



From: University Senate Committee on Research and Graduate Education

To: Provost David Blackwell, PhD and University Senate Council

Date: November 27, 2019

Purpose

This memo communicates the Senate Research and Graduate Education Committee's (SRGE) support for advancing graduate education at the University of Kentucky. The committee has reviewed the 2018 Blue Ribbon Panel (BRP) on Graduate Education Report and the more recent *Priorities for Implementation of the Recommendations of the Blue-Ribbon Panel on Graduate Education Report*. Based on our review, the committee endorses the reports, and we urge swift implementation of the BRP Implementation Committee's recommendations:

1. Make graduate education an urgent campus-wide priority.
2. Reorganize to embed the Dean in ongoing partnerships with university leaders in research and education.
3. Conduct a national search and appoint a permanent Dean of the Graduate School.
4. Restructure funding for graduate education to allow investment in outstanding programs and in new initiatives, including cross-disciplinary ventures.
5. Build data analytic capacity to support graduate education.
6. Strengthen graduate student services.

Conclusions

The SRGE Committee agrees that graduate education must be an urgent priority. Much like the recent attention to undergraduate education at UK, an intentional, laser-like focus will bring needed energy and resources to the advancement of graduate education. Such a focus on graduate education is essential, if UK is to achieve the goals of its strategic plan. The SRGE Committee believes it is vital to conduct a national search for a new dean of the Graduate School, as an interim dean has served for nearly 6 years. However, the committee noted the challenge of recruiting a strong new dean without university investment in operational resources, high-quality space, tuition reform, and graduate student compensation—all needs that were identified by the original Blue-Ribbon Panel and subsequent implementation panel. UK should address these financial issues immediately to demonstrate the kind of commitment to graduate education that will attract an excellent dean. To that end, the SRGE Committee encourages a benchmarking study to explore the level of funding that is appropriate to achieve UK's goals in graduate education. A fully funded graduate school will enable a new dean to provide the leadership required for further improving infrastructure, communication, and overall resources for graduate education at UK in ways that were explicated in the BRP Implementation Report's recommendations.