

# Graduate Education 2030: Imagining the Future

## A STATEMENT OF PRACTICAL ACTIONS DEVELOPED BY AND FOR THE GRADUATE EDUCATION COMMUNITY

The 2017 Strategic Leaders Global Summit on Graduate Education revisited an earlier CGS project, *Graduate Education 2020*, which challenged leading scholars to consider technological, demographic, and global trends shaping graduate education around the world. With the year 2020 within sight, we took the opportunity to consider the next decade: 2030. Given the global forces transforming graduate education in their countries and regions: How will the nature of graduate education in 2030 differ from what is available in 2017?

The Council of Graduate Schools and the Educational Testing Service invited representatives from 16 countries across six continents to explore these ideas at a two-day summit in Alaska. At the Summit's conclusion, participants developed a set of *Practical Actions* to identify how individually and collectively we might respond to these forces for the benefit of students, universities, and broader communities. These recommended actions are intended as a menu of options for graduate institutions and/or organizations seeking to better prepare themselves and their students for the future.

### Practical Actions – 2017 Global Summit

**Note:** The underlined practical actions would require coordination across universities, associations, regions, etc.

#### ***Global and Regional Demographic Shifts***

- Explore the possibility of joining the European University Association (EUA) “[Refugees Welcome Map](#)” campaign, an effort to “showcase and document the commitment of higher education institutions and organizations support of refugees.”
- Cultivate and promote a culture of inclusivity. While ethnic/cultural awareness should be a major focus given our increasingly global society/economy, attention should also be given to other areas of difference (i.e. veterans, students with disabilities, returning adult students).
- Institutions should develop more online and hybrid graduate programs to broaden access to graduate level education for students who cannot participate in day-to-day campus-based programs (i.e. students who work full time, provide care for families; live in remote locations).
- Develop ethical guidelines around supervisor/student relationships.

#### ***Trends in Technology***

- Improve the ability to track the performance and progress of graduate students, while ensuring compatibility with existing information management systems for students.
- Create standards and best practices for the delivery of online graduate education programs.
- Enhance collaborations in ways to help address and overcome some of the IT limitations present in some parts of the world, and which could limit research activities and the way these activities could positively impact local and national economies and communities.
- Widen the scope of delivery of graduate programs to off-campus, off-shore students, while ensuring: (a) comparable on-campus and off-campus educational experiences; (b) sufficient engagement of students and faculty members in such initiatives; (c) consistency/comparable experiences across different disciplines; (d) effective and consistent assessment.

### ***Generational Perspectives***

- Develop guidelines for mentors and mentees that address common trends and consider differences in generational communications and learning styles, including guidance on providing mentees with constructive criticism and feedback.
- Encourage the use of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) across all disciplines to help mentors and mentees set specific career goals and professional development needs.

### ***Globalization***

- Analyze the curricular and program structures that both facilitate and impede international research experiences for graduate students. Develop programs/curricula that foster global competencies in the absence of travel abroad, especially opportunities to use new technologies to create virtual research and learning communities. How do we create the opportunity for internationalization without traveling?
- Create and fund a grand challenge competition that includes a moral/ethical value proposition, allows broader topics to involve all disciplines, and requires participation of graduate students from different countries to enhance the concept of international networking.
- Create a gallery of stories on research innovations developed by international teams.
- Host a professional development workshop webinar with speakers from institutions across the world in a variety of careers.

### ***Workforce Demands***

- Examine the relationship between micro-credentials and master's and doctoral degrees. Examine the defining purpose, characteristics, and value proposition of each, particularly in relation to needs of the changing workforce.
- Rethink/Redefine the purpose of the PhD given the varied career paths of doctoral-recipients. Prioritize the development of transferable and cross-disciplinary skill sets.
- Develop formative and summative assessment strategies for transferrable skills such as teamwork, oral communication skills, global awareness, project management, and leadership.
- Establish (or improve) industry-university partnerships to develop models for mentorship programs and other possibilities such as co-produced curricula.

### ***Conceptualizing the University***

- Develop standards/guidance for collaborative, dual, and joint-degree doctoral programs for supervisors and students.
- Develop guidelines on how universities can demonstrate their impact and contributions to society. Propose additional metrics of doctoral impact to supplement peer reviewed journal articles and standard economic impact indicators e.g. number of jobs created; research expenditures; licenses; and patents.
- Think more concretely about learning outcomes and assessments for graduate education and find ways to assess contributions of all career paths. Define, measure, and report outcomes that address moral imperatives for transparency than simply compliance with external regulations.
- Identify barriers to intellectual risk taking and consider strategies for removing them. Additionally, identify and encourage the financial, curricular, cultural, and organizational practices that facilitate intellectual risk taking.