UW Oshkosh Graduate Education
Enrollment Projection Plans
February 7, 2013

Where are we?
Where could we go?
How will we get there?

Worldwide education is under the microscope\(^1\). Costs are up, enrollments are down, and stakeholders are calling for relevance while being focused on employment and employability. According to the Be Bold2 report, “mobility across industry and roles will be a new normal, and will require that we look at workforce development as an ongoing and critical component of Wisconsin’s talent strategy.” Students and learning have changed too with technology as a driving factor. No longer do we serve primarily a campus-based student population. No longer is lecture a primary means for content delivery. No longer are we the only or primary provider of learning opportunities in the region. In fact, a majority of people now believe online degrees provide a similar quality of education to a traditional degree although they prefer hybrid approaches to fully online courses\(^2\). Cost is identified as a major barrier\(^3\). As graduate programs we must hear, understand and be responsive to these external factors while staying true to our vision which is to “be recognized as the premier provider of graduate education north of Madison.”

Our Strategic Plan developed in 2010 was forward thinking and considered many of these important changes. Specifically, we identified five opportunities to strengthen graduate education on our campus and identified Some Keys to Success to help guide us toward achieving our vision (See Appendix A). We will use these in developing individual program Enrollment Management Plans as well as an overall Graduate Studies Office Enrollment Management Plan. In these plans we will identify enrollment targets and strategies for meeting them including identification of resources needed to achieve our goals. UW Oshkosh’s graduate programs are ready for this challenge – we are ready to realize our vision.

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\(^1\) For example, read Rethinking Education: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-Economic Outcomes (press release, full report) from the European Commission and Be Bold2: Growing Wisconsin’s Talent Pool.

\(^2\) Americans believe higher education must innovate.

http://www.northeastern.edu/news/2012/11/innovation-summit/

\(^3\) ibid
Plan Outline and Content
Program Name
Degree/Certificate Name(s)
Program Coordinator Name
Date

I. Background Information

Brief current program description
(approximately 1 page, tell the data sources used, approximate numbers and descriptions are acceptable)
• Primary goal(s) of program?
• What type of graduate are you seeking to produce? What do they do after graduation? (tell job titles, career paths, etc.)
• How do students apply program learning during their program? (internships, class projects situated in the workplace, program lab work, etc.)
• Number of credits in program? Number of elective credits? Can electives be taken outside the department?
• When are courses primarily offered? (time of day/night, weekends, summers, non-14 week semesters)
• Where are courses offered? (on campus, off-campus, where off campus?)
• How are courses primarily offered? (f2f, blended, online)
• How many courses are offered each semester? How many students tend to be in each course section?
• How many tenured/tenure track faculty regularly teach in your program? How many graduate courses do they typically teach each semester? How many faculty are in your department?
• Are your programs revenue generating?

Brief current student profile
• Number of active students in program.
• How many new students entered your program in the past year?
• How did your students find your program?
• Describe your students (age ranges, part/full time students, employed and doing what, etc)
• How long does it take to graduate from your program?

Take a deep breath, select which option you best fit into:
☐ This isn’t too bad. I can answer most of these questions off the top of my head or by using data which is easy to locate. I’m good to go! Keep going....
☐ Whoa, I don’t know the answers to these questions, I need help!! Got any STEP students available to work with me on this???? Don’t panic, contact Grad Studies immediately, we are eager to help you!

Retention, Graduation and Employment
• Do the students who enter your program graduate? What are your graduation rates?
• Upon graduation, what percentage of your graduates secure employment related to their degree? For those who were already employed, what percentage get promotions or other types of advancement/opportunities related to their degree? (External entities are wanting us to post this information on our websites. Do you track your alumni well enough to be able to do this?)
• Do you contact students who are not making adequate progress toward graduation? How? When? Do you encourage them to resume their program? Do they resume their program?
• How do you accommodate students who have stepped out of your program for a ‘bit of time’ and then want to return? How do you do this when the bit of time involves major program and faculty changes?

Enrollment Trends and Patterns
• What have your enrollments been over the past 4 years?
• Discuss trends and patterns you see and reasons for them.
• Are you at enrollment capacity? Are you right sized? Discuss.
• What professionals (in the region?) use content like you teach or could teach but are not currently teaching in your program?
• Are there new audiences you could serve?

Recruitment
• List your recruiting efforts Fall 2011- Summer 2013. If possible, indicate how well each strategy is working. Use a chart or spreadsheet if you wish.
  o Email
  o Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, etc.)
  o Electronic advertising (Google, Yahoo, etc)
  o Paper fliers, mailings, advertisements
  o Conference events
  o Undergraduate events including talking to majors in your dept/college, interacting with McNair Scholars, etc
  o Bulletin boards on campus
  o Writing grants to provide student assistantships
  o Etc
• How frequently do potential students contact you for program information? How do they contact you? How quickly do you respond?
• Are there certain times of year where you are contacted more than other times?
• What additional recruitment efforts would you do if you could? What would it take to make them a reality?

Publicity
• How often is your program and/or your faculty, students, alumni highlighted in the media? What media sources?
• What awards are your program and/or faculty, students, alumni winning? How are they highlighted in the media? On your website?

Website
• Who maintains your website?
• When was it last updated?
• Does anyone else need to approve your edits before they go live? If so, who? How long does the review typically take?
• When was the last time you reviewed your website for clarity, visual appeal, and accuracy of content? Did you have student participation in this review?
• Does your website contain the following information? How many clicks does it take to access the information?
  o Program overview
  o Program requirements (courses, credits, when courses are offered)
  o Application instructions, requirements, link to Common App
  o Links to financial aid information
  o Program navigation checklist
  o Who to contact for more information (photo, phone number, email)
  o Alumni placement information and successes
• When potential students contact you, what are common types of questions they ask? Is this information on your website?
• When current students contact you with program questions, what types of questions do they ask? Is this information on your website?
• Do you regularly analyze your webpage analytics? Have you engaged in key word optimization?
• Is your website optimized for mobile devices?

