



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
GRADUATE COLLEGE



ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE FACULTY SENATE

Academic Year 2022–2023

Guided by the Strategic Plan for the University of Delaware, "Forward and Forever," and the Graduate College Strategic Plan, we continue to make progress on our goals, including strengthening our graduate community, developing faculty mentoring expertise and supporting the delivery of new and innovative graduate programs. We proudly share these and many other achievements in detail in our 2023 Annual Report.



Louis F. Rossi
Dean, UD Graduate College



THE GRADUATE COLLEGE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE FACULTY SENATE



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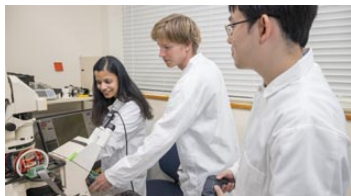
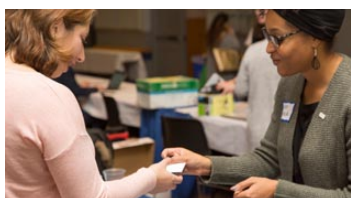
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INTRODUCTION

The Graduate College was created in 2019 to pursue new opportunities for graduate education at the University of Delaware and to fill gaps in the needs of our graduate students and postdocs in alignment with the [University of Delaware Strategic Plan](#). Specifically, the mission of the Graduate College is to achieve excellence in graduate education and graduate research, scholarship and creative expression at the University of Delaware. In doing so, the Graduate College will elevate the stature of our graduate programs nationally and internationally. Our path to achieving our mission is outlined in the [Graduate College Strategic Plan \(Academic Years 2021 through 2026\)](#), the outcome of months of work by faculty, staff and students across the University. Like the 2022 Annual Report, this report is structured around the five goals outlined in our plan.

No one thing characterizes excellence. The work of the Graduate College is in a collection of activities, large and small. Almost all of them involve collaboration with other units. Almost all of them directly involve faculty and students through our shared governance with the Graduate College Council. Almost none of these activities have the word “excellence” in their description, and yet they all represent progress toward achieving excellence in graduate education and research. This report showcases multiple metrics assessing graduate education at UD, but we would like to begin by highlighting a few small bellwether events from last year. To begin, the Graduate College hosted its first interdisciplinary orientation featuring faculty program directors from multiple colleges welcoming graduate students in the various interdisciplinary programs. Next, in response to the number of interdisciplinary master’s students having grown too large to be included in the Doctoral Hooding Ceremony, the Graduate College hosted its first convocation. Finally, we graduated our first doctoral student at the Doctoral Hooding Ceremony.

It is important to acknowledge that the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (UD PCS) is part of the Graduate College, and its mission – educating for life – overlaps with graduate education while fulfilling a broader purpose to provide workforce development, support the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute and meet many other needs in our community and the state.

To achieve excellence in graduate education, the Graduate College maintains a tight focus on the five goals outlined in our [Strategic Plan](#). Specifically, the Graduate College will enhance graduate experiences by:

- building a welcoming, respectful, strong, diverse and resilient graduate community,
- fostering innovation in graduate education, especially in creating and supporting interdisciplinary programs, delivering online courses and programs, and extending educational opportunities to nontraditional learners,
- providing opportunities for professional development so that graduate students and postdocs can achieve their career aspirations,
- recruiting and retaining the best and brightest students, supporting, developing and enhancing opportunities for graduate and postdoctoral research, scholarship and creative expression.

We place the highest value on our common humanity, and therefore we will reflect and act upon issues of diversity, equity and inclusion in the decisions that we make. Operational excellence and operational continuity will be our guiding organizational principles. Best practices, data and evidence will inform all our actions, and we will maximize our impact by working harmoniously with the Graduate Council, the University’s other colleges and units, and partners from outside the University.



ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE WITHIN GRADUATE COLLEGE OPERATIONS

Building and Strengthening Relationships with other Colleges and Units

Graduate College

The Graduate College is committed to working collaboratively with other colleges and units to achieve our objectives. To facilitate this collaboration, Graduate College leadership has built new and strengthened existing relationships across campus through the creation and/or extension of formal groups tasked with addressing graduate education needs. The deans at the University of Delaware enjoy a collaborative relationship, meeting regularly and working closely with the provost, president and other units on campus. The Graduate College has particularly close relationships with the Office of Student Life and the Research Office. The Office of Student Life has been a problem-solving partner as we transition from a campus designed almost exclusively for undergraduates to a campus designed for a dynamic combination of undergraduate and graduate students. Working together, we created a new position, an assistant dean for graduate student life, who served as a single-point-of-contact resource for graduate students facing non-academic challenges. Also, the Research Office has been an outstanding partner in helping teams of faculty pursue and deploy graduate training grants.

Within the Graduate College, we completed the final steps of our internal reorganization. The Graduate College consists of six portfolios:

1. Academics
2. Recruitment and Retention
3. Professional Development
4. Professional and Continuing Studies (PCS)
 - Professional Noncredit
 - Continuing Education/ACCESS Center
 - [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute \(OLLI\)](#)

5. Business and IT

6. Communications and Marketing

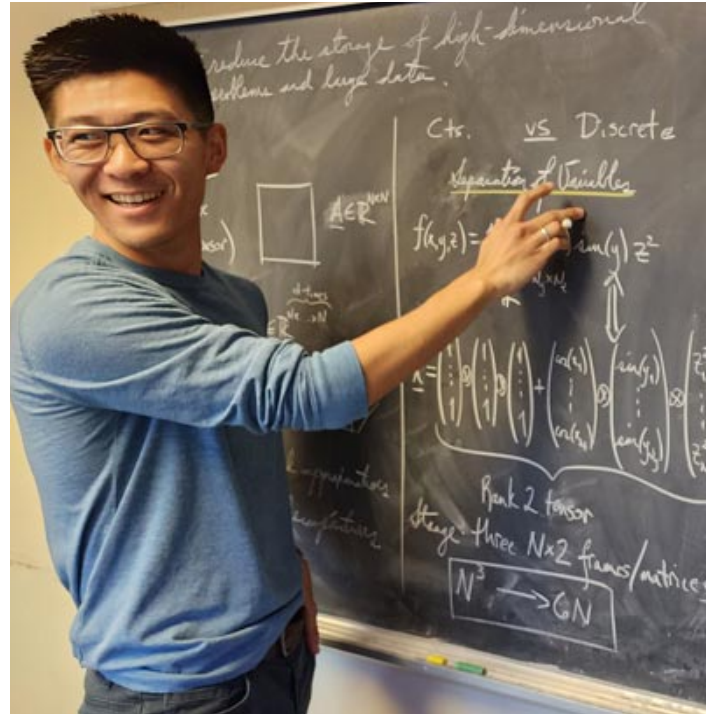
The first three portfolios directly involve graduate education. The fourth portfolio has three divisions. PCS provides noncredit courses and training to the state of Delaware and beyond. PCS also supports continuing education to give non-degree-seeking students access to both undergraduate and graduate courses. PCS also supports OLLI, which is a nationwide organization of member-driven educational activities for people 50 and older. The fourth portfolio used to have a division that supported online education, both credit-bearing and noncredit. This unit moved to the Provost's Office this year and still continues to work closely with the Graduate College. The fifth and sixth portfolios are shared services that support the entire Graduate College. Together, these portfolios constitute the integrated Graduate College. Since the Graduate College is still new to UD, we worked with HR to deploy a yearlong Q12 employee engagement activity. Following our first retreat, we decided to fix some ambiguity in our name. The Graduate College refers to the entire organization even though many use it to refer to the first three portfolios located in Hullahen Hall. Going forward, the first three portfolios are called "the graduate support team" and refer to those individuals who work exclusively with our graduate degree-seeking students and programs.

Five key University constituencies provide strategic advice to the Graduate College. Descriptions of these groups are provided below.

- The Graduate College Council (GCC) acts as the primary deliberative and representative body of the Graduate College. Consisting of 35 faculty members who are nominated and elected as the representatives of graduate programs within the academic colleges, as well as one graduate student from each college, the council acts in accordance with the Graduate College bylaws and in harmony with the Graduate College staff. The GCC convenes monthly. More information on the GCC's committees can be found on the [GCC website](#).

GCC accomplishments in the last year include:

- Vetting and revising the Additional Work policy
 - Creation of the Interdisciplinary Evaluation Science program
 - Student-parent support task force
- Graduate program directors are a crucial part of the graduate education infrastructure at UD. The Graduate College convenes meetings with the program directors every month. The purpose of these meetings is to provide up-to-date information relevant to the day-to-day management of graduate programs and share best practices on recruitment, retention and support of graduate students among the graduate program directors.
 - The Graduate Inter-College Advisory Committee (GICAC) connects all colleges with graduate programs to the Graduate College. The purpose of this working group is to share information and resolve Universitywide challenges related to budget, graduate program administration, marketing and promotion of programs, employment policy and other items that live outside the domain of academic programs and education. It also gives deans' offices the opportunity to provide input on crosscutting issues like the Additional Work policy. Examples of the work done by this committee include ways we can work to move more students to 12 months of support, exploring GradSERU data focusing on climates within each college broken out by demographic groups, strategic discussions about the direction of the EAB online marketing campaign and other matters of Universitywide interest.
 - The Graduate Student Government (GSG) consists of elected graduate student representatives who pass legislation on a wide range of issues. Last year, its highest priorities were stipends, housing and faculty-advisor relations. In response, the Graduate College has taken a number of actions. The Graduate College has been working with the rest of the University leadership to increase stipends. Working with Student Life, we piloted a project to provide housing to graduate students in order to reduce the pressure on the private rental market in the region. Finally, the GCC created a working group to study faculty-student relations. The group made a pair of proposals to the GCC that are still under consideration.



- The Graduate Support Network (GSN) is a collaborative group of staff members who support graduate students on campus. The GSN convenes to share ideas on how to best help graduate students.

Division of Professional and Continuing Studies

Serving as the adult and nontraditional learners' portal to the University of Delaware, the University of Delaware's Division of Professional and Continuing Studies (UD PCS) provides educational opportunities for anyone seeking to begin or complete their college career, enhance their professional skills or enrich their personal life. Also providing customized training and educational services to area businesses, organizations and professional associations, UD PCS impacts more than 13,000 students each year through UD credit courses and degree offerings, professional development courses, certificate programs, specialized conferences, workshops and lifelong learning member cooperatives throughout the state.

