

## PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
December 6, 2014

**Contact:** Nate Thompson  
(202) 223-3791 / [nthompson@cgs.nche.edu](mailto:nthompson@cgs.nche.edu)

### CGS Launches Study of Holistic Graduate Admissions Processes

Washington, D.C. — The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), in collaboration with Hobsons, today announced a new initiative to better understand current holistic graduate application processes. With input from its member institutions, CGS will explore the implications of new technologies for achieving improvements in graduate admissions and student success rates.

As graduate institutions focus increasing attention on identifying and developing talent, the process of “whole-file” or holistic review is becoming more important. Holistic review of individual applicants is a process by which programs consider a broad range of admissions criteria when selecting applicants, including non-cognitive and personal attributes.

At the Council of Graduate Schools’ Annual Meeting in Washington, DC today, CGS President Suzanne T. Ortega announced, “With this project, CGS reaffirms its commitment to enhancing the quality of graduate education from admissions to completion and into careers. Understanding the practices and value of holistic review will help graduate institutions develop a broader understanding of the applicant qualities that translate into student success.”

Many leaders in graduate education believe that some version of holistic review has the potential to help universities achieve a more appropriate match between programs and students, to improve access to graduate education, and to improve the success rates of students who enter graduate programs at the master’s and doctoral levels. A recurring discussion among graduate deans is how to encourage programs and departments to engage in the review of a broader range of admissions criteria, rather than focusing on a few indicators of potential student success.

“Core to our mission at Hobsons is the belief that we can help improve long-term student outcomes by helping academic institutions to more effectively and efficiently find right-fit applicants during the admissions process,” said Stephen M. Smith, President of Advising and Admissions Solutions at Hobsons. “We’re proud to support the work of CGS to increase access to graduate education through improved matching of students to higher education options.”

The year-long project will include a survey of over 500 universities on their current practices and emerging needs in graduate application review, a white paper exploring the current state of holistic review processes and the value of using such approaches, and a two-day intensive workshop of researchers, graduate deans, admissions professionals and other experts on the subject of holistic application review.

###

*The [Council of Graduate Schools](http://www.cgsnet.org) (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 91% of the doctoral degrees and 81% of the master’s degrees.\* The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices. \* Based on data from the 2013 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees*

*[Hobsons](http://www.hobsons.com) helps educators, administrators, students, and families maximize success through every stage of the learning lifecycle. Hobsons’ personalized learning, academic planning, post-secondary enrollment, and student support solutions serve millions of students across more than 10,000 schools, colleges, and universities worldwide.*