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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas A&M’s growing graduate and professional education program enrolled almost 13,541 students - pursuing master’s, doctoral, or professional degrees (DVM, MD, DDS, JD, PharmD) - as of the official reporting period last fall (Fall, 2013). In addition to providing students with advanced degrees for key positions in the private sector and numerous areas of government and academia, Texas A&M’s graduate programs play a vital role in support of the university’s research endeavors. Texas A&M’s annual investment in a variety of scholarly works, studies and, experiments totals about $689 million, which ranks it first in Texas and the Southwest, and among the top 20 nationally (March 13, 2012 TAMUTimes, Dr. Karen Butler-Purry interview).

“We are pleased that Texas A&M continues to perform well in the U.S. News and World Report rankings of best graduate schools. Our showing is significant, especially when considering that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with some of the top private institutions in the nation. Texas A&M remains committed to elevating graduate program quality to world-class status and competitiveness.” Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies Dr. Karen Butler-Purry.
Our Mission
Texas A&M University is a global leader in graduate education and experiences, committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the power of intellect. Through exceptional service and commitment to the highest standards, the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies’ mission is to provide customer-friendly, accurate, and timely support services to graduate students, faculty, and staff to enroll and graduate highly qualified, diverse graduate students.

Our Vision
The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies’ vision is to achieve recognition as a leader in support of graduate education through innovation, exceptional service, and commitment to excellence.

Our Values
The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) is committed to a climate of respect for all individuals and their unique contributions; enhancement of graduate experiences and development for all students, personally and professionally; and providing the highest quality customer service.

Our Work
OGAPS serves as an advocate for graduate education and is home to the Ombudsperson for Graduate Education. This office establishes procedures to guarantee that the educational experience at the graduate level is of the highest quality; fosters and facilitates interdisciplinary/intercollegiate graduate programs and research activities; and strives to maintain and enhance an environment conducive to creative scholarship and scientific inquiry.
Strategic Goal One: Cultivate a diverse and globally aware graduate community
The first strategic goal focuses on two main areas: 1) foster a climate of respect within the graduate community and for each individual’s unique contributions; and 2) support college and department efforts to matriculate a diverse, high-quality graduate student population.

Strategic Goal Two: Enhance the graduate experiences and development of all graduate and professional students, personally and professionally
This objective aims to 1) enhance and support high impact learning experiences consistent with Aggies Commit to Learning for a Lifetime, the University Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP); and 2) promote and recognize graduate student success.

Strategic Goal Three: Practice intelligent stewardship of resources entrusted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies
This goal aims to 1) provide unparalleled support services for success; 2) facilitate strategic resource allocation to advance programming excellence; and 3) ensure public trust through efficient resource utilization, accountability, and transparency.

Strategic Goal Four: Lead and advance graduate education at Texas A&M University and throughout Texas and the nation
This goal focuses on 1) identifying “best practices”, guidelines, and procedures in graduate education; and 2) promoting adoption of best practices and influencing graduate education policies and procedures.

Strategic Goal Five: Create and nurture an office climate that leads to excellent performance and collegiality among staff
This pursuit strives to 1) promote regular staff participation in professional development and training activities; and 2) foster a climate of involvement, respect, and transparency.
TAMU General Graduate & Professional Students Facts
Academic Year 2014-2015

14,541 total graduate and professional students enrolled in fall of 2015 (for all Campuses - 23% of total student population)

16% underrepresented minority (American Indian, Black, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaii, others) of U.S. citizens and permanent residents (2418 URM graduate and professional students total)

44% female

32% international students from 123 countries; largest representation*:
China (1607), India (1174), South Korea (363), and Taiwan (144)

*College Station only that accounts for 95% of total international student population

Figure 1: TAMU Graduate and Professional Student Population Breakdown by

AGRIC = Agriculture and Life Sciences
ARCH = Architecture
BUSH = Bush School of Government & Public Service
BUSS = Mays Business School
EDUC = Education and Human Development
ENG = Dwight Look College of Engineering
GEO = Geosciences
HSC = Texas A&M Health Science Center
LAW = Law School
CLLA = Liberal Arts
SCIE = Science
VET = Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences
Galv/Qat = Galveston and Qatar