As building cross-campus relationships is a critical component of UD PCS' model of providing just-in-time education to a diverse population of learners, the division's noncredit professional development team continues to partner with the Lerner College of Business and Economics, the College of Engineering and the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources to deliver high-quality

customized, grant-funded and open enrollment professional development programs for industry, government and nonprofit professionals. Programs of note include:

- the Emergency Poultry Disease Response Program for foreign veterinarians, funded by an annual grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- the Patient Experience Academy for Veterans Administration of Wilmington medical personnel
- the fully online PocketMBA for ChristianaCare and Incyte Corporation

Additionally, each year UD PCS receives a grant from the Office of the Governor to hold the Governor’s School for Excellence for 125 rising high school juniors from across the state. The students are nominated by their schools to attend the weeklong gifted and talented, campus-based program with tracks in the arts, music and academics. For the July 2023 Governor’s School offering, UD PCS collaborated with the following units and colleges:

- Alfred Lerner College of Business and Economics
 - Exelon Trading Center
- College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
 - Applied Economics and Statistics
- College of Arts and Sciences
 - Department of Theatre
 - English
 - School of Music
 - Visual Arts
- College of Earth, Ocean and Environment (Cannon Lab)
- College of Engineering
- College of Health Sciences
 - Kinesiology and Applied Physiology
 - Health Behavior Science and Promotion
- Horn Entrepreneurship
- Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration
- Pearson Hall MakerSpace

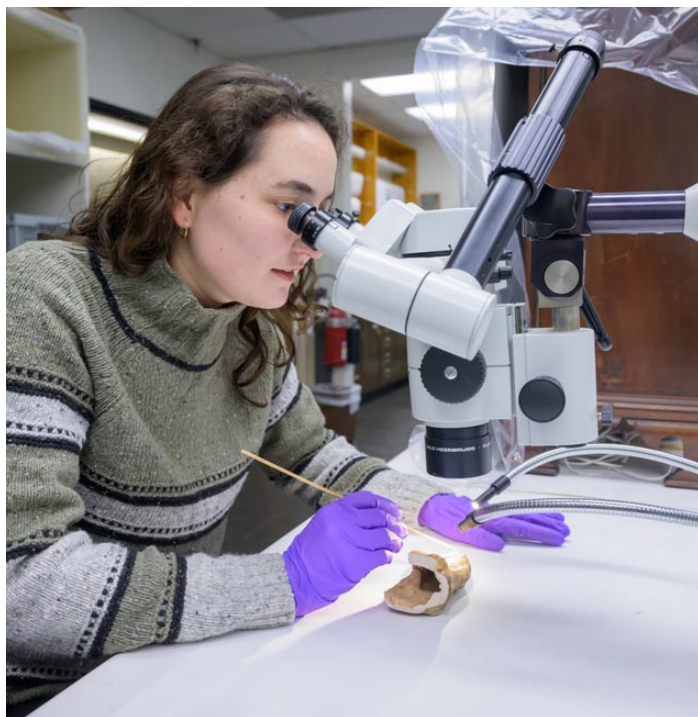
Furthering UD PCS’ approach to relationship-building and collaboration, UD’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) in Wilmington and in Kent and Sussex counties has continued its longstanding partnerships with UD departments and programs that allow graduate students

to teach classes or provide lectures for OLLI members. For example, each year graduate students from the Center for Material Culture Studies, the Department of Music and the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) program lead classes based on their research and/or performance skills at OLLI Wilmington or via OLLI Online. Similarly, graduate students from the College of Earth, Ocean and Environment lead courses about climate change and maritime topics to OLLI Kent and Sussex members. The courses led by the CEOE graduate students are taught from the Lewes facility in the hybrid modality and are accessible to all OLLI members via Zoom. The college’s Sea Grant Program also invites OLLI members to its Ocean Currents lecture series each summer.

Bolstering Support for Graduate Programs

The Graduate College has maintained its commitment to promoting the value of University of Delaware graduate education and, in turn, works with campus representatives of graduate programs to address urgent issues related to market demand/program outlook, student funding, graduate education promotions and more. Additionally, based on identified staffing needs in relation to campuswide support requests, Graduate College leadership has strengthened the college’s service team by creating new roles and hiring additional team members.





Market Research for New/Existing Programs

To assist with informing faculty, chairs and deans about the market demand and potential viability of given programs, job availability associated with graduate programs and regional program competition, the Graduate College used to hire graduate students from the Lerner College of Business and Economics to serve as market researchers. Since 2019, we have conducted more than 75 market research studies. Details of studies conducted during academic year 2022–2023 are in the Innovation section. These reports have both bolstered the case for new master’s degrees or indicated the market is not attractive for new degrees thereby saving scarce college and department resources for other important purposes.

With the creation of a new program incubator program run out of the Provost’s Office, it made sense to move this operation together with UD Online to the Provost’s Office. The services will continue to be available to faculty who are exploring the creation of new graduate programs.

Promoting University of Delaware Graduate Education

Graduate program support efforts also include various marketing and communications functions that aim to increase overall awareness of – and ultimately

enrollments in – UD graduate programs. Details regarding these marketing and communications efforts are presented in the “Recruiting and Retaining the Best and Brightest Students” section below.

Strengthening Insight and Decision-making through Communications and Data Sharing

Focused, frequent and easy-to-follow communications from the Graduate College to our stakeholders is critical. As such, Graduate College leadership has worked to streamline communications and information sharing with students, staff and faculty over the past year. Specific communications and data-sharing initiatives and tactics are listed below.

- **Graduate College Newsletter** – Issued biweekly via email, Graduate Student News serves as UD’s graduate-focused information aggregator that replaces the need for multiple emails per week. The newsletter provides information on student fees, stipends, health and well-being, events, awards and fellowships, internships, student life, student profiles, campus news, and more. Approximately 28% of email recipients open/read the emailed newsletters, and approximately 3% of the readers click links. During the last academic year, 436 people visited newsletter pages on the Graduate College website.
- **Graduate Dashboard** – The dashboard provides accurate time-series data at the college and program levels. Available to all program directors for more than a year, it has received a number of minor upgrades. The most significant augmentation is the funding tab that allows directors to explore the numbers of graduate TAs, RAs, GAs, fellowships and sustainers.
- **Town Halls** – During the 2020–2021 academic year, the Graduate College hosted monthly town halls open to all graduate students and postdocs. These meetings were useful for answering questions, sharing data and addressing concerns. For example, graduate students on contract are routinely confused about when they should be treated as students and when they should be treated as employees when accessing services on campus. We formed a working group consisting of students, an HR rep and the Graduate College team to write a guide clarifying their status in all possible circumstances on campus. We noticed that the same

graduate students were attending and that we were not reaching all the populations of students that we were interested in hearing from. When we hosted a town hall just for postdocs, it was very well attended and highlighted some of their distinct needs. During the fall of 2021, we continued with the open format but transitioned to a new format where we would invite subgroups of graduate students to partner with us. We still host open town halls once per semester, but other monthly slots are reserved for a collection of focused populations, in part driven by our analysis of GradSERU data. For instance, we met with the master's students in the spring. The vision is that we will partner with student organizations to structure these sessions to best meet their interests and needs. Going forward, we hope to co-organize listening sessions with Black graduate students, Hispanic/Latinx graduate students, women in STEM and any other interested groups.

- **Graduate Admissions Report Year-Over-Year** – The newest dashboard is the Graduate Admissions Report Year-Over-Year, which provides live “race-track” summaries of graduate applications, including offers of admissions and acceptances, broken out into several subcategories, so that graduate program directors have historical context in their admissions campaigns.
- In addition to the Graduate Admissions Report Year-Over-Year, the Graduate College’s systems and data analyst provides weekly email updates throughout the spring that analyze the current data and put international recruiting in the context of current trends in consular wait times.
- The dean of the Graduate College is committed to being accessible and responsive to graduate students and their representatives in the Graduate Student Government. The Graduate College dean meets monthly with the president of the Graduate Student Government and holds regular town halls with the graduate students.



Data Gathering from gradSERU

The University of Delaware has participated in the Graduate Student Experiences in the Research University (gradSERU) survey since 2017. This survey, administered to all graduate students every two years, allows UD to learn more about the experiences of our students in order to inform decisions relevant to their needs. While there has been some data analysis on the data from past years, more intentional efforts have been made to share the 2019, 2021 and 2023 data broadly to encourage greater use across campus. Tableau-based dashboards are now provided by the SERU Consortium; graduate program and college leaders are able to dive into their own data to identify areas of pride and opportunities for improvement. The GradSERU data includes information about program quality, climate, advising, financial aid, wellness and more.



ENHANCING GRADUATE EXPERIENCES THROUGH COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

The University of Delaware Graduate Student Population

To understand our graduate student community, it is important to understand our graduate student population.

One of the important features of our graduate student community is that roughly half of our graduate students are seeking doctoral degrees and half are seeking master's degrees. The vast majority of online students are seeking master's degrees. In Figure A, we can see trends in our graduate population over time by degree type. Despite COVID impacts, 2021 saw an increase in graduate enrollments. Doctoral enrollments are tied to research faculty mentors, and the growth was modest. Nonetheless, COVID impacted this group the greatest by delaying degree completion for many during the lockdown when field research and lab access was limited. Most of the recent growth in graduate enrollments is driven by master's degree programs. The emergence of non-degree students in our statistics in 2020 is because we started keeping track of continuing education graduate students in that year.

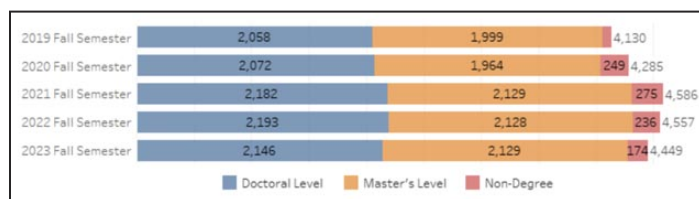


Figure A. Distribution of graduate students by program type.

However, the graduate community is not uniformly distributed across the colleges. In Figure B, we can see that graduate populations vary considerably across each college. The typical graduate student in the Lerner College of Business and Economics, for instance, is a master's student. The typical graduate student in the College of Engineering is a doctoral student. Furthermore, these populations are dynamic. For instance, the growth in population in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources is mostly due to an increase in master's students.

