UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

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STRATEGIC PLAN 2025
Prepared October 2018
Graduate Faculty Approved December 4, 2018

The **mission** of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is to define and support excellence in graduate education and the research and scholarly activities associated with it.

The **objective** of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies is to actively contribute to the creation of new, innovative graduate programs, attract and retain greater numbers of highly qualified students and improve graduate education experiences for all students and faculty.

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PREAMBLE

INTERCONNECTIVITY

This document identifies strategic themes that will guide the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' planning and priorities for the next seven years. Within each theme, the document establishes strategic objectives and goals that will contribute to the University Plan 2025 by elevating the profile, significance and value of graduate education at the University of Saskatchewan. While developing this strategic plan, we benefited from a firm grounding in a confidence of knowing who we are and priorities for our future.

Looking forward to 2025, the CGPS was guided by the University of Saskatchewan's four principles of sustainability, diversity, connectivity and creativity, and we have challenged ourselves to think beyond the status quo.

Our strategy integrates 'quiet but confident leadership' throughout all of the strategic pillars. This leadership style is paradoxical. We acknowledge that current strengths of the CGPS are modesty and restraint coupled with a tenacity to solve particularly difficult problems when it comes to graduate students, graduate programs and graduate courses.

The CGPS plan speaks to the interconnectivity of the campus and its extended community; it speaks to the connections we share and the value and potential of future connections and partnerships. The network of graduate and postdoctoral studies at the University of Saskatchewan is critically woven throughout the fabric of our community.

Strategic Pillar 1: BOUNDLESS COLLABORATION

ACADEMIC GREATNESS: GROWTH, SERVICE & FLEXIBILITY

Amidst world-class faculty and state-of-the-art facilities, the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) will remain the destination of choice for future generations of graduate students. Graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan have the opportunity to learn, discover and innovate across a broad range of disciplines, and these opportunities continue to expand and evolve. Success of graduate studies depends heavily on the timely availability of accurate information in support of student recruitment, student program management and academic program renewal, to name just a few. Growth in student numbers, the number of graduate programs and the diversity of graduate programs will result from commitments to increased flexibility and efficiencies. Through creative and innovative planning and partnerships, the CGPS will elevate the graduate experience.

COMMIT TO ROBUST STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS
The CGPS will continue to collaborate with campus partners to incorporate student information systems that help the college facilitate flexibility and innovation in program maintenance **e.g.** allows students to register in multiple colleges simultaneously. The incorporation of information technology to more efficiently distribute funding to students and support students registered through international agreements are examples of various priorities.

SUPPORT STRATEGIC ENROLMENT MANAGEMENT & RECRUITMENT
The CGPS will re-invest its recruitment resources into a centralized model to maximize its impact. Student recruitment is a multi-faceted venture, involving various groups of prospective students, funding agencies and stakeholders on and off campus. Strategies will be responsive to the student recruitment needs of college/school partners, and these will take into account, among other details, capacity and opportunities for growth, student retention, time in program and targeted scholarship funds. With a commitment to growth, recruitment of increasing numbers of highly qualified students will be a top priority.

COMMIT TO SYSTEMS, POLICIES AND PROCESSES

The CGPS will complete a comprehensive review of its policies to ensure its processes are compliant, flexible and allow adaptability in cases where it is warranted. Internal and unit administrative load will be reviewed to identify creative and innovative approaches that will improve the experience of CGPS stakeholders.

CREATE CGPS SERVICE STANDARDS

The CGPS serves and supports **approximately** 65 graduate program administrators, **56** departments across **14** colleges, and more than **4000** students in a variety of programs. The CGPS will lead development and deployment of service standards that manage the expectations of all of these stakeholders as well as speak to the quality of our service.

OUTCOMES

Successful execution of this pillar will result in student information systems that simplify processes and accommodate flexibility and innovation. Process efficiencies will translate into greater satisfaction for all stakeholders. Our graduate student population will have grown, driven by continued efforts to attract international students coupled with increased engagement with prospective UofS domestic and Indigenous graduate students.

