients may hold funding once
- Recipients expected to present research at Graduate Research Forum in Spring
- Fellows encouraged to attend semesterly gatherings, other activities sponsored by Graduate College

# Dissertation Fellowship – Current

- Fellowship specifically for doctoral students in final year of program
- Nominations must include at least one of program-level mentoring plan or student-level plan
- One-year funding commitment, recipients may hold funding once
- Recipients expected to present research at Graduate Research Forum in Spring
- Fellows encouraged to attend semesterly gatherings, other activities sponsored by Graduate College

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# *Doctoral Fellowship for Excellence & Innovation – New! (well, merged)*

- **Rationale** – current two awards very similar, same students sometimes nominated for both

- **Purpose** – recognize students at various stages of their doctoral career who have exhibited scholarly excellence, leadership/innovation, and/or diversity contributions in their department or discipline more generally
    - Gives flexibility/permission for programs to recognize students who have exhibited excellence in a variety of ways beyond traditional scholarship

- **Changes**
    - Require student-level mentorship plan for all nominees
    - All programs eligible to nominate at least three (3) students, more for larger programs
    - Nominator must indicate whether nominee has demonstrated excellence in (1) scholarship, (2) leadership/service, and/or (3) diversity, and prepare short statement for each area selected
    - Students may hold award for two (2) years

- **Implement starting in Fall 2022 nomination period**

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# *Breaking Barriers Opportunity – New!*

- **Rationale** – incentivize efforts by programs to recruit and retain students from demographics traditionally underrepresented in program

- **Purpose** - promote the diversity of unit's graduate student population by strategically recruiting a cohort of students from a particular background that is currently underrepresented

- **Components**
  - Application in Spring term
  - Program/team of related programs must identify population, provide data to demonstrate underrepresentation, develop and justify strategic plans to recruit and retain students from population
  - Recruiting budget of up to $4500 may be requested, 2-3 awards may be requested
  - Recruiting funds provided in Year 1, awards provided in Year 2 if ≥2 students from targeted population come to UD

- **Implement starting with Spring 2022 application period**

# *Generic Rubric*

| Category | Outstanding (9-10) | Promising (7-8) | Adequate (4-6) | Weak (1-3) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Application | • All materials complete | • Missing element | | • Two or more missing elements |
| Letters of Reference/ Nomination | • Excellent, highly detailed about student's promise<br>• High familiarity with student's work<br>• Comprehensive praise for student's work | • Several details about student's promise<br>• Clear familiarity with student's work<br>• Extensive praise for student's work | • Few details of student's promise<br>• Some familiarity with student's work<br>• Some praise for student's work | • Lacks details of student promise<br>• Low familiarity with student's work<br>• Lacks praise for student's work |
| Nominee's Statement | • Very well written with clarity and organization<br>• Very well focused with much detail<br>• Highly connected to Graduate College goals | • Well written with clarity and organization<br>• Focused with good details<br>• Well connected to Graduate College goals | • Adequately written with general comments and moderate organization<br>• Vague in details | • Poorly written<br>• Lacking details<br>• Disconnected from Graduate College Goals |
| Relevant Scholarly Activity | • Many relevant experiences/recognitions | • Some relevant experiences/recognitions | • Few relevant experiences/recognitions | • No relevant experiences/recognitions |
| Mentoring Plan | • Detailed/specific | • Some details | • Vague plans | • Lacking plans |
| Potential to Contribute | • Exceptional potential to contribute to field | • Strong potential to contribute to field | • Average potential to contribute to field | • Average potential to contribute to field |

# *Next Steps*

- **Today** – respond to any immediate questions/thoughts

- **By October 18th** – GCC members send LaRuth McAfee ([mcafee@udel.edu](mailto:mcafee@udel.edu)) any additional feedback for the committee's consideration)

- **Prior to next GCC meeting** – updated recommendations shared with GCC for review

- **Next GCC meeting (November 8th)** – GCC votes on endorsement of recommendations