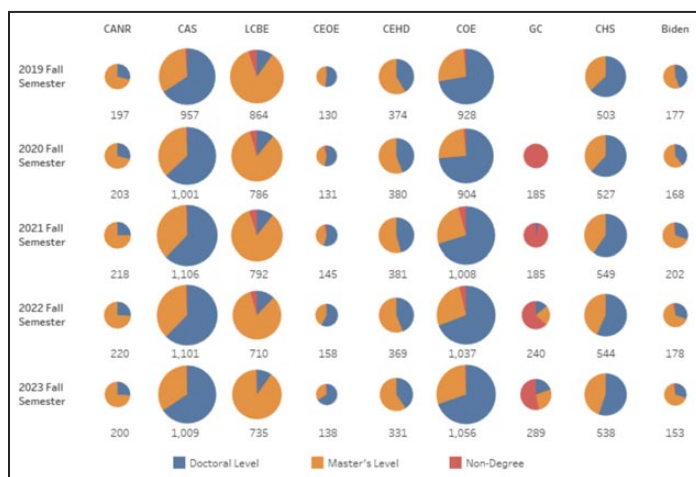


Figure B. Distribution of graduate students by program type across each college. The size of each disk represents the graduate population size.

Diversity can be viewed in many different ways. The overall graduate population at UD is close to gender parity, but this is not the case at the college level as shown in Figure C. Furthermore, there is very little movement in gender diversity at the college level except for the College of Education and Human Development where the percentage of females has continued to increase over the last few years. There is considerable interest in the diversity of our population with regard to race and ethnicity. Of particular interest are the categories of underrepresented minorities (URM). We use the nationally accepted Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) definition of URM, which is "Domestic Underrepresented Minority." These are U.S. citizens and permanent residents who identify as Black, Hispanic, Native American Indian, Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. In Figure D, we break these out in terms of absolute numbers and by proportion of college populations. Overall, the number of international graduate students dropped during the pandemic due to travel restrictions and visa backlogs. With the rollout of the vaccines, changes in approach to student visas by the Department of State, and other political changes around the world, 2021 saw a

rebound in international applications, acceptances and matriculations at UD. Regarding our domestic students, both URM and non-URM student populations have grown together. Diversity at UD is a top priority and a key element of both the UD and Graduate College strategic plans. Examining the URM population as a fraction of our overall population of U.S. citizens and permanent residents in Table X, we are making steady progress even through the pandemic terms.

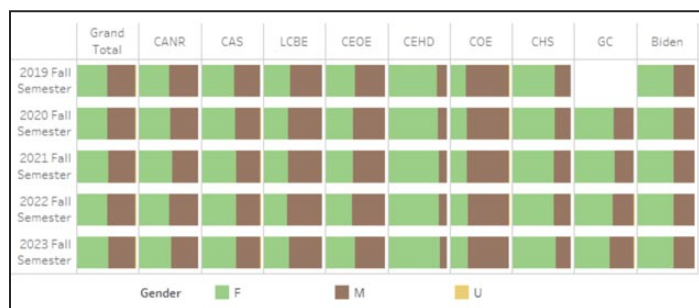


Figure C. Gender diversity for the full graduate population at UD and broken out by college.

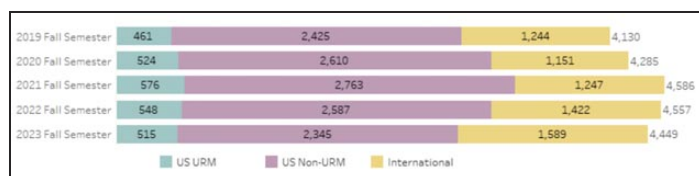
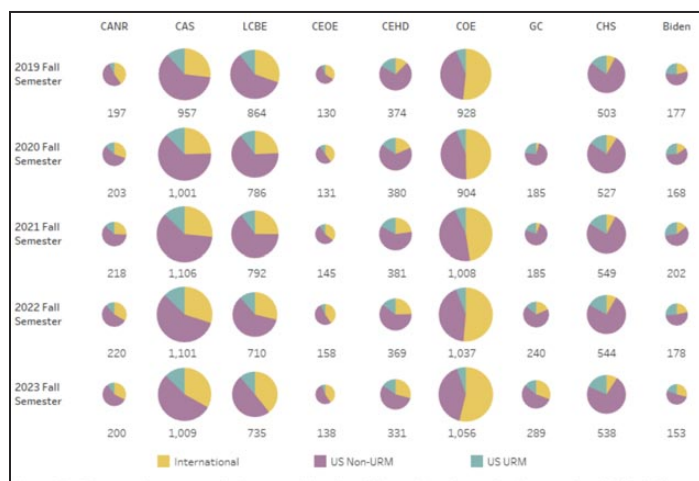


Figure D. The graduate population overall and within each college, broken out by URM, U.S. non-URM and International.



Fall of	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% URM (all grad)	10.9%	11.2%	12.2%	12.6%	12.0%
% URM (US cit/PR)	15.8%	16.0%	16.7%	17.3%	17.5%

Table X. Percentage of URM students as a fraction of total graduate student population and as a fraction of U.S. citizen and permanent resident graduate student population.



Figure E. Graduate degree productivity by degree type over time.

Understanding and Addressing the Needs of Graduate Students

Through the meetings and other communications mentioned above, Graduate College leadership continues to identify and address concerns shared by graduate students, staff and faculty.

Minimum stipends – During the last academic year, many graduate students and faculty expressed concern that minimum stipends were not keeping up with the growing cost of living. When students receive an assistantship or a fellowship from the University, they must receive at least the minimum stipend. The minimum stipend evolves over time from competing influences, including making our programs competitive with graduate programs of comparable quality and providing graduate students with a wage that meets basic living needs. While it is adequate for most graduate students to live on, there can be no guarantee it will meet all needs and all circumstances. The provost and deans work together on setting the minimum stipend that is competitive, adequate and affordable within the college budgets.

To understand adequacy, we can use the [Consumer Price Index \(CPI\) for the Mid-Atlantic region](#) as a benchmark for the cost of living in our part of the country. The CPI is the cost of a basket of goods. The basket remains constant, so the CPI in year n and month m reflects the actual cost in year n and month m, and takes into account the regional economy and inflation ([more information here](#)). The ratio of our stipend to the CPI is a measurement of the purchasing power of our stipend in the contemporary economy. If that ratio remains constant, our stipend rises

with consumer prices, so presumably, students will neither be getting ahead nor falling behind. A positive number means that the living conditions of graduate students are improving relative to the year before. Table F summarizes the current data on our minimum stipend together with CPI and how it has been evolving. We also include the NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Stipends, which are 12-month stipend levels, converted to a nine-month stipend for comparison with our minimum. From 2012 to 2019, our graduate student compensation had been improving relative to the local economy, with one exception in 2014. Our stipends grew strongly in AY17–18, AY18–19 and AY19–20, where the stipend to CPI ratio reached its high-water value of 81.9. The colleges moved to increase the stipend aggressively for AY22–23, but the pace of inflation is a challenging factor.

Academic year (Fall)	Minimum stipend (9 month)	YOY change	Mid Atlantic CPI (Sep)	YOY change	Stipend to CPI ratio	YOY change	NRSA (9 month)
2015	\$17,500	2.64%	237.945	-0.04%	73.55	2.68%	\$17,190
2016	\$18,000	2.86%	241.428	1.46%	74.56	1.37%	\$17,532
2017	\$19,000	5.56%	246.819	2.23%	76.98	3.25%	\$17,883
2018	\$20,000	5.26%	252.439	2.28%	79.23	2.92%	\$18,243
2019	\$21,000	5.00%	256.558	1.63%	81.85	3.31%	\$18,612
2020	\$21,000	0.00%	260.280	1.45%	80.68	-1.43%	\$18,990
2021	\$21,000	0.00%	274.310	5.39%	76.56	-5.11%	\$19,377
2022	\$22,000	4.76%	296.808	8.20%	74.12	-3.18%	\$19,764
2023	\$22,660	3.00%	307.255	3.52%	73.75	-0.50%	\$20,358

Table F. Summary of UD’s minimum stipend against the mid-Atlantic consumer price index and the NIH benchmark. All stipends are prorated to nine months. September 2023 CPI is interpolated from the July data, which is the latest available at the time this report was produced.

Another way to assess our minimum stipend is to understand our stipend against those of institutions that we compete against. These institutions are the institutions that students choose to attend when they decline our offers. Top decliner data for 2023 will not be available until the data in the National Student Clearinghouse is updated by other institutions in late October.

Institution	Applications	Minimum stipend (9 month)
University of Delaware		\$22,660
University of Maryland College Park	27	\$25,266
Pennsylvania State University	25	\$22,770
University of Colorado Boulder	20	\$25,134
New York University	18	Varies by college
George Washington University	16	N/A
Georgia Institute of Technology	16	\$23,250
Temple University	15	\$25,000
Boston University	15	\$28,690

Table G. Top 2022 institutional destinations for prospective graduate students who declined UD’s offer.

The Graduate College, in collaboration with the other colleges, is taking a multifaceted approach, which is needed for any complex problem. When doing so, we follow two principles. First, we recognize that we must compete on quality, not on buying graduate students. Therefore, as stated above, our goal is to offer a top-quality graduate education, and that is what our unique competitive advantage should be against our peers. Second, internal funds directed toward graduate education, stipends and graduate tuition scholarships should favor our research mission, doctoral programs and master’s degrees that are nationally recognized as terminal (e.g. performance or fine arts). The Graduate College has taken the following steps to be more competitive.

1. For those cases where the quality is comparable but our stipend is falling short, we have retasked some funds toward the redesigned [Competitive Counteroffer Program](#).
2. We are actively engaging all stakeholders on campus to commit to providing 12 months of support to prospective students. We know from the Competitive Counteroffer award and the internal and external review that led to the creation of the Graduate College that UD lags behind its peers in offering 12 months of support to graduate students. For departments that fund graduate students primarily through sponsored projects, year-round support is natural. For departments that fund students on nine-month teaching or graduate assistant positions, summer support can be from teaching, external opportunities for research and scholarship, or internal fellowship support. From the perspective of a prospective student, there is a difference between an offer letter that includes a commitment to multiple years of support that includes summer funding and an offer letter that includes only a commitment to nine months of

support. The Graduate College encourages program directors and chairs to find ways to make 12-month, multi year commitments where possible. Along these lines, the Graduate College has taken the following actions:

- a. The Graduate College increased the stipend rate for its competitive awards to \$32,666 for the year, which is a nine-month equivalent rate of \$24,500.
- b. We continue to offer our [Summer Stipend program](#) to provide bridge funding to graduate students in departments that commit to promising practices for effective mentoring during the summer months.
- c. We partner with other units to expand external sponsored training and summer opportunities by matching fellowship and training grants.

