CGS New Deans Institute: Political Engagement

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Internal and External ‘Political’ Constituents

- Public institutions must educate and influence a wide range of stakeholders/constituents
  - Internal groups include:
    - Other Deans
    - Chancellors cabinet
    - Board of Trustees for UNC-Chapel Hill
  - External groups include:
    - Board of Governors for UNC system
    - State General Assembly (Senate and House)
    - Governor
    - Private enterprise
    - Public
Political Issues

• Social value of a graduate education
• Economic value of a graduate education
  – Graduate students make it possible to attract external funding; job creation; economic multiplier
• Institutional reputation is related to quality of graduate programs
• Tuition remission for out-of-state students
  – Funding our doctoral students
• Value of providing graduate education for out of state students
  – Graduate School is not subject to out-of-state enrollment caps
Strategies Employed at UNC-Chapel Hill

- Graduate Education Advancement Board
  - Specific for UNC-Chapel Hill
- North Carolina Council of Graduate Deans
- Relationship with UNC legislative liaisons
  - State level
  - Federal level
- Visibility with the Board of Trustees
- Strong relationships with members of Chancellors cabinet
- Networking
Graduate Education Advancement Board

• Mission
  – The Graduate Education Advancement Board assists the Graduate School and the University in generating broad support and funding for graduate education at UNC-Chapel Hill

• Membership
  – Community/state leaders with an interest in supporting graduate education
  – Significant donors contributing to graduate education
  – Legislators
  – Alumni in leadership positions
Federal and State Legislative Liaisons

• UNC-Chapel Hill maintains a state legislative liaison
  – The graduate school keeps this individual up to date on graduate school priorities
  – Work directly through this individual to maintain ties with General Assembly

• UNC system maintains a legislative office in Washington, DC
  – Attend annual events in Washington, DC
  – Frequent visits to this office and to legislative offices in Washington, DC
  – Reciprocal visits when legislative office director is in Chapel Hill
Working with the Board of Trustees

• Attend bi-monthly BOT meetings
  – Visibility is important
  – Raise issues of importance for graduate students

• Organize an annual lunch with BOT and faculty focused on graduate education

• Former Trustees appointed to the GEAB
  – Continues their contact with university and graduate education

• Networking at university events

• Invitations to major Graduate School events
  – Graduate student recognition ceremony
  – Hooding ceremony at commencement
A Positive Outcome

• State budget passed in House and Senate had different impacts on the university
  – Contacted by member of House and member of Senate prior to conference committee
    • Both members of GEAB
  – Opportunity to discuss impact of each budget on graduate education
  – Answered specific questions regarding budget impacts on graduate education

• Final budget was a compromise that did not disproportionately disadvantage graduate education