Enrollment Profiles - Fall 2015
These data include all regular candidates from all Campuses (College Station, Galveston, Health Science Center, School of Law, Qatar) as well as professionals.
OGAPS STRATEGIC PLAN

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CULTIVATE A DIVERSE AND GLOBALLY AWARE GRADUATE COMMUNITY
Between Fall 2011 and Fall 2015, Hispanics enrollment increased 46%, Asian 38%, blacks 35%, and multi-race 49%. Since 2013, graduate student demographics (non whites) are dominated by Hispanics (42%), following by Asians (28%) and Blacks (17%).

The number of diverse graduate population has been increasing steadily for the last 5 years. The Asian population is above parity with national demographics at 38% for TAMU versus 5% nationally, as well as Black (13%), Hispanic (16%). Native-Americans (1%) are new parity with national demographics.

Since 2009, Doctoral students with diverse background have increased by 1.4% and Master students by 42%. The number of diverse Professional students increased significantly in 2014 (94%) largely due to the Hispanic and Asian students enrollment.

International students enrollment is quite good relative to peer institutions. Texas A&M University has attracted more than 4,735 students from 123 countries. Asian students are the dominant majority with China counting for 77% followed by India with 27% of all Asian graduate students enrolled in 2015. The Graduate School seeks to improve representation by doubling the number of international students from Africa, Europe, and Central/South
Graduate students should make up a greater proportion of the student body. Enhanced ability to attract and retain a bright, diverse, and globally aware graduate student body, and providing the framework with which they can complete their studies as full participants in the community of scholars, is essential for growth in graduate programs (TAMU Vision 2020).

**Objective A: Foster a climate of respect within the graduate community and for each individual’s unique contributions**

**STRATEGY 1:** Facilitate periodic graduate campus climate surveys

- **Measure 1:** Conduct surveys at three year intervals with at least a 20% participation rate
- **Measure 2:** Conduct at least one campus-wide forum, produce at least one written report and post findings on OGAPS website for each survey cycle
- **Measure 3:** Establish a mechanism that tracks actions to address the findings and monitor and document changes in successive surveys

**STRATEGY 2:** Promote diversity awareness and institutional commitment to diversity

- **Measure 1:** Increase participation of graduate students, faculty, and staff and number of Community of Scholars events and activities
- **Measure 2:** Conduct quarterly reviews of graduate student campus climate recommendations and resultant actions performed by OGAPS
- **Measure 3:** Implement at least one action by OGAPS to address the graduate student campus climate recommendations annually

**Objective B: Support college and department efforts to matriculate a diverse, high-quality graduate student population**

**STRATEGY 1:** Participate in student recruitment activities and name serves to annually increase the number of student applications to graduate and professional degree programs

- **Measure 1:** Increase numbers of applications from contacts made at undergraduate student research events (ex. REU, USRG, SPUR, SURF, UGR)
OGAPS STRATEGIC PLAN

Scholars, etc.) graduate fairs, national conferences, and name serves (e.g. National Name exchange, National GEM Consortium, McNair Scholars and ETS)

**Measure 2:** Increase numbers of applications from early admit program

**Measure 3:** Increase numbers of applications from contacts made at graduate fairs and partner institutions identified as having a concentration of diverse, high-quality prospective graduate and professional students

**Measure 4:** Increase numbers of applications from contacts made at national conferences where participation of underrepresented minorities is large (e.g., SACNAS, ABRCMS, MANNRS, etc.)

**STRATEGY 2:** Improve partnerships with individual faculty and faculty teams engaged in activities to increase enrollment of diverse, high-quality graduate and professional students.