Other colleges also took action to increase 12-month support or increase their minimum stipend levels. The outcome of all activities is summarized in Figure F, which compares the actual stipend rate distribution in fall 2022 against fall 2023. The minimum stipend in fall 2022 was \$22,000 for nine months. The minimum stipend for fall 2023 is \$22,660 for nine months.

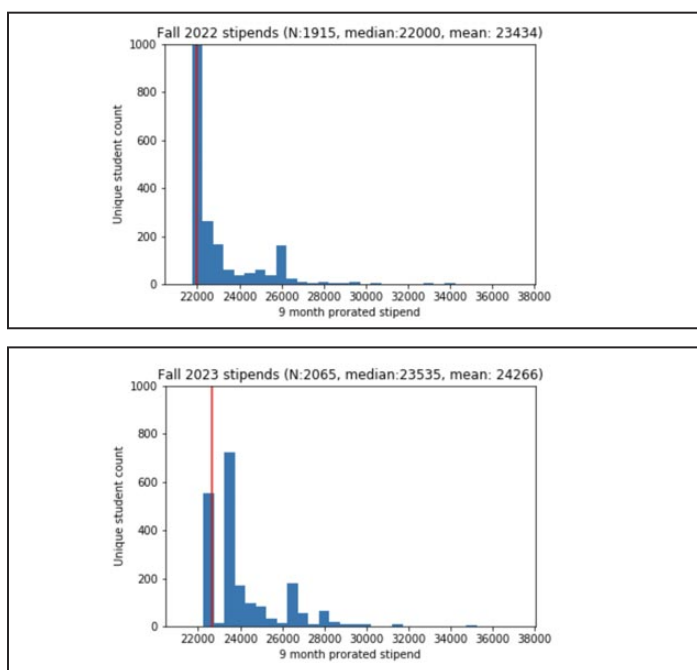


Figure F. Graduate stipend rates at UD. Each data point represents an individual student contract in the fall, and their stipend pay rate normalized to nine months, rather than the actual amount they were paid during a calendar year. The minimum is marked in red.

Another important element of meeting students' needs is student support over the summer. Figure Z shows the distribution of contract support duration our graduate students have received. We have made steady progress in increasing summer support to our graduate students. The data for AY23-24 looks the way it does because this is the current status. Many two-term students will end up receiving summer contracts, so the final result will look similar to previous years.

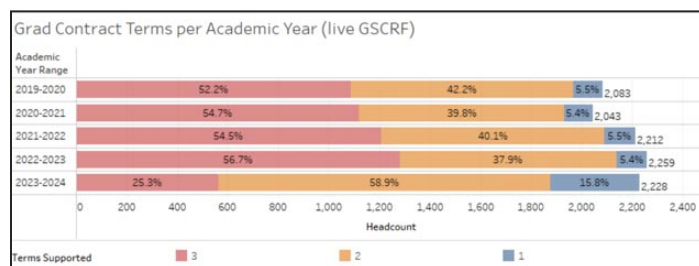


Figure Z. Historical distribution of graduate contract support duration by unique headcount. A 2-entry may be associated with a student having one contract spanning two terms or two single-term contracts. Similarly, a student counted as having three terms of support may have support through a single 12-month contract or multiple contracts that sum to 12 months in duration. A three-term contract is 12 months of support.

Health and dental insurance – All graduate students are required to have Affordable Care Act-compliant health insurance, and UD offers a plan that students can purchase. As has been the case in previous years, the University pays for 86% of graduate students' health insurance for students on contract. Graduate students pay 14% of the actual cost. Every year, we renegotiate the plan with graduate student input. The graduate students liked the current plan and wanted to keep the benefits the same at a similar price point. Healthcare costs have risen considerably in the last few years due to impacts from COVID. Aetna has had our business for the last few years, and Highmark was interested in doing more business with UD. In the end, Highmark offered a better package than Aetna, so we have changed providers with graduate students being the beneficiaries. Benefits remain mostly the same with some minor adjustments in copays. Graduate student rates are going down to roughly \$413 per year, which is \$3 less than last year's rate of \$416. For dental insurance, which is not mandatory, the University covers 50% of the expense, and students cover the other half. Highmark will be the new insurer, and annual rates will go down to roughly \$168 from \$230.

Tuition and fees – Regarding tuition, fees and other expenses, tuition rates for both undergraduate and

graduate programs are increasing by 5%. The most common \$979 rate is rising to \$1,028 per credit. There are a small number of exceptions for graduate students in online accounting practice, applied statistics, international business, MBA and MPA, which are under a separate contract and will not change next year. Following the 3% campuswide increase in tuition, sustaining fees for doctoral students are going up from \$1,118 to \$1,152. The campus center and well-being fees remained constant despite inflation. The international fee has gone up by \$10, from \$170 to \$180 per semester.

Housing – The housing market in and around Newark is tight for graduate students and postdocs. There are ongoing conversations about how the University and the Graduate College can best relieve some of the pressure on the rental market. This year, Student Life piloted a project to offer some graduate student housing through a combination of University-owned residences and a master lease. Over 200 students expressed an interest in the housing. In the end, the pilot project met the needs of many students. The graduate housing project will continue next year using what was learned this year.

Fostering a Student-centered Graduate Culture and Increasing Involvement in Graduate Student Life

Success in graduate school is dependent on a number of factors, and the Graduate College is committed to ensuring that student experiences at the University of Delaware are both professionally and personally rewarding. As such, we are continuing to foster a graduate student-centered culture and increase involvement in graduate student life activities. In addition to welcoming new graduate students in the fall and spring with New Graduate Student Orientation and our Diversity Welcome, we host a number of community-building activities to support our diverse graduate student community described in the next section.

Graduate Diversity Programming

The Graduate College continued supporting graduate diversity programming in 2022–23 with an emphasis on campuswide community-building initiatives targeting graduate students from underrepresented/marginalized backgrounds. In 2022–23, the college hosted more than 30 events attended by approximately 400 different graduate students. Given the positive response students have had for them, the Graduate Diversity Programming Initiative

continued hosting events to welcome students at the beginning of each semester and to recognize students at the end of each semester who have passed milestones or received awards to mark the importance of these achievements and celebrate accomplishments with students.

The Graduate Diversity Programming Initiative additionally placed an emphasis in 2022–23 on collaborating with Graduate Student Organizations that target students of identities similar to those our events seek to support. Collaborating GSOs included the Black Graduate Student Association, Graduate Women in Science, the Hispanic/Latino Graduate Student Association and the Queer & Trans Graduate Student Union. Events were additionally planned for graduate students who identify as having disabilities, those who are the first in their families to attend college, and graduate students with dependents to better understand their needs and begin to plan initiatives aimed at those populations.

Doctoral Fellowship for Excellence and University Graduate Scholar Awards

Graduate programs may nominate a limited number of their graduate students for the Doctoral Fellowship for Excellence and the University Graduate Scholar Awards (master’s and doctoral). The Doctoral Fellowship for Excellence was formed in 2022-23 by merging the former Doctoral Fellowship and Dissertation Fellowship. In the 2023 nomination period, 134 students were nominated for these awards, 58 received offers (43%) and 55 of those offers were accepted (41%). The table below summarizes outcomes for some demographic groups the Graduate College tracks throughout the process:

Population	Nominations	Offers	Acceptances
All nominees	134	58	55
CANR	2	1	1
CAS	56	25	23
COE	32	12	12
CEHD	8	3	3
Graduate College	5	3	3
CHS	11	5	4
CEOE	11	5	5
Biden School	8	4	4
Historically Excluded Racial/Ethnic Populations (URM)	19	10	8
Females	80	37	35
STEM Degrees	85	34	32



$$y = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3x + 4$$

$$y' = x - 3$$

$$y'' = 1$$

The graph of the function $y = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3x + 4$ is a parabola opening upwards. The vertex is at $(3, -2.5)$. The x-intercepts are at $x = 2$ and $x = 4$. The y-intercept is at $(0, 4)$.

The function is increasing on the interval $(3, \infty)$ and decreasing on the interval $(-\infty, 3)$.

The function is concave up on the interval $(-\infty, \infty)$ because $y'' = 1 > 0$.

The graph of the function $y = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3x + 4$ is shown below.

The graph of the function $y = \frac{1}{2}x^2 - 3x + 4$ is shown below.



ENHANCING GRADUATE EXPERIENCES BY FOSTERING INNOVATION IN GRADUATE EDUCATION

As a primary component of the Graduate College’s vision is fostering innovation in graduate education, especially in creating and supporting interdisciplinary programs, delivering online courses and programs, and extending educational opportunities to nontraditional learners, the Graduate College made significant strides in these efforts over the past year. These efforts are discussed in detail below.

Creating and Supporting Interdisciplinary Programs

Interdisciplinary Programs Housed in the Graduate College

Enrollment in interdisciplinary programs housed in the Graduate College grew from 101 in fall of 2022 to 136 in fall of 2023. While there were not any new programs created this year, the Graduate College officially transferred in the Water Science and Policy M.S. and Ph.D. programs, including them in our interdisciplinary portfolio.

See the breakdown of student enrollment in table below:

Program	# students enrolled in Fall 2022	# students enrolled in Fall 2023
M.S.- Data Science	49	65
Ph.D.- Education and Social Policy	5	7
M.S.- Interdisciplinary Evaluation Science	1	3
Ph.D.- Interdisciplinary Neuroscience	15	21
M.S.- Microbiology	7	5
Ph.D.- Microbiology	8	10
M.S.- Quantum Science and Engineering	0	1
Ph.D.- Quantum Science and Engineering	6	11
M.S. - Water Science and Policy	4	5
Ph.D.- Water Science and Policy	6	8
Total Enrollment	101	136

These numbers reflect currently enrolled students. It is important to note that during 2022-2023

These numbers reflect currently enrolled students. It is important to note that during 2022-2023, two Ph.D., 22 M.S. and eight interdisciplinary certificates were awarded to students in interdisciplinary programs.

