
 TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

# Graduate School Task Force Stakeholder Presentation

April 2020

Updated 4/6/20


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## Agenda

- Background
- Task Force charge and membership
- Timeline
- Graduate School Proposal
  - Rationale
  - Guiding Principles
  - Framework
    - Current organizational structure
    - Proposed changes
    - Current practices that will continue
- Plans for 2020-21
- Q&A


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## Background

- Vision 2020
  - Imperative 2: Strengthen Our Graduate Programs
- Academic Master Planning in 2009
  - Recommended a task force on the Graduate Experience
- Graduate Experiences Task Force
  - Offered priorities and recommendations around three issues: (1) Quality of Life, (2) Practices: Compensations and Benefits, and (3) Professional Development
- Next ten years, several major university investments were made and programs established to improve graduate student financial and programmatic support
- 2018 – 2019: OGAPS gathered preliminary input to inform a decision on possible changes to the scope and structure of the university's graduate unit
  - Hanover Research – Benchmarking Analysis of Graduate Units at Peer Institutions
  - Visits to Graduate Units at UT Austin, U of Michigan, UCLA
- December 2019: Request to establish Graduate School submitted to Provost
  - Convened a Task Force


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## TF Charge and Membership

- Charge
  - During the spring semester, the task force will focus on gathering input from stakeholders [e.g. faculty senate, council of deans, GOC Deans, URC Deans, graduate students, CPI, etc.] on the establishment of a Graduate School and its scope.
  - The task force will continue into the next academic year with a charge to provide recommendations on changes needed to achieve the graduate and professional education goals in the 2020-2025 University strategic plan.
- Membership
  - 13 Faculty
  - 5 department administrators, 4 college administrators, 1 interdisciplinary degree program chair
  - 2 staff
  - 3 graduate students
  - 8 member executive committee representing university administrative units

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	<h2>TF Timeline &amp; Scope</h2>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• February 26, 2020      Task Force Meeting #1</li><li>• Mid-March to Mid-April 2020      Stakeholder Presentations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GPSG, CPI, Council of Deans, GOC Deans, DH Steering Committee, URC Deans, Faculty Senate</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Late April 2020      Task Force Meeting #2</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Discussion of Draft Task Force Report #1</b></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Mid-May      Finalize Task Force Report #1</b></li><li>• <b>Third Week of May      Associate Provost submits recommendation to Provost based on Task Force input</b></li><li>• September 2020      Task Force Reconvenes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Subcommittees will be established in fall to develop recommendations</li></ul></li></ul>	
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<h1>GRADUATE SCHOOL PROPOSAL</h1>	
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## Rationale

- Texas A&M has made considerable progress in strengthening its graduate programs over the past twenty years.
- Yet, to build on our success and reach the level of excellence in graduate education, we must continue to evolve, embracing bold strategic changes and investing the financial resources necessary to maximize the positive impact of those changes.
- **One such change is to transform the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies into a Graduate School.**
  - **Shifting a few areas of university-level administrative oversight to a centralized administrative division, the Graduate School.**
  - **Administrative shifts or enhancements in governance structure, marketing, and graduate interdisciplinary degree program operations are proposed for summer 2020.**

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## Benefits of Re-branding as a Graduate School

- Signify that graduate education is an integral part of the university mission and, therefore, strengthen the university's identity as a research institution in a manner analogous to our peers
- Graduate School would support the enhancement of all of our graduate programs to build and sustain excellence in graduate education at Texas A&M by:
  - improving effectiveness in the administration and delivery of degree programs
  - building our graduate community by providing a central hub for current, prospective, and former students, faculty, staff
  - encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration
  - enabling consistency in policies and practices across graduate programs
  - centralizing the collection and analysis of data to support decisions, dissemination of information, and transparency about graduate education
  - centralizing coordination of health and wellness initiatives

