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| H. Dele Davies, MD, MSc, MHCM  VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS  Dean for graduate studies |
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**Graduate Studies Report 2012-2013**

**– One Year Later**



I am pleased to present this summary of our accomplishments within the University of Nebraska Medical Center Graduate Studies during my first year at UNMC. Shortly after my arrival, I led the UNMC Graduate Council through a series of strategic planning exercises to ensure alignment of our programs with changing national priorities and trends. We especially wanted to ensure that our graduates are getting all the opportunities needed to succeed during their time with us at UNMC, and will continue to succeed after they leave UNMC, as they take on post-doctoral and their initial academic and other appointments. We have made great progress in accomplishing several of these goals. Here are some highlights

1. The internal UNMC fellowships awarded to support graduate students have been revamped to encourage more external NIH T (institutional training grants) and F (individual graduate and post-graduate training grants) type applications by reducing the number of years of the internal awards to two years from three. The money saved from the reduced year is now being used to incentivize students and faculty to apply for the external federal grants. There are several reasons why we made these changes:
2. There had been a dramatic increase in demand for UNMC Graduate Fellowship Awards. As a result, there was pressure on the amount of money available for distribution under the previous model of three year funding.
3. Based on proposed federal rules, which could see a change in how federal monies are provided for training of graduate students, (less money available on RO1 or other program grants and more available only via training grants) UNMC has an institutional vested interest to increase the number of F, T and K awards.
4. It is in the best interest of our graduate students career development at UNMC that they have opportunities to receive fellowship awards
5. Having fellowship or institutional awards is also of value to improving the growing reputation of our UNMC faculty.
6. In keeping with the desire to encourage more external NIH type applications, we have changed our application form to a slightly modified version of the NIH F31 form format for our internal UNMC graduate studies fellowships. This will make it much easier for promising internal applications to be submitted for NIH awards.
7. We are in the process of developing and implementing a new cross campus graduate studies database - **GPSIS (Graduate and Postgraduate Student Information Systems)** to track the progress and outcomes of all our graduate trainees and post-doctoral fellows as they apply to UNMC, while they are with us, and long after they have left UNMC. Development of this database has involved consultation with a broad cross section of graduate faculty and students and has involved several hundreds of hours of development time by members of the UNMC IT division (led by Lee Trant) along with faculty leadership by Dr. Pamela Carmines, Chair of the Physiology Training Program, Dr. Laura Bilek, Chair of the MSIA program and Terri Vadovski, Director of the Graduate Studies Program. There is strong national interest in this database, as every graduate program in the nation is seeking to improve its graduate student analytics. The program will be rolled out in phases, and the initial beta version of the database was unveiled on May 3rd, and we anticipate initial use by fall of 2013.
8. We have introduced a twice a year seminar series for graduate students and mentors interested in writing NIH F applications. In addition, an external advisor (retired NIH Senior Research Associate), Dr. Gary Madonna was brought in to simulate a **mock NIH T-type training grant review session** attended by graduate faculty, some graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. This was very well received and will be repeated periodically in the future.
9. We have established a **review panel** of experienced faculty members led by Dr. Jim Turpen to review applications of students and faculty who are submitting F and T applications respectively to the NIH to give constructive feedback prior to the submission.
10. Pre-award **boilerplate information** has been created for some sections of the T grants (Responsible conduct of research, institutional support) to allow ease of submission.
11. The graduate studies office is compiling a list of **external funding opportunities** both within and outside the NIH to ensure all of our graduate students have access to these awards.
12. Based on a clearly identified need for greater involvement of our UNMC alumni in our graduate programs, we have established for the very first time a **Graduate Studies Alumni Chapter** at UNMC.
13. We have been working to develop close relationships with other universities whose undergraduate students may serve as pipeline schools for students to our graduate programs. In particular, we have been exploring opportunities with the University of Nebraska in Lincoln through the office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and with Hope College in Michigan, which is the second ranked primarily undergraduate school in the US for research and the University of Nebraska in Omaha.
14. Based on local and national demand by graduates and employees to expand the training experiences of our graduate students, we have introduced a **course on entrepreneurship** in conjunction with UNeMed, and are working on introducing other courses and opportunities.
15. In response to a Request for Applications, a letter of intent has been submitted to the NIH for a training grant to support alternative training experiences for our graduate students and postdoctoral fellows involving community partners (Drs. Karen Gould and Dan Monaghan, co-PIs). The full grant proposal will be submitted by May 10, 2013.
16. We have introduced a new UNMC **Graduate Studies Facebook page.**
17. We have developed a brand new **Graduate Student Handbook** with substantial input from the students, which is now online, and will be continually improved.
18. I have established a taskforce led by Dr. Vimla Band to assess examine whether the current **Graduate Training Programs structures** are appropriate for UNMC and to make recommendations on the best option moving forward.

**Other Graduate Studies Related Activities.**

In addition to the accomplishments above in relation to our strategic planning processes, several new graduate courses and a new graduate program were introduced.