4+1 Programs

One of the most attractive entry points into graduate education is our 4+1 programs where students can complete their bachelor’s and master’s degrees through a coordinated curriculum that double counts a small number of graduate courses toward both degrees. In 2023, the Graduate College created three new 4+1 programs: Applied Physics/Quantum Science and Engineering, Physics/Quantum Science and Engineering, and Materials Science/Quantum Science and Engineering.

Enrollments in these programs have followed suit.

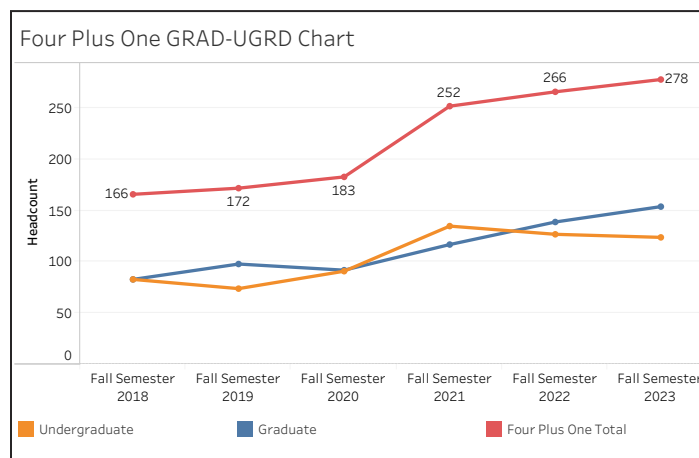


Figure H. Enrollment of students in 4+1 programs by degree status.

More innovative pipeline programs involve 4+1 or 3+2 programs where students from a non-UD undergraduate program articulate into a UD graduate program that their home institution lacks. Examples include a 3+2 articulation agreement with Millersville University where a physics student at Millersville can articulate into UD’s material science and engineering graduate program and, just

added for fall 2023, a 3+2 articulation agreement with West Chester University within the M. S. Quantum Science and Engineering program. The number of programs like these at UD is small, but this is a promising way to build pipelines into our more specialized graduate programs, especially as we try to diversify our graduate programs by building meaningful connections to minority-serving institutions.

Certificates

Certificates fall into multiple categories including stand-alone certificates aimed at working professionals, “stackable” certificates, certificates that are integrated into degree programs, and certificates directed toward existing degree-seeking graduate students who want to add value to their program of study. The Graduate College and PCS offer both noncredit and credit-bearing certificates. Adhering to our mission, the Graduate College supported the creation of two new interdisciplinary certificates.

■ Computing and Data Science for Soft Materials Certificate

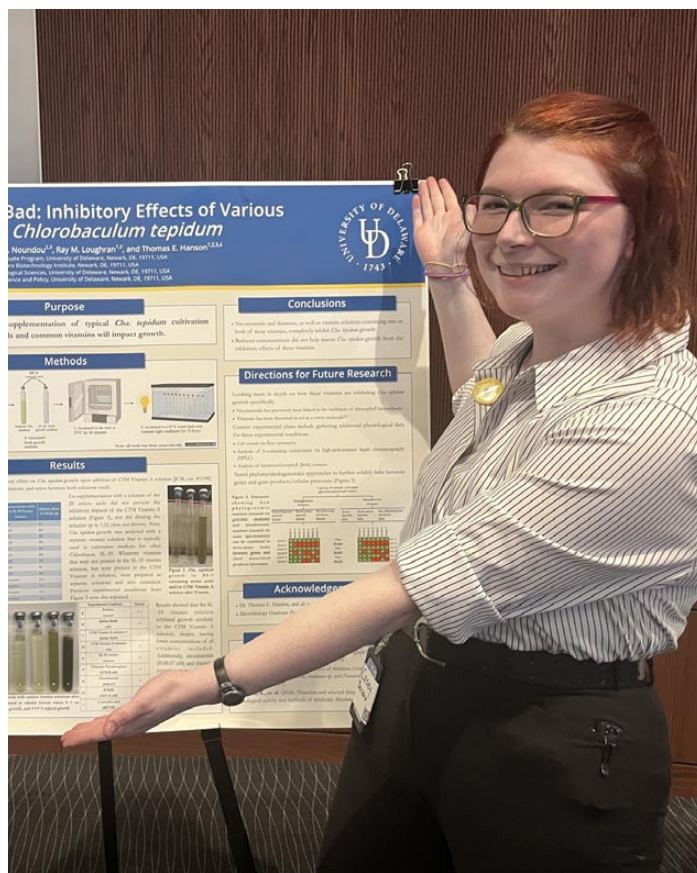
The interdisciplinary-based graduate Certificate in Computing and Data Science for Soft Materials prepares students to use high performance computing and data science to discover, innovate and engineer new synthetic and biologically relevant soft (specifically polymeric) materials with tailored properties and function.

■ Leadership in Social Innovation Certificate

The Certificate in Leadership in Social Innovation prepares students to lead themselves and others in conceptualizing, developing and implementing novel solutions to social problems for the sole purpose of improving individual and community quality of life. It gives students the knowledge, skills and tools to answer the following question: What is the process of social innovation and how does one lead that process with others to conceptualize and actualize ideas that result in measurably improved societal well-being?

There are currently 12 students enrolled in interdisciplinary certificate programs at UD.

While graduate certificates were once heralded as an ideally sized, revenue-generating credential for professionals, reality has shown this statement to be more nuanced. Nationally, enrollments in stand-alone certificate programs are miniscule. The data shows that professionals gravitate toward stackable certificates. Within this



structure, certificates are designed in ways that can be combined together and counted toward a master's degree. While some programs have created stackable certificates in the last year, it is too early to report outcomes.

PCS launched three new noncredit certificates, including two in cybersecurity at the fundamentals and advanced levels and one in instructional design. In addition, PCS led the campuswide effort to award digital badges to students who complete a noncredit certificate or training program. PCS now awards digital badges for all of its noncredit certificates and customized learning programs.

Market Research to Support Graduate Education

As mentioned above, to assist stakeholders in launching new graduate programs, the Graduate College market research program leverages graduate student expertise to analyze program demand, competition and other factors that can help determine a program's overall enrollment success. This service is now offered by the Provost's Office. Over the past year, the Graduate College market research team conducted research studies for the following programs:

- Environmental Economics Ph.D.
- Instructional Design Certificate
- Master's of Clinical Psychology
- Noncredit Business Intelligence Certificate
- Master's in English Education
- 4+1 in Literary Studies
- Noncredit Cybersecurity Certificate
- Nonprofit Leadership
- Master's in Early Childhood Development
- Master's in Plant and Soil Sciences
- Master's in Environmental Science and Policy
- Master's in Technical and Professional Writing
- Summer Camps for High School Students
- Certificate in Healthy Aging

The market research studies resulted in the creation of the following new programs:

- Noncredit Cybersecurity Certificate
- Noncredit Instructional Design Certificate

Delivering Online Programs

Under the UD Online brand and operational function that was managed by the Graduate College/UD PCS until summer of 2023, UD currently offers 25 fully online undergraduate and graduate degree programs and post- and pre-baccalaureate certificates. As mentioned earlier, UD Online is now operating out of the Provost's Office. Twenty-four of these online programs are at the graduate level, and five are highly ranked by U.S. News & World Report in its 2023 U.S. News Best Online Programs. The Graduate College managed UD's relationship with two online program providers (OPMs) that provide marketing, enrollment management and student services for eight of our online master's degrees.

Another important accomplishment this year that aids in the creation of online degree programs is the new online course quality rubric that UD PCS created in partnership with IT Academic Technology Services and the Center for Teaching and Assessment of Learning. The rubric helps faculty continuously update their online courses in line with high-quality online learning standards.

Extending Educational Opportunities to Nontraditional Learners

Serving nontraditional graduate and undergraduate students, working professionals, and lifelong learners is another important role of the Graduate College since nontraditional students represent the largest student segment in the United States and because alternative credentials are gaining acceptance in the workforce. By helping UD better serve nontraditional students, the Graduate College and UD PCS better position the University to weather the current steep demographic decline in the northeastern United States of traditional-aged college students (18-22-year-olds.)

Campuswide Advisement, Registration and Career Counseling Services

UD PCS serves as the nontraditional learners portal to UD classes, degrees and programs, and its Adult Center for Continuing Education Student Services (ACCESS) provided advising and registration services to 2,759 nontraditional graduate and undergraduate students in the academic year 2022-23. Nontraditional students include students who are:

- taking courses in Continuing Education Non-Degree or Graduate College Non-Degree status
- returning to complete degrees after a break in matriculation
- transferring from other schools
- undergraduate academically dismissed
- taking online courses, including matriculated students
- veterans and active military personnel
- Delaware residents interested in the Over-60 Program
- participating in high school dual enrollment
- working professionals in special programs with JPMorgan Chase, state of Delaware educators, Amazon associates in Amazon's Career Choice
- interested in noncredit programs
- In specialized cohorts of international students
- UD employees

Additionally, the ACCESS Center continued to grow UD's Early College Credit (ECC) Program, a dual enrollment program that serves as a pipeline of undergraduate

students to UD. The program offers free tuition in select undergraduate courses to juniors and seniors at participating public and private high schools in all three counties of Delaware. The most recent analysis of the ECC program indicates that 52% of participating seniors matriculated at UD.

Noncredit Programming

UD PCS' noncredit professional development programming served just under 1,500 nontraditional students in the past academic year through 20 certificate programs that teach high-demand workforce skills in business, IT, education, healthcare, law, food and hospitality, occupational safety, and sports and coaching. In addition, UD PCS offered test prep programs (SAT, ACT, GMAT, GRE, LSAT and Praxis), 30-plus self-paced online short courses, and customized learning programs for regional companies and organizations.

UD PCS is currently working on creating noncredit to credit pathways for students interested in pursuing a master's degree or postbaccalaureate certificate at UD.

Lifelong Learning via UD's Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes

Housed within UD PCS, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Delaware helped 2,000-plus members aged 50 and over take classes, socialize with fellow lifelong learners and stay connected with each other via online learning. Over the past three years, UD OLLI Online has become one of the largest online OLLIs in the country, serving members in Delaware and over 20 other states.

Building Partnerships to Meet Needs of External Organizations

The Graduate College and UD PCS partner with regional companies and organizations to ensure that University of Delaware graduate degrees meet workforce development needs. We use a number of programmatic means to achieve this end.

