Florida State University
PhD Completion Project Phase II

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CGS Summer Workshop
July 2009
Florida State University

• Context
  – Research University (VH)
  – Liberal arts tradition
    • 25% of faculty in STEM fields
  – 8,370 graduate students
    • ~20% of student body
    • ~20% minorities
    • ~11% international
  – 73 doctoral programs
    • 2,309 advanced graduate (28%)
    • 368 PhDs (07-08); 36% increase from 03-04
Florida State University

• Decentralized Organization
  – The Graduate School
    • Enrollment targets
    • Dissertation checklists
    • University-wide fellowships
    • Professional development workshops
    • Responsible Conduct of Research
  – Admissions & Records
    • Demographics
    • Enrollment dates and status
    • Courses completed
    • Candidate for degree dates
  – Institutional Research
    • Retention and completion data updated annually for various cohorts (e.g. discipline, major, gender, ethnicity)
  – Departments and Colleges
    • Committee composition
    • Annual reviews
    • Required courses
    • Discipline specific milestones
Project Goals

• Increase PhD retention and completion by:
  – Developing and implementing a web-based system to track graduate student progress
  – Expanding the Professional Development Workshop Series
  – Develop a workshop for faculty focused on mentoring students
  – Assess the annual review process and recommend improvements
  – Conduct surveys to gain student feedback on their doctoral education, student services, and their experiences
  – Implement the e-mentoring service Mentornet
Evaluation

• Assess impact of interventions on doctoral retention and graduation
• Assess whether students who participate in activities (e.g. PFF, workshops) are more likely to advance to candidacy, graduate in a timely fashion and place effectively
• Assess whether participants in faculty training programs are more likely to have students graduate and place effectively
Other Project Responsibilities

• Send data to CGS
  – Retention and completion data
  – PhD Exit Survey results
    • Administered as part of checklist for ETD and graduation clearance
    • Survey of “PhD completers”
Graduation Rate

Percent

Years Since Matriculation

Science 1
Science 2
Science 3
Arts 1
Arts 2
PhD Exit Survey

PhD Graduates 12/05 - 11/08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad Disciplines</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soc-Sci</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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PhD Graduates 12/05 - 11/08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad Disciplines</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>Non-US</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>287</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>Soc Sci</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
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67% US Citizen
33% Non-US Citizen
PhD Graduates 12/05 - 11/08

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad Disciplines</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>White</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>39</td>
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<td>190</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soc Sci</td>
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<td>190</td>
<td></td>
<td>572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td></td>
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<td>572</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Black 78 9%
Hispanic 39 4%
Asian 190 22%
White 572 65%
Number of responses

Year 1  Year 2  Year 3  Year 4

Number of responses decreases over the years.
% Response by broad discipline

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4

Percentage

Engineering  Humanities  Life Sciences  Mathematics  Physical Sciences  Social sciences
Main factors contributing to completion

Year 1: Financial Support, Mentoring/advising, Family support
Year 2: Financial Support, Mentoring/advising, Family support
Year 3: Financial Support, Mentoring/advising, Family support
Year 4: Financial Support, Mentoring/advising, Family support

Percentage
Aware of orientation

Year 1: 51.4% (Aware of univ. orientation), 66.2% (Dept. or prog. orientation)
Year 2: 56.4% (Aware of univ. orientation), 63.2% (Dept. or prog. orientation)
Year 3: 59.7% (Aware of univ. orientation), 64.3% (Dept. or prog. orientation)
Year 4: 67.4% (Aware of univ. orientation), 73.9% (Dept. or prog. orientation)
Were the requirements of your program presented to you in clear written form?

- Yes
- No

Percent

- Regular Feedback
- No Regular Feedback
“non-completers”
Methodology

• Define the “non-completer”
  – Not registered for more than 2 consecutive semesters

• Develop a cover letter; online survey; phone script
  – To identify obstacles to completion and reduce attrition

• Received IRB approval November 2008
• Spring 2009 contacted 26 students
“non-completers”

Results

• 12 doctoral students were reached
• 2 completed the survey
• None wanted to be contacted by phone
“non-completers”

Next steps

• Expand to include other degree programs
• Identify and contact non-completers sooner
• Currently we have identified 33 additional students who we will be contacting by email
The Future

• Evaluating responses of the PhD exit survey on the basis of demographic and disciplinary categories