* Notably, a new Bioinformatics Graduate Training Program was shepherded for approval by the UNMC Board of Regents and the Coordination Commission on Higher Education in conjunction with the University of Nebraska, Omaha and is poised to enroll its first cohort of graduate students this fall.
* Our partnership with several academic institutions in China through our Asia Pacific Rim Development Program (APRDP) continues to thrive with 13 new students admitted to our graduate programs during 2012 and several more visiting for shorter periods during the year. In addition, several UNMC faculty, students and administrators visited China during the same period.
* Dr. Jialin Zheng, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, helped plan a very successful and first ever Association of Academic Health Centers annual convention held outside of the US in China in October of 2012. He also helped coordinate a Nebraska trade mission led by Governor Dave Heinemann.
* The annual joint international educational and research symposia involving Chinese, Australian, Japanese and UNMC students and faculty was held in Omaha.
* Several members of our Graduate Council participated in the UN wide Graduate School Workshop
* Dr. Davies presented a workshop at the Council of Graduate Schools meeting in December of 2012 titled “Recent research on the biomedical workforce: implications for designing graduate programs.”

**Special Thanks**

I would like to indicate what a delight it has been working with members of the UNMC Graduate Council (listed below). Many members have played major roles in enabling the successful implementation of our strategic vision (see committee memberships below). I also welcome the strong support of the Dean’s Leadership teams of the Colleges of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, Pharmacy and School of Allied Health, as well as the Faculty Senate and Student Senate as we unveiled our strategic vision to each of these groups.

Special thanks to my Associate Deans, Jim Turpen (Executive Associate Dean for Graduate Studies), Iqbal Ahmed (Associate Dean for Post-Doctoral Studies), Dr. Jialin Zheng (Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, APRDP) and to Ms. Terri Vadovski (Director of Graduate Studies) and her staff - Linda Bottoms and Dan Teet for their stellar work during the year. I am also grateful to my predecessor, Dr. David Crouse for his gracious support and transfer of information during my transition period at UNMC. Finally, we have had extra-ordinary support from Chancellor Maurer and his staff.

Based on the quality and enthusiasm of our faculty, staff and students, I am confident that the UNMC Graduate Programs have a very bright future of continued excellence and growth.

Sincerely,

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H. Dele Davies, MD, MS, MHCM

Listed below are the UNMC Graduate Program Committee Chairs and members and the members of the various strategic planning committees.

**UNMC Graduate Program Committee Chairs and Members, 2012-2013**

James Turpen (Chair)

Steve Caplan, Biochemistry

Glen Haynatzki, Biostatistics

Joyce Solheim, Cancer Research

Pam Carmines, Cellular and Integrative Physiology (CIP)

Lorena Baccaglini, Epidemiology

Todd Wyatt, Environmental, Agricultural and Occupational Health

Karen Gould, Genetics, Cell Biology and Anatomy (GCBA)

Mohammad Siahpush, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Alice Shumaker, Masters in Public Health

Shelly Smith, MD/PhD

Laura Bilek, Medical Sciences Interdepartmental Area (MSIA Program)

Ann Berger, Nursing

Rakesh Singh, Pathology and Microbiology

Yazen Alnouti, Pharmaceutical Sciences

Keshore Bidasee, Pharmacology and Experimental Neuroscience (PEN)

Dan Monaghan, Biomedical Research Training Program (BRTP)

Joshi Shantaram, Executive Graduate Council Representative

Amanda LaKamp, Graduate Students Association (GSA) President

Jialin Zheng, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies / APRDP

Iqbal Ahmad, Associate Dean for Post-Graduate Studies

Terri Vadovski, Director, Graduate Studies Program

**Graduate Studies Strategic Planning Committees**

**1) Goal: Increase US Applicant Pools**

Responsible Leader: Steve Caplan (Biochem)

Team Members: Dan Monaghan (BRTP)

Turpen Jim (Graduate Studies)

Alice Shumaker (Public Health)

Keshore Bidasee (PEN)

**2) Goal: Ensure UNMC Is Collecting Appropriate Metrics For Training Grants.**

Responsible Leader: Pam Carmines (CIP)

Team Members: Laura Bilek (MSIA)

Dele Davies (Graduate Studies)

Ann Berger (Nursing)

Terri Vadovski (Graduate Studies)

Lee Trent (IT)

**3) Goal: Improve Alumni And External Relations**

Responsible Leader: Alice Schumaker (CPH)

Team Members: Dele Davies (Graduate Studies)

Mary Pat Leuschen, (Allied Health)

Pam Carmines, (CIP)

Roxanna Jokela, (Alumni Affairs)

Mohammad Siahpush, (Public Health)

James Stimpson, (Public Health)

Wayne Stuberg (Allied Health)

**4) Goal: Increase Faculty Mentorship Pool**

Responsible Leader: Karen Gould (GCBA)

Team Members: Lorena Baccaglini (EPI),

Rick MacDonald (BIOC),

Paul Fey (PAMM),

Jenny Black (CRGP)

1. **Goal: Develop And Enhance Training Experiences**

Responsible Leader: Laura Bilek (MSIA)

Team Members: Amanda LaKamp (GSA)

**6) Goal: Improve Office Of Graduate Studies Support**

Responsible Leaders: Dan Monaghan (BRTP)

Joyce Solheim (Cancer Research)