University to Business (U2B) Partnerships

A means to achieve the goal of building partnerships to meet the needs of external organizations is by creating mutually beneficial university-to-business (U2B) relationships via customized learning programs that

develop the competencies of the given partner organizations' employees. For example, the Graduate College and UD PCS have helped the Lerner College of Business and Economics and the College of Engineering provide three postbaccalaureate certificate programs, one in Business Analytics and the second in Cybersecurity, to six cohorts totaling about 175 JPMorgan Chase employees. More than half of the employees who have completed one of the post-baccalaureate certificates enrolled in the master of data science, master of business administration, master of business analytics and information management, or master of cybersecurity programs. In this example, UD met the employee development needs of its private sector partner while developing a pipeline of high-quality graduate student applicants. Additional metrics are listed below.

Two post-baccalaureate certificate program were offered to JPMorgan Chase:

- With Lerner College – Provided Data Analytics Certificate to four cohorts of JPMC employees since June 2019.
 - 109 employees completed as of the writing of this report.
 - 70 (68%) matriculated in a master's degree.
- With College of Engineering – Provided Cybersecurity Certificate to two cohorts of JPMC employees.
 - 27 employees completed cohort 1, and 24 completed cohort 2.
 - 20 (27%) matriculated in the M.S. in cybersecurity.

UD PCS also helped the Lerner College of Business and Economics provide a PocketMBA to one cohort of 29 Incyte Corporation employees. Participants in this program enhance their leadership skills by experiencing the major topics commonly associated with earning an MBA in an abbreviated format with lessons that are customized for the pharmaceutical industry.

Similarly, over the past year, UD PCS has provided customized learning solutions to regional and national organizations, including Beebe Healthcare, United Electric and the state of Delaware. As part of an R1 research university, UD PCS has the expertise to be a thought partner to organizations and offer interdisciplinary training that presents the assets of the University. UD PCS partners with faculty from the Lerner College of Business and Economics, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration, and

the College of Engineering to deliver some of these programs. This allows organizations to have research-based training knowledge to achieve their employee professional development goals and upskilling initiatives.

In addition, UD PCS has developed the Employee Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) as a means to ensure that UD PCS professional development and programming is aligned with the workforce development needs of regional organizations. EDAC serves an ongoing mission for organizations to foster and retain high-caliber talent.

Another partnership program of note is UD's selection by Amazon to participate in its Career Choice program, whereby Amazon associates can start or continue their undergraduate education, as well as receive English language instruction, at UD. The associates can avail themselves of Amazon tuition assistance to pay for UD courses and degrees.

Graduate College Advisory Council

Over the past year, the Graduate College has worked with UD Development and Alumni Relations to lay the groundwork for the creation of a college advisory council comprised of UD graduates who now hold senior positions at regional organizations. This council will help the college better prepare graduate students to become future leaders in industry and provide useful employee development programs for our partners.

Creating On-ramps to Graduate Education for Diverse Populations of Prospective Students

As a research-intensive, technologically advanced university with global impact, UD and the Graduate College are committed to creating an educational community that is intellectually, culturally and socially diverse. As such, the Graduate College recognizes that we must create and promote additional on-ramps to graduate education for diverse student populations.

Affordability

To attract nontraditional students who are not ready to commit to a graduate degree program or do not know what topic they would like to pursue, we maintained the tuition for the graduate noncredit students (GCND) at the base rate of \$1,028. Students can take up to three courses at this base rate before committing to a degree program.



Graduate Student Recruitment Events

The Graduate College coordinated and/or supported various virtual and in-person recruiting events in 2022-23, including:

- Department of Energy Recruitment Fair – seven UD representatives from chemistry and biochemistry, biomedical engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, geography and spatial sciences, earth sciences, CEOE Dean's Office, and Graduate College
- SACNAS (Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science, Inc.) – 12 representatives from chemistry and biochemistry, mathematical sciences, civil and environmental engineering, psychological and brain sciences, physics and astronomy, CHS Dean's Office, CEOE Dean's Office, and Graduate College
- ABRCMS (Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists) – five UD representatives from medical and molecular sciences, interdisciplinary neuroscience, physical therapy, bioinformatics, and the Graduate College
- Graduate School Fair at GEM Annual Meeting GRAD Lab (prospective graduate students from underrepresented minority backgrounds in STEM)

The Graduate College is additionally active in campuswide efforts to strengthen UD's relationship with Delaware State University, which includes supporting the recruitment and transition of DSU students into master's programs at UD. The Graduate College is additionally laying the groundwork for the development of relationships with other Minority-Serving Institutions in the mid-Atlantic region and has started creating relationships with institutions near the 2022 SACNAS conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Prior to that conference, UD representatives visited five institutions in the San Juan area to share information on summer research and graduate opportunities on our campus: University of Puerto Rico Rio Piedras, Universidad Ana G. Mendez (Carolina and Gurabo campuses), Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico and Interamerican University.

In addition to Graduate College-led initiatives, the Graduate College recognizes the importance of encouraging graduate programs to rethink their practices around recruitment and admissions to minimize practices that lead to the exclusion of certain populations. Over the past three and a half years, one way in which the Graduate College has done this is by leading workshops on holistic admissions practices. The first one was held in January 2020 and was open to graduate program leaders. Since then, program- or college-specific workshops have been held on request from unit leaders. To date, the following units have coordinated such workshops through the Graduate College:

- Psychological and Brain Sciences
- Geography and Spatial Sciences
- Political Science and International Relations
- Earth Sciences
- School of Marine Science and Policy
- College of Engineering
- Art Conservation

While not all programs keep the Graduate College updated on changes they have made based on these workshops, feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Some attendees have reached out to the Graduate College with additional questions or concerns that have arisen in conversations with other faculty, or to get feedback on initial drafts of process revisions. Programs that have implemented such practices have shared how they have found the students they've admitted to be more diverse than in the past, and students who have enrolled have been successful. Therefore, they are optimistic that the changes are moving their programs in positive directions and that it will be possible to convince faculty not yet supportive of the changes to be open to piloting some of the practices. Given the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in summer 2023 that no longer allows the use of race in admissions, the Graduate College expects more programs to request these types of presentations and consultations in the coming year.

In summer 2022, the Graduate College additionally launched a new funding opportunity called Breaking Barriers. This award provides two years of recruitment support for the selected proposals and, if the projects each successfully recruit at least two students from the identified population of interest, one year of fellowship for each student. As part of the application, the unit was required to describe changes to its recruitment and retention practices to address the needs of the selected population and biased practices by the unit that are likely negatively impacting applicants from that population. Seven applications were submitted in the inaugural year, and two were selected as awardees. This project additionally was viewed favorably by UD's Development and Alumni Relations team, which identified a donor interested in sponsoring a project the Graduate College did not select. The Graduate College additionally offered recruiting funding to all unselected proposals to still encourage them to begin implementing their proposed recruitment initiatives.



Funding Awards

Graduate programs may nominate a limited number of their prospective graduate students for the Unidel Distinguished Graduate Scholar Award (doctoral only) and the University Graduate Scholar Awards (master's and doctoral). In the 2023 nomination period, 129 prospective students were nominated for these awards; 58 received offers (45%) and 29 accepted those offers (23%). New in the 2023 recruitment cycle, the Graduate College introduced top-up awards for prospective students nominated for the University Graduate Scholar Award and the Unidel Distinguished Graduate Scholar Award. These were designed to offer larger stipends to more prospective students by topping Graduate College funding on top of a program-offered award with a stipend of at least the campus minimum level. The table below summarizes outcomes for some demographic groups the Graduate College tracks throughout the process:

Population	Nominations	Offers	Acceptances
All nominees	129	46	19
CANR	5	4	4
CAS	49	23	11
COE	25	13	3
CEHD	11	4	3
Graduate College	10	3	3
CHS	8	3	1
CEOE	14	6	3
Biden School	7	2	2
Historically Excluded Racial/Ethnic Populations (URM)	51	31	15
Females	92	44	24
STEM Degrees	86	39	14

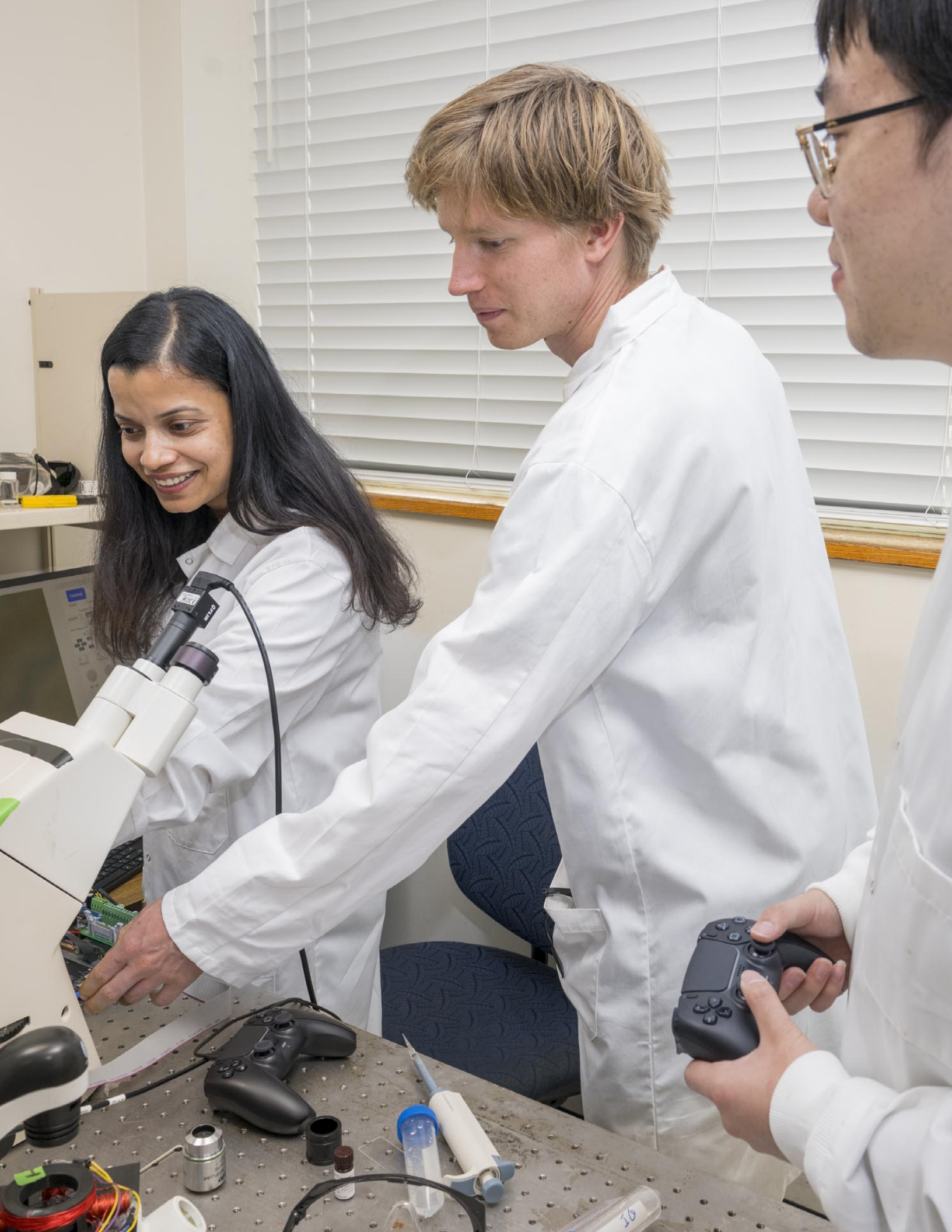
Summer pipeline programs

There is no better way to demonstrate excellence in graduate education to prospective students than to have them spend a summer on campus working with our faculty. Some individual faculty members set up their own summer research programs, and the Graduate College is happy to advertise these opportunities on our [website](#).