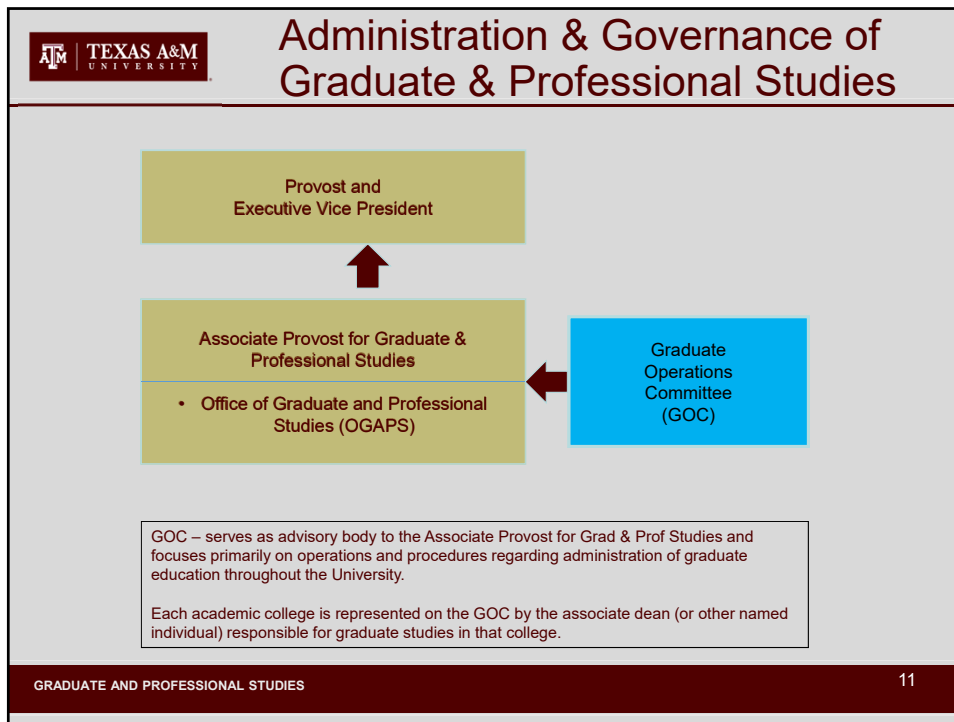
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## In summary...

- Shifting to a Graduate School would advance Texas A&M's goal to be known as
  - a university that attracts the best students from the U.S. and abroad,
  - supports its graduate students comprehensively, and
  - provides outstanding professional and career development programming,
- thus elevating our graduate programs and community while building on Texas A&M's reputation as one of the world's preeminent educational institutions.

## Graduate School Guiding Principles

- *Service and Excellence* – the school exists to serve students, faculty, and graduate programs and advance excellence in graduate and professional education
- *A Student-Centered Approach* – the school should be leading the implementation of student centered, optimal approaches for student success and well-being across programs
- *Faculty Governance* – Faculty should retain a critical role in collective decision-making for graduate education.
- *Program Diversity* – TAMU administers a wide variety of graduate programs, from professional and research programs to STEM and Humanities programs. Respect for differences of disciplines in best practices will guide implementation of the school's strategies
- *Budgeting* – The core of the school's budget should consist of funds currently allocated to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. Additional funding should come from new investments.




## Administrative Organization – Graduate Operations

Department & Intercollegiate Faculty	College – GIC	University – GC
Graduate Advisors – Graduate Program Directors	<b>Chair</b> – Associate Dean for Graduate Studies  <b>Members</b> – Graduate Program Directors	<b>Chair</b>  <b>Members</b> – Chairs of GICs, Graduate Program Directors, Graduate Faculty

•**GIC (College Committees on Graduate Instruction)** -- Responsible for making recommendations concerning graduate course offerings, general policies on graduate instruction and for other matters pertaining to graduate studies in each college.

•**GC (Graduate Council)** -- A reporting committee to the Faculty Senate. Concerns itself with the development of graduate programs within the university and the maintenance of standards of excellence in all graduate instruction and graduate activities


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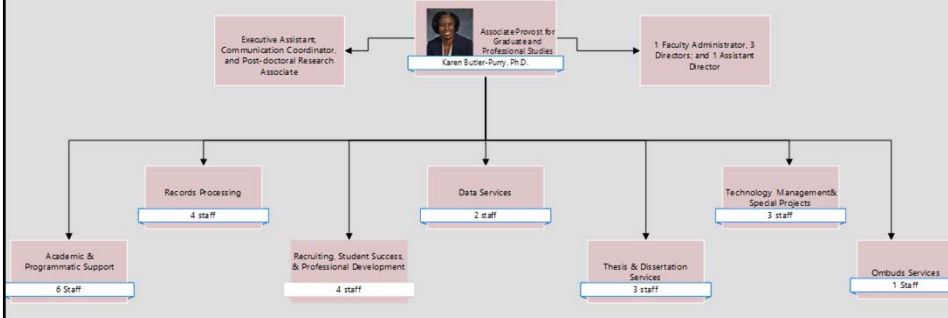
## Units Supporting Graduate and Professional Studies