**Measure 1:** Increase faculty partnerships in the Pathways to the Doctorate Fellowship program to increase the number of TAMU doctoral students who completed their undergraduate degrees at a TAMUS school

**Measure 2:** Improve partnerships with faculty teams supported by a training grant (e.g. IGERT, etc.), who lead other cohort-based programs (e.g. SLOAN, NSF LSAMP, Bridge to the Doctorate, etc.), or who lead prospective student visitation programs (e.g. Political Science, etc.)

**Measure 3:** Increase partnerships with faculty PIs associated with undergraduate summer research programs (e.g., REU and USRG) and faculty mentors to undergraduate research scholars

**STRATEGY 3:** Provide leadership and promote competitiveness in recruitment of diverse, high-quality prospective graduate students

**Measure 1:** Develop and deliver workshops in annual advisor’s workshop on best practices in the recruitment of graduate students

**Measure 2:** Increase participation in networking meetings (e.g., student advisory group, faculty networks, pathways teams, etc.)
Measure 3: Increase utilization of prospective student website (sample metrics include session duration [user timings], screen views, pages per visit, average visit duration)

Measure 4: Increase utilization of new technology for effective and economical dissemination of information (e.g., scan codes, etc.)

Measure 5: Update print information (both as hard copies and in electronic print-on-demand format) annually

Measure 6: Increase OGAPS recruiting presence and prospective student utilization of popular social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) to provide news and opportunities

STRATEGY 4: Provide Merit and Diversity fellowships and effective informational materials to enroll diverse, high quality graduate students

Measure 1: Increase the number of historically URM students enrolled (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, veteran status, first generation, etc.) relative to the University, College, Program or Discipline, and national populations

Measure 2: Increase the quality of fellowship nominees (e.g., GPA and Standardized Test Scores by Percentile, publications, presentations, and research experiences)

Measure 3: Increase the acceptance of highest ranked fellowship selectees (e.g., 1st quartile, 1st percentile, top N where N is the actual number of fellowships to be awarded)
ENHANCE THE GRADUATE EXPERIENCES AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALL GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS, PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY
Between Fall 2002 and Fall 2009, Masters enrollment increased 27%, Doctoral increased 30% and the Professional/DVM increased 7%.

Graduate student enrollment has increased from 23% to 26% from 2003 to 2009. From 2009-2013 domestic and international enrollments trend have been relatively constant, with the exception of a 46% increases in 2013 for domestic students.

Virtually all graduate students are enrolled in either a Master's, PhD, or Professional degree program. The majority of graduate students are enrolled in PhD (36%) and Master (41%); Professional students enrollment increased by 146% in 2013. Enrollment capacity at the PhD level is governed largely by external research and the accompanying graduate student assistantships. Consequently, one element of the plan to bolster enrollment includes increasing research support.

The number of graduate students participating in pedagogical preparation has increased to ensure that graduate students understand and are able to provide exceptional instruction. Since 2001, Texas A&M has added 19 master's and six doctoral programs to complement its range of offerings and to meet changing needs and disciplinary advances.

Texas A&M has increased the number of doctorates awarded from 578 in 2009 to 726 in 2012. Texas A&M is ranked 15th nationally among public institutions in the number of doctorates awarded in 2011.
**Objective A:** Enhance and support graduate students high-impact learning experiences consistent with Aggies Commit to Learning for a Lifetime, the University Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

**STRATEGY 1:** Implement a professional and career development model and programming activities

- **Measure 1:** On Professional Development (PD), as part of Steering Committee, include representation from 100% of non-academic units who provide relevant programming to graduate and professional students

- **Measure 2:** Facilitate at least 3 meetings/year of this PD Steering Committee to assure optimal coordination of efforts

- **Measure 3:** Update on-line searchable tool with existing activities in colleges, departments, and non-academic units at least twice/year, and increase unique users to at least 30% of all graduate/professional students

- **Measure 4:** Develop activities to fill gaps in programming (e.g., professional development in teaching, financial, education)

- **Measure 5:** Support expansion of successful programs offered by colleges, departments, or non-academic units to the University level