For faculty and program directors who cannot stand up their own programs, the Graduate College offers Summer Opportunities for Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors (SOURCE) where we provide programming and support for undergraduate researchers to work with UD faculty over the summer. SOURCE focuses on attracting students from underrepresented groups (e.g., first-generation, historically underrepresented, disabled, low-income, etc). In four years of hosting this summer research program, the Graduate College has hosted 104 students, and almost 10% have later enrolled in UD graduate programs so far. The Graduate College recently was selected by the Unidel Foundation to support funding awards with a goal of recruiting more students who have participated in SOURCE or other UD summer research programs into our graduate programs.

Competitive Counteroffer Program

Enabling graduate programs to better compete for top students, the Graduate College Competitive Counteroffer program allows graduate programs to request, for their top prospective students who have attractive offers from other institutions, a top-up for their stipend. While this was initially offered as a one-time award, in 2023 the Graduate College transitioned the structure to a smaller one-time award and up to three years of stipend supplementation on top of what the graduate program offered the student. Funding for this new structure is shared between the Graduate College and the student's academic college. Over the past year, 11 competitive counteroffers were made, with 10 accepted and the other offer declined because the student accepted an admission offer to a UD program different from the one that requested a counteroffer.



INSPIRING, EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS IN THEIR CAREER JOURNEY

Transformative graduate education is more than research scholarship. As we strive to prepare our graduates and postdoctoral trainees for success in a variety of careers, we envision a future where they have strong career foundations, confidence in themselves and their abilities, and the resilience needed to thrive during their time on campus and beyond. As such, we are committed to providing our graduates and postdoctoral trainees with a broad range of professional development programming and opportunities to cultivate skills and experiences that prepare them to excel. To this end, we have offered several professional development programs and initiatives that are described below.

Alumni Mentoring through Leveraging Engaged Alumni Program (Grad LEAP)

Grad LEAP is an alumni mentoring program designed to link Blue Hen graduate alumni with current graduate students. It is designed to provide holistic support, guidance and advice regarding the challenges of doctoral education and research, professional development strategies, and personal growth. In its second year, more than 80 alumni volunteered to mentor over 200 graduate student mentees. The mentoring pairs logged over 900 conversations with topics ranging from academics to connecting coursework to careers. As a testament to its success, the pioneering and innovative Grad LEAP program was selected for a 50-minute presentation session, *From Labeling a Problem to Implementing Solutions: Using Mentorship to Address Institutional Inequities*, at the 2023 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Annual Conference.

Accelerate to Industry (A2i)

The Graduate College's Accelerate to Industry (A2i) initiative provides career development programming to graduate students and postdoctoral trainees from the STEM, humanities and social sciences disciplines so they are prepared to transition into careers in a variety of sectors. The skills and competencies we provide are informed by conversations with regional industry partners, such as BioCurie, DuPont, Dow, FMC Corporation, IDT Biologika and Incyte Corporation. The college leverages existing A2i resources and expertise from North Carolina State University, the A2i program founding institution and A2i academic partners across the country. For academic year 2022-2023, 80-plus graduate students participated in the A2i Job Search Strategy course, and five graduate students participated in paid internships with our industry partners.

Applied Career Exploration (ACE) Fellowship Program

The Applied Career Exploration (ACE) fellowship program provides graduate students with experiential learning opportunities at various offices and centers across the University of Delaware's campus. The Graduate College works closely with individual fellowship preceptors to craft projects that are suitable for graduate-level fellows. Each project is designed to leverage the fellows' skills and experiences and help them apply their knowledge beyond a typical academic setting. Additionally, the fellows have opportunities to build professional connections, gain awareness of career options and be prepared to succeed in desired career paths. During the summer of 2023, the Graduate College oversaw three fellowships to graduate students working on a user experience research project at the Library, Museums and Press, an equity, diversity and inclusion program assessment project at the Office of Equity and Inclusion, and a project to evaluate a workforce development program at the National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals (NIIMBL).

Spark! Symposium

The Graduate College has continued to host the Spark! Symposium, an interactive series of TED-style talks to celebrate the discoveries made by graduate students and postdocs and to enable the community to learn about the ongoing research at UD. More than 40 participants from throughout the University of Delaware and the local community attend each Spark! Symposium. The fall 2022 symposium, *Living Together, Being Together*, featured graduate student presenters from the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy and Administration, College of Education and Human Development, College of Engineering and College of Health Sciences. The spring 2023 symposium, *Healthy Self Society and Planet*, featured graduate student presenters from the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment, and College of Engineering.



Postdoctoral Leadership Fellows

The Postdoctoral Leadership Fellows program facilitates the sharing of knowledge, resources and support among all UD postdocs. Two fellows from the College of Engineering and College of Health Sciences worked closely with the Graduate College to plan and lead a variety of community-building efforts, including hosting the weeklong National Postdoc Appreciation Week program, creating and maintaining the postdoc Slack channel and email list, and holding a variety of social and professional development events throughout the year.

RECRUITING AND RETAINING THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST STUDENTS

Adhering to our commitment to recruit the best and brightest students as we increase overall graduate enrollment, the Graduate College has taken steps to implement admissions practices that minimize bias, establish more informed recruitment goals and better engage prospective students through Universitywide marketing efforts.

Implementing Admissions Practices that Minimize Bias

The Graduate College strongly encourages graduate programs to adopt holistic approaches to admitting new students for two reasons. First, examination of these practices will increase access to programs by eliminating bias and spurious indicators that are not related to students being successful. Second, the process of determining effective predictors of student success will lead to higher retention and success rates among the students. When adopting holistic approaches, it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel. The Council of Graduate Schools has studied promising practices in holistic admissions in some detail. Its report and recommendations are well-sourced and [free to download](#). The Graduate College is here to help by running workshops for groups interested in adopting holistic practices. To date, the College of Engineering and the College of Earth, Ocean and Environment have taken advantage of these workshops as have individual programs in psychology and brain sciences, political science and international relations, and art conservation.

Engaging Prospective Students through a Robust Universitywide Marketing Strategy

Focusing on increasing graduate student enrollment Universitywide, the Graduate College marketing and communications team continues to promote the Graduate College to prospective students via internally and externally managed efforts. While the Graduate College marketing and communications team is primarily tasked with promoting graduate education in general, along with the seven interdisciplinary graduate degree programs and three interdisciplinary graduate certificate programs housed within the Graduate College, the team also provides as-needed, program-specific consultative support and counsel to the marketing and communications teams housed within UD's other colleges and schools.

Internally Driven Marketing Efforts

Advertising

Since early 2020, the Graduate College marketing and communications team has managed targeted social media advertisements promoting the Graduate College. Incorporating compelling text and imagery, the ads contribute to inquiries and applications from prospective students and to overall brand awareness. What's more, over the past year, the social media ad targeting criteria and imagery have been modified to focus on more diverse audiences, specifically audiences who have expressed interest in or affiliations with HBCUs. Samples of ads are provided below.



Social Media

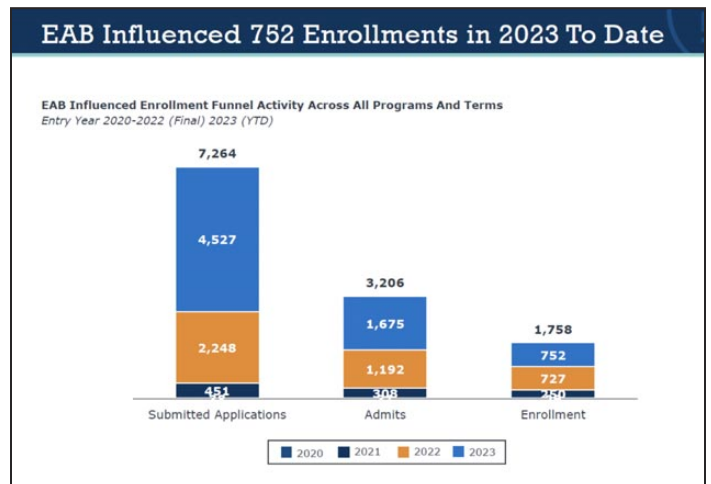
The Graduate College also reaches prospective students, as well as current students, with strategic organic (free) posts coupled with paid advertising on our Graduate College-specific social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter. Used to share news, upcoming events, student accomplishments, information about specific programs and more, Graduate College social media posts and ads reached an audience of several hundred thousand in 2022–2023.