Office of Admissions	Departments/ Programs	Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS)	
<p>Facilitates univ applications &amp; decisions</p> <p><b>Other Units</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Student Services</li> <li>• Career Center</li> <li>• University Writing Center</li> <li>• Center for Teaching Excellence</li> <li>• Registrar</li> <li>• Division of Student Affairs</li> <li>• Division of Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting</li> <li>• Make Admission Decisions</li> <li>• Fellowships</li> <li>• Assistantships</li> <li>• Dept./Program Orientation</li> <li>• Graduate Faculty</li> <li>• Offers Courses</li> <li>• Advise/Mentor Graduate Students</li> <li>• Establish/Maintain Degree Programs Curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official Student Record</li> <li>• Student Matriculation Processes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o New Graduate Student Orientation</li> <li>o GTA Training &amp; English Proficiency Compliance</li> <li>o Degree Plan, Proposal, Preliminary &amp; Final Exams</li> <li>o Theses &amp; Dissertations</li> <li>o University Degree Clearance and Dismissal Processes</li> <li>o Doctoral Hooding</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non-resident waivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University level recruitment</li> <li>• Univ. Fellowships and Awards</li> <li>• Research and Presentation Travel Grants</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> <li>• Ombuds Services</li> <li>• Advisor Workshops and Development</li> <li>• Graduate Committee Faculty Membership Process</li> </ul>

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## OGAPS Organizational Structure




- 30 full-time staff
- 10-20 part time staff and graduate & undergraduate students

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 <h2 style="text-align: center;">Proposed Changes</h2>	
Graduate Unit	(i) Work currently overseen by OGAPS will be transformed into work of Graduate School
Graduate Faculty	(i) Will be affiliated with the Graduate School
Graduate Council (GC)	(i) Graduate Dean will remain a non-voting member and become the chair of the GC  (ii) Establish three new subcommittees: master's and doctoral curricular review, first professional doctorate curricular review, and graduate policies and procedures
Graduate Program Directors (GPD)	(i) Work with GC to define a set of standard roles and responsibilities for GPDs (ii) Hold regular meetings with GPDs to identify opportunities for improvement in graduate program policies, procedures and operations, and provide opportunities for GPDs to share their best practices  (iii) Provide regular professional development for GPDs so they utilize best practices in graduate education and meet the diverse needs of their students. Also provides opportunity to train new GPDs more quickly
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 <h2 style="text-align: center;">Proposed Changes</h2>	
Marketing and Student Engagement	(i) Initiate a unified university-level marketing and communication plan to promote TAMU Graduate and Professional Studies across the U.S. and abroad  (ii) Invest in tools to strengthen engagement at university, college, department, and program levels with prospective students, current students, and alumni
Interdisciplinary Degree Programs	To address concerns articulated by faculty in doctoral IDP programs,  (i) GS will assume responsibility for convening an annual meeting of the A&EC department heads and EC for each IDP doctoral program to ensure that regular interactions occur to support the success of the IDP programs  (ii) The IDP chair or a designee for each IDP program will serve on the GIC of their administrative college to keep IDP faculty apprised of policy and procedural changes
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## Current Practices that will continue

Roles & Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OGAPS</li> </ul>
Academic Programs (Awards degrees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TAMU awards degrees</li> <li>Graduate degree programs administratively housed in departments and colleges</li> <li>OGAPS provides oversight of policies &amp; procedures for graduate certificates and master's and doctoral programs</li> </ul>
Administration & Governance Structure for Graduate and Professional Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Graduate Operations Committee, College Committees of Graduate Instruction, Graduate Program Directors</li> </ul>

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## Current Practices that will continue

Graduate Admissions & Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty establish admissions standards, make decisions, perform discipline specific recruiting</li> </ul>
Graduate IDP Oversight and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intercollegiate Faculty</li> <li>IDP Executive Committee</li> <li>Advisory &amp; Evaluation Committee of participating department heads</li> <li>Administratively housed in colleges</li> </ul>

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## TF Plans for 2020-21

- Continue its efforts into the 2020-21 academic year, gathering broad input to work through issues identified during spring 2020 discussions.
- Identify changes needed to achieve the graduate and professional studies goals in the 2020-2025 University Strategic Plan, and provide recommendations to be addressed at the university level.



Q&A



# Federal Government / Congressional Update

Michael O'Quinn – Vice President for Government  
Relations & Strategic Initiatives

Michael J. Hardy – Assistant Vice President for  
Government Relations

4/8/20





# **2020 Federal Update**

- \* FY 21 Appropriations Update**
- \* Federal Government Response to COVID-19**
  - \* 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Stimulus Packages**
  - \* 3<sup>rd</sup> Stimulus Package (CARES Act)**
  - \* 4<sup>th</sup> Stimulus Package?**
- \* Impact on Washington**
  - \* Congressional Calendar**
  - \* Judiciary Impact**
  - \* 2020 Election**



Questions?