Strategic Pillar 2: COURAGEOUS CURIOSITY

KNOWLEDGE CREATION: INNOVATION & IMPACT

Preparing graduates for nontraditional careers is a priority for the CGPS today. Consider this: 7.7 million jobs related to climate and energy will be available by 2020 (Renewables 2015 Global Status Report), 60% of CEOs polled cited creativity as the most important leadership quality (IBM Global CEO Study), 50 billion people, devices and things will be connected to the internet by 2020 (Cisco), the demand for highly-skilled workers will hit 123 million by 2020, but there will only be 50 million qualified people to fill these jobs (AT&T). And what about the jobs that haven't yet been created? While the future is unclear, it is important that we plan for tomorrow. We must endeavor to support the career aspirations of future students and ensure that graduates have the skills to compete and lead in these wide-ranging career options.

MOTIVATE AND SUPPORT PROGRAM INNOVATION
The CGPS commits to prepare students for non-traditional career paths by incorporating soft skills into new and innovative programs. Learning outcomes of current and new programs will include non-traditional job preparedness and contribute to reconciliation by introducing non-standard course curriculum opportunities.

EXPAND INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
A comprehensive approach to **incoming** students will include not only recruitment, but also redefined support during admissions through to program completion. Understanding the importance of diversity and research intensity, the CGPS is evaluating how to effectively offer that same support to visiting faculty and researchers. Opportunities for **outbound** students will be supported by streamlined processes for students participating in *cotutelle* agreements, study abroad opportunities and faculty ambassadorship programs.

WORK TOWARD MULTI-YEAR PLANNING

Completion of a graduate degree takes time and effort, and students must integrate various commitments during the completion of graduate studies. The university could facilitate student planning by developing multi-year schedules of course availability, tuition rates and funding commitments. During this planning cycle, the CGPS will work with academic units to develop multi-year timetables for graduate course delivery and aspire to create multi-year funding packages for students.

ENSURE PROGRAM QUALITY

Graduate program review (GPR) is critical to understanding program strengths and identifying opportunities for growth and enhancements (*Framework for Assessment 2008*). Our graduate programs will consistently meet or exceed the quality standards demonstrated in similar programs at medical-doctoral and research-intensive universities across Canada and around the world. The CGPS commits to set expectations, work with units to respond to recommendations from program reviews and commit to program excellence.

SUPPORT OF POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Development of new policies and processes dedicated to recruitment and financial support for postdoctoral fellows (PDFs) will continue. Each postdoctoral fellow is in a transitional period, having completed a doctoral program and preparing for subsequent career options. Those careers are increasingly varied and nontraditional. Postdoctoral fellows will benefit from opportunities to learn and develop skills as part of an individual development plan (IDP) and training to support transition to careers. In collaboration with the Society of Postdoctoral Scholars and the Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Administrators, the CGPS will continue to seek opportunities to enhance the support structures for the community of postdoctoral scholars.

OUTCOMES

Successful execution of this pillar will result in innovative programming that will prepare graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to thrive in the "new" future job market. The evolution and advancement of academic programs will be informed by program reviews, ensuring that program learning outcomes are consistent with the expectations of future students and employers. Academic programs will feature innovative options for delivery and engagement, and programs will have taken obvious steps to include Indigenous content and support Indigenous learners within programs.

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Strategic Pillar 3: INSPIRED COMMUNITIES

GOVERNANCE REJUVENATION: CULTURE & COMMUNITY

Our graduate community consists of more than 1700 faculty members, more than 4000 current graduate students and thousands more graduates. All of these are united by our high-quality programs grounded within the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS), and the success of every program depends on strong collaboration with colleges and schools. We have reason to be proud of our history, and we will take steps to ensure that our governance structures encourage innovation and enhanced student support into the future. Teamwork will allow us to elevate our brand and reputation, increasing the value of a degree from the University of Saskatchewan. The actions and accomplishments of our graduates speak loudest about the quality of our programs, and as an institution, we will collectively celebrate and applaud those accomplishments.

REVISE THE CGPS GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Every successful team is built upon a firm foundation of trust and role clarity. Graduate programming at the University of Saskatchewan requires teamwork. Partnerships with all colleges and schools will be strengthened by an updated governance model, featuring crisp lines of authority. Other colleges and schools will be empowered to actively participate in the management of graduate programs, graduate courses and graduate student experiences. A new set of college bylaws will feature a revised governance structure designed with a commitment to role clarity and streamlined processes.