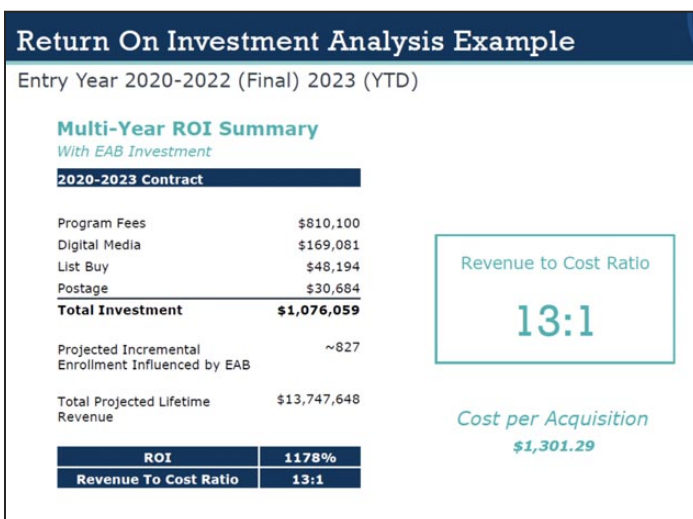
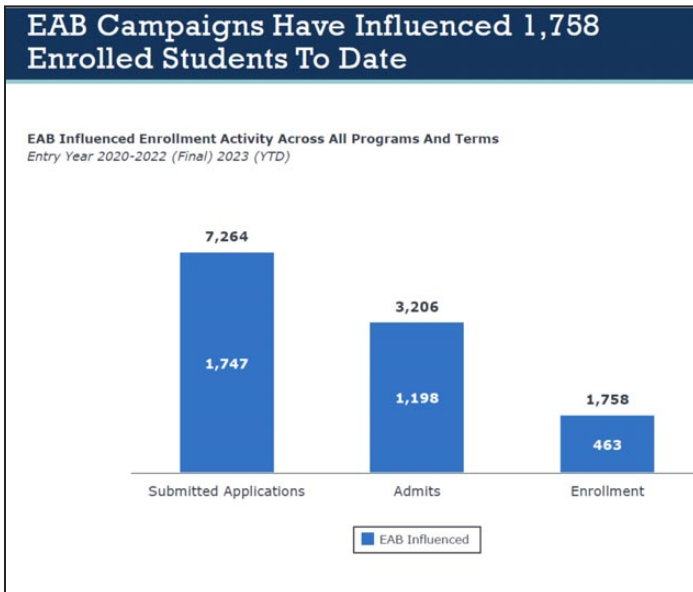
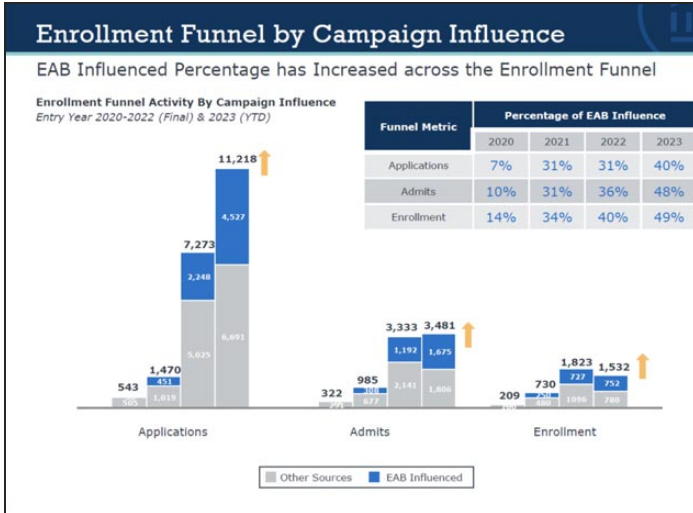
Externally Driven Marketing Efforts

Over the past academic year, the Graduate College extended our reach to prospective students by leveraging our existing contract with EAB to create an additional campaign focused on promoting 40-plus graduate programs related to sustainability and the environment (as a complement to our existing campaign focused on promoting 20 data-science-related programs). The integrated marketing campaigns include social media ads (Facebook, LinkedIn), emails (various versions at the student awareness, consideration and decision stages), USPS mail, online decision indication surveys, content downloads, information request forms, and landing pages that are designed to cater to specific student journeys and move prospective students through the decision funnel toward enrolling at UD.

To share data and track the effectiveness of EAB campaigns, we have established a bidirectional data feed between the Graduate College and EAB that allows the Graduate College admissions team to track campaigns, inquiries, applications and enrollments and enables EAB to build prospective audience targeting criteria based on attributes, response rates and actions of students within our systems.

These efforts, combined with other promotional and recruitment efforts, led to 11,218 applications, 3,481 acceptances/admits and 1,532 matriculations. Of the 1,532 enrollments, EAB influenced 752.



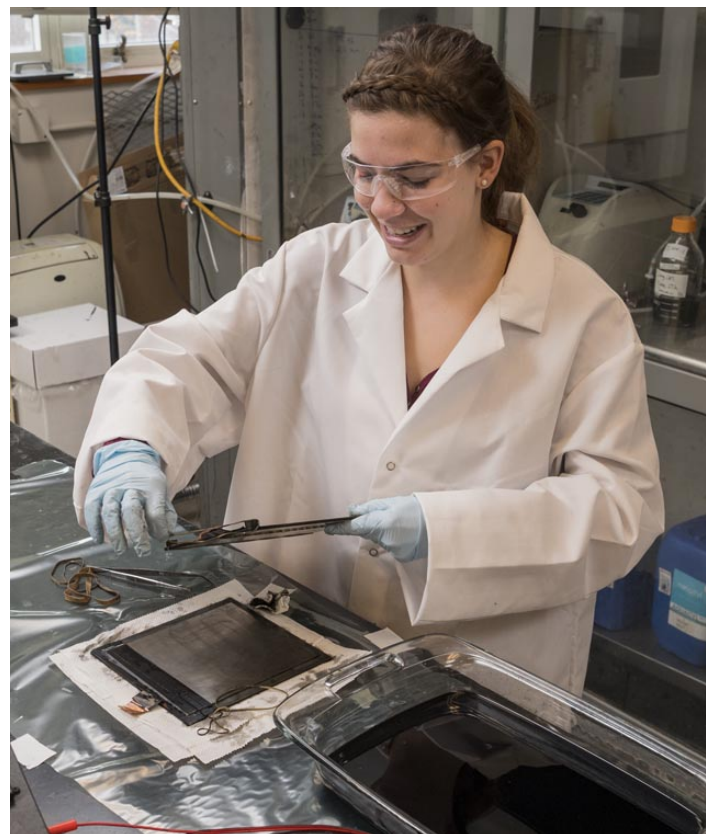


Funding for Graduate Students on Contract

For Ph.D. programs and research-based master's programs, we need to offer competitive funding packages so that we can compete with other institutions based on program quality. There are three key elements in making offers of financial support to graduate students.

1. The stipend rate – The stipend rate needs to be at or above the minimum stipend.
2. The duration of the commitment – A firm commitment to a doctoral student for the duration of their studies, assuming adequate academic progress, is a stronger offer than a year of support.
3. Summer support – Summer support for research experiences or having the opportunity to teach a course as an instructor-of-record adds value to a graduate student's experience and provides additional income.

There are disciplinary norms around these elements, and the Graduate College seeks to support efforts by colleges and departments to recruit the best and brightest through different combinations of these elements. The data shows that we have made steady progress in improving No. 1 and No. 3 over the last year. The second element is currently not measured in our admissions system.



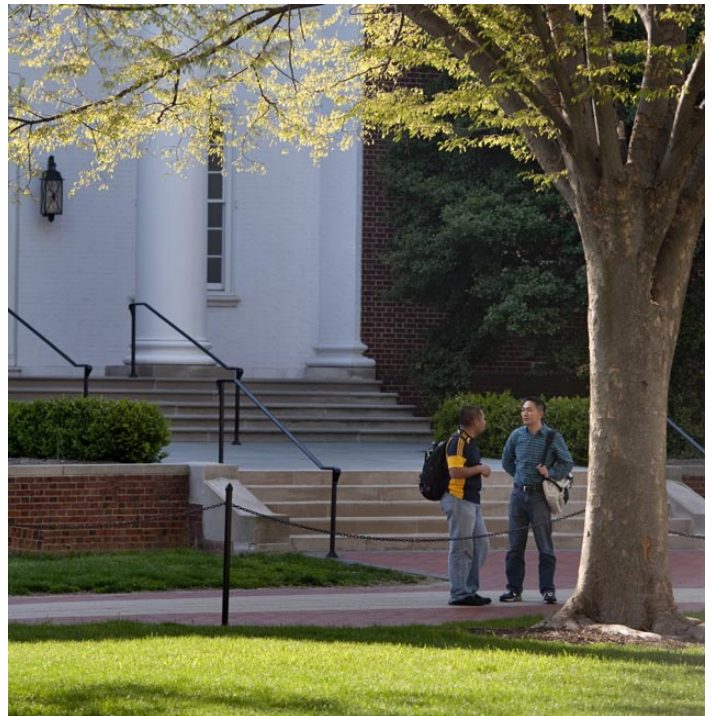


FULFILLING OUR VISION THROUGH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, CONTINUING STUDIES AND LIFELONG LEARNING

The Division of Professional and Continuing Studies is an important part of the Graduate College. Its mission is to serve as the nontraditional students' portal to UD degrees and programs. UD PCS is made up of four programmatic areas that provide learning opportunities to students across their lifetime from high school through retirement:

1. Continuing education to start or finish a UD degree or program
2. UD Online to earn a credential while working or remotely
3. Noncredit professional development programs to upskill and reskill for career advancement
4. Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Wilmington and in Kent and Sussex counties to learn for the fun of it.

As described above, UD PCS programs complement Graduate College programs that serve full-time, traditionally aged graduate students. UD PCS programs support undergraduate and high school students, but many of these students eventually may pursue graduate education, and when they do, Graduate College programming will be there for them. In addition, UD PCS is actively working to create on-ramps from its credit and noncredit programming into appropriate UD graduate degrees. For example, noncredit students could receive undergraduate or graduate credit for their UD PCS certificate program. One way to achieve this is through a UD Credit for Prior Learning policy, which UD PCS is helping draft in the coming academic year.



Acknowledgements

The Graduate College and graduate education at UD had an excellent year. Much of that success happened through the intense and often unseen efforts of the many Graduate College team members, including Cindy Dolan, Sherrie Fauvelle, Tiffany Harrison, George Irvine, Adam Kamras, Mary Martin, LaRuth McAfee, Tim Nelson, Cindy Rechsteiner, Suprawee Tepsuporn, Eric Tommer, Nora Zelluk and many others on the Graduate College/Professional Continuing Studies teams as well as Emily Davis, Joe Fox, Paul Laux, Ryan Zurkowski and all those who answered the call to serve on the GCC.



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