- **Measure 6:** Facilitate annually a common tool to assess effectiveness and participant satisfaction with professional and career development activities

**STRATEGY 2:** Promote graduate student involvement in Aggies Commit to Learning for a Lifetime, the University Quality Enhancement Plan

- **Measure 1:** Increase involvement of all graduate students so that every master’s student participates in at least one high-impact learning experience and every doctoral student in at least three over their years of graduate studies
**Objective B: Promote and recognize graduate student success**

**STRATEGY 1:** Provide dissertation fellowships to PhD students in last year of studies

**Measure 1:** Decrease time to degree for ill-funded students completing doctoral degrees

**STRATEGY 2:** Work collaboratively with faculty, programs, departments, and colleges to increase retention and completion of degrees

**Measure 1:** Examine and disseminate data annually on doctoral and master’s completion and attrition trends, identified areas of improvement, and best practices

**Measure 2:** Provide timely Ombudsperson services to assist students in their resolution of problems that decrease their retention and completion of their degree objective

**Measure 3:** Develop programs to assist students in overcoming barriers impacting graduation in collaboration with other Colleges, Departments and Programs, at least two per semester

**Measure 4:** Develop programs in collaboration with the center for Teaching Excellence to promote to faculty best practices in mentoring graduate students, at least one per semester

**STRATEGY 3:** Work collaboratively with graduate student organizations to enhance student success

**Measure 1:** Meet monthly with the GSC president and once per semester with GSC executive committee

**Measure 2:** Meet once per semester with graduate student advisory group to OGAPS

**Measure 3:** Meet once per semester with leaders of student organizations that support URM graduate students and their activities (BGSA, HLGSA, SACNAS).
PRACTICE INTELLIGENT STEWARDSHIP OF RESOURCES ENTRUSTED TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
Objective A: Provide unparalleled support services for student success

STRATEGY 1: Develop effective and efficient processes and tools related to degree matriculation and completion

Measure 1: Achieve 90% of target timelines and goals related to student document review and processing

Measure 2: Conduct annual staff training and document audits to assess, enhance, and review the accuracy and consistency of graduate document processing and thesis reviews

Measure 3: Move the entire lifecycle of Graduate Records document processing online; within 5 years all student-submitted documents should be initiated and processed online (versus completion/submission of paper documents)

Measure 4: Maximize electronic synchronization between DPSS and Compass, with 95% compatibility via automated feeds, measured with daily load and error csv reports.

Measure 5: Perform at least one major update or 5 minor updates to electronic systems (e.g., DPSS, Vireo, ImageNow) per year in response to user needs (internal and external, and including faculty, staff and students) for workflow system enhancements for efficient processing and routing

Measure 6: Make progress toward allowing some level of departmental access to electronic student records over the next 3 years (e.g., put a plan in place, including objectives and timeline, to address all issues - security, access, maintenance, etc. - within one year)

Measure 7: Provide timely access to process electronic student records, ensuring that all submitted documents are imaged and linked within 24 hours of receipt.

Measure 8: Automate additional systems and processes (e.g., residency, graduate classification, graduation notifications, degree milestones, and graduate GPA) over the next two years to reduce the need for manual processing.
**STRATEGY 2:** Provide high standard customer service (e.g., document review and processing, data analysis and reporting, and programs and services) to students, faculty, and staff.

**Measure 1:** Provide advisor training and information related to accurate document processing via five Graduate Advisor Brown Bags and two Graduate Advisor’s Workshop annually on relevant topics and bi-annual Graduate Advisor Compass training, each with a documented 4 out 5 satisfaction level

**Measure 2:** Provide timely information to graduate advisors through regular (at minimum annually) updates to the Graduate Advisors Handbook

**Measure 3:** Maintain relevance and awareness of faculty tools (such as the degree evaluation system) through annual updates/reviews and reminders of existing training guides/videos

**Measure 4:** Provide student training, services, and tools to increase awareness of and knowledge pertaining to degree requirements