Social Media
• Does your program have a Facebook page? Who maintains it? How often are postings made? How many people did you reach via your page last week?
• Does your program have a Twitter account? Who maintains it? How often do you tweet? How many followers do you have?
• Does your program have a LinkedIn account? Who maintains it? How often are posts made? How many connections do you have?
• What other social media connections do you have? Describe the activity levels.
**Barriers to Entry**
- What are your program entrance requirements?
- Do your program entrance requirements predict successful program completers or are they based on tradition?
- How many students start applications but don’t finish? Why?
- How many students are denied program admission? What percentage of applicants does this represent?
- Do your entry requirements cause potentially successful students not to apply?

**Future Potential**
- How is your program innovative? How is it future faced?
- When was the last time you changed course names and program requirements?
- What new areas are emerging in your discipline? What new areas have emerged that are interdisciplinary? Does anyone on campus have expertise in these areas? Do colleagues on other UW System campuses exist with this expertise and could you collaborate with them (cooperative programs)? Do are there others with whom you might collaborate?
- What audiences exist that you could serve but currently are not serving?
- Are there certificates you could offer that would: Serve people who already have masters degrees? Serve people who don’t want an entire degree? Address new/emerging areas in your discipline? Address workplace needs? Serve as a stepping stone into your degree program?
- Are there non-degree options you could offer? What might they be?
- What would it take to entice your program to expand in these directions?

**Alumni**
- How often do you interact with your alumni?
- How do you interact with alumni? (ie they recruit for you, they provide internships, they serve on your advisory board, you serve on their advisory boards, professional networking, program feedback, gift giving, scholarship establishment, etc.)

**II. Goals and Next Steps**
Identify where to go from here.
1. Data I need to obtain
2. Questions raised as I worked through the background portion of this report
3. Set then tell your marketing and recruitment goals
4. Short, medium and long term actions the program can take (tell action, who is responsible, and time frame)
5. Resources needed
Appendix A
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Graduate Education Strategic Plan
Opportunities and Some Keys for Success
Approved by Graduate Council May 6, 2010

INCREASE VISIBILITY OF GRADUATE EDUCATION ON CAMPUS
Enhance the presence of and the commitment to graduate education on campus.
Some Keys to Success:
• Create esprit de campus for graduate students by holding graduate-focused events & activities
• Increase opportunities for graduate education funding and scholarships
• Improve visibility and access to graduate education via signage, web-pages and print media
• Create an autonomous administrative structure, such as a Graduate School
• Promote networking opportunities for graduate students
• Identify best practices used by other campuses for organization, promotion and delivery
• Allocate adequate resources (budget, space & personnel) to achieve Graduate Education mission

COMMUNICATE OUR SCHOLARLY, LEADERSHIP AND RESEARCH EXPERTISE
Promote our expertise and excellence and better define our position and value to our region and disciplines.
Some Keys to Success:
• Promote current high-interest, high-impact projects to promote the caliber of graduate work on our campus
• Conduct primary research for the region
• Partner with local organizations and constituents to engage in applied research
• Identify best practices used by other campuses for engaging in and making available to the region campus graduate research/scholarly activities and leadership

ENHANCE EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS
Foster a sense of commitment to graduate education among external constituents (alumni, agencies, organizations, communities).
Some Keys to Success:
• Establish and manage networking opportunities that engage graduate alumni in a variety of contexts and formats, including advisory boards, guest lecturers and committees.
• Encourage (compensate/provide incentives to) graduate faculty and staff to participate in community, civic and service organizations
• Track/manage the wide variety of contacts with external organizations and constituents
• Identify best practices used by other campuses for promoting external relationships

GO FORTH
Better serve our constituents by expanding the delivery of graduate education to the greater northern regions of the state and beyond.
Some Keys to Success:
• Establish demand for specific programs in specific locations and formats.
• Promote specific programs
• Establish a northern “campus” and/or Graduate Education Center
• Improve faculty skill in alternative educational delivery methods
• Engage in continuous assessment and quality improvement
• Improve infrastructure to meet demand

STRENGTHEN GRADUATE ENROLLMENT
Attract and matriculate qualified students to fulfill the graduate education mission. A critical mass of graduate students is needed for programs to remain viable. We need a mix of part-time students with full-time students. We need students from our region as well as from throughout the United States and the world. We need persons of color and both men and women. We need some students who are with us physically and some who are with us virtually.

Each existing program will need to maximize its opportunities in its own way: some may need to grow in enrollments; others may need fewer students; and still others will need the same enrollment but a different mix of students (e.g., better quality, more full-time, more international). It also means that we may need to add new programs that meet the needs of northeastern and north central Wisconsin and potentially beyond.…

We expect that UW System will be asking each campus to set a goal for the number of graduate degrees conferred. In anticipation of that request, we are proposing a goal for graduate enrollment, which can lead to increased degrees conferred. By 2015, our goal is for graduate headcount enrollment to be between 14% and 17% of the total student body. This would mean graduate enrollment would increase (assuming same total student body remains at 13,300) to between 1862 and 2261 graduate students. This is consistent with our historical levels.

Some Keys to Success:
• Develop and retain well qualified faculty
• Establish and maintain relationships with alumni
• Dedicate on-going resources to enrollment, recruitment and outreach of well qualified students
• Identify and develop resources for graduate financial aid, graduate student advising and graduate student support services