EMPOWER COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS BY DEVELOPING ROLE CLARITY

How do we work together to provide students with better experiences? How can colleges and schools become more involved in setting the direction of our graduate programs? The CGPS commits to demystifying processes and clarifying the roles of administrative offices within colleges and schools. Practices within colleges and schools may vary, but the commitment to students and postdoctoral fellows will pervade. Colleges and schools will be empowered to more actively manage graduate programs as part of an academic program continuum.

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TELL THE COLLEGE STORY

Cultivating meaningful relationships with all CGPS stakeholders is at the heart of the CGPS identity, and refining the mechanisms and processes for communicating with our stakeholders and partners is a priority. We will develop a CGPS communication plan that affirms who we are, identifies the supports we provide and allows us to congratulate our stakeholders and help to celebrate their successes.

CULTIVATE LASTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALUMNI

The experiences of our alumni while they were students and during their working careers can inform the evolution of our academic programs. Alumni will be invited to share their experiences in an effort to help our programs remain relevant and strong. Alumni will also be instrumental in helping us to anticipate changes, opportunities and challenges within our global environment, ensuring that our programs and institution are responsive to the expectations of the next generation of scholars.

OUTCOMES

Success will highlight a new set of approved college bylaws, featuring a revised governance structure that will streamline operations of college committees. Administrative offices within other colleges and schools will be more actively engaged in the management of graduate programs, and students will be confident that they can count on both the resource college and the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for support during their graduate program. Current and future students will benefit from the increased involvement by alumni in program reviews and on advisory boards, as examples.

COLLEGE OF GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES
SUPPORT UNIT FRAMEWORK

DISCOVERY

REGIONAL   **PROVINCIAL**

INDIGENIZATION

COURAGEOUS CURIOSITY

Empower a daring culture of innovation with the courage to confront humanity's greatest challenges and opportunities.

1 **Motivate and Support Program Innovation**
   in new single-unit and interdisciplinary programs, prepare graduates for alternate career paths, incorporate Indigenous content, and update degree-level learning outcomes to address reconciliation

2 **Expand International Opportunities**
   for in- and outbound students; actively collaborate in international agreements, facilitate and increase the number of Cotutelle agreements

3 **Work Toward Multi-year Planning**
   including tuition and scholarship modeling with goals of student growth and support (including Indigenous, domestic & international students), develop multi-year graduate course availability, tuition forecasting and financial support

4 **Ensure Program Quality**
   by initiating a second round of graduate program reviews; act on previous recommendations

5 **Support Postdoctoral Fellows**
   through new policies and processes dedicated to recruitment and financial support for PDFs, IDP, transition to careers; clarify PDF roles in research and graduate student programming

BOUNDLESS COLLABORATION

Invigorate the impact of collaboration and partnership in everything we do.

1 **Commit to robust student information systems**
   that can accommodate flexibility and innovation (i.e. register in multiple colleges simultaneously) and facilitate disbursement of student funding

2 **Support Strategic Enrolment Management & Recruitment**
   efforts related to graduate students, develop strategic targets (Indigenous, domestic & international students), facilitate growth in the number of high-quality students

3 **Commit to systems, policies and processes in support of**
   flexibility & growth; strategies that contribute to student experience, program flexibility, and student transition between programs; alternate registration models including part-time registration; alternate thesis defense processes; lean strategy in college processes and policies

4 **Create CGPS service standards**
   that incorporate adaptability, lean strategies, enhance staff capacity, and develop service commitment linked to enabling academic greatness

INSPIRED COMMUNITIES

Inspire the world by achieving meaningful change with and for our communities.

1 **Empower Colleges and Schools by Developing Role Clarity**
   in graduate program accountability and graduate course administration; support academic unit autonomy

2 **Cultivate Lasting Relationships with Alumni**
   through regular and meaningful engagement; help celebrate career and life-long successes

3 **Revise CGPS Governance Structure**
   to interface directly with college/school leaders of graduate programming; development and approval of revised college bylaws

4 **Incorporate Story Telling Within Communication Strategies**
   that affirm our identity, identifies the supports we provide and allows us to congratulate our stakeholders and help to celebrate their successes

SUSTAINABILITY | DIVERSITY | CONNECTIVITY | CREATIVITY

TEACHING AND LEARNING

NATIONAL   **INTERNATIONAL**