**Measure 5:** Implement and maintain a feedback mechanism to regularly collect feedback on OGAPS services (email, phone, Website, and walk-ins) from at least 20% of graduate students, faculty, and staff; maintain at least a 35% response rate on feedback collected on Thesis and Dissertation services from graduate students who have cleared

**Measure 6:** Achieve an average of 4 out of 5 on overall satisfaction with each item assessed in feedback mechanism; implement changes as warranted, documenting at least one change per year

**Objective B: Facilitate strategic resource allocation to advance programming excellence**

**STRATEGY 1:** Develop and continuously improve model for resource distribution to academic colleges, departments, and nonacademic units that support graduate students

**Measure 1:** Review annually for consistency with academic mission of University
STRATEGY 2: Strategically allocate tuition payments for graduate assistants

Measure 1: Review annually for consistency with academic mission of university

STRATEGY 3: Develop and continuously improve model that selects students for scholarships, fellowships, grants, and awards

Measure 1: Review annually to ensure award amounts and selection processes remain consistent with strategic goals of university

Objective C: Ensure public trust through efficient resource utilization, accountability, and transparency

STRATEGY 1: Develop and update annually accountability mechanisms of appropriate OGAPS metrics to feed into the University Accountability System.

Measure 1: Collect data and deliver report for central and OGAPS web-accessible portals
LEAD AND ADVANCE GRADUATE EDUCATION AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY AND THROUGHOUT TEXAS AND THE NATION
Objective A: Identify “best practices”, guidelines, and procedures in graduate education

STRATEGY 1: Conduct research identifying best practices through engaging in national studies.

Measure 1: Engage in at least one national study per year

Measure 2: Evaluate at least one policy, practice, or service annually using peer institutional data or national reports and integrate findings into OGAPS as appropriate.

Objective B: Promote adoption of best practices and influence graduate education policies and procedures

STRATEGY 1: Actively participate in and/or lead various committees and organizations that influence graduate education

Measure 1: Increase active membership and leadership of OGAPS staff in state, regional, and national organizations including attendance at workshops, presentations, and conferences

Measure 2: Increase active membership and leadership of OGAPS staff in campus organizations and attending associated presentations

STRATEGY 2: Ensure promotion and adoption of best practices in TAMU Colleges, departments, and OGAPS.

Measure 1: Develop workshops that feature and enhance best practices in graduate education, at least one per year

Measure 2: Increase the opportunities for faculty to familiarize themselves with policies that affect graduate education (meetings, luncheons, publications)
CREATE AND NURTURE AN OFFICE CLIMATE THAT LEADS TO EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE AND COLLEGIALITY AMONG STAFF
Objective A: Promote regular staff participation in professional development and training activities

Strategy 1: Provide opportunities and/or resources for professional development

Measure 1: Staff engagement in professional development activities (at least one professional development activity per year)

Measure 2: Supervisor and employee will develop and agree upon a professional development plan by the fall of each performance evaluation cycle

Objective B: Foster a climate of involvement, respect, and transparency

Strategy 1: Promote a welcoming and diverse environment facilitated by a climate and diversity committee

Measure 1: OGAPS Climate and Diversity Committee will host at least one program annually to encourage a welcoming and diverse office environment

Measure 2: Every staff member will participate in at least one course or alternate (approved) activity that focuses on climate and diversity - to raise awareness or build skills

Measure 3: At least two activities per year will be held to examine the Academic Affairs Diversity and Climate Committee findings, with at least one internal activity/discussion taking place (during the weekly staff meeting) using the academic climate and diversity survey report

Strategy 2: Create an organizational structure providing each individual a place to serve and influence decision making

Measure 1: Functional and cross-functional interactions within OGAPS should occur bi-monthly

Measure 2: There will be 100% participation for all staff in at least one OGAPS office committee
Measure 3: Clear roles and expectations for performance will be outlined and discussed in staff tasks and responsibilities matrices, updated on an annual basis, when staff in the unit change, and when reorganizing roles/responsibilities