

PRESS RELEASE

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University Leaders Issue Statement of Principles and Practical Actions to Promote Graduate Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

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Washington, D.C. – Leaders of graduate institutions from 16 countries across six continents recently agreed on a set of principles and practical actions supporting graduate student mental health and wellbeing.

The statement was released at the conclusion of the 13th Annual Global Summit on Graduate Education, “*Cultural Contexts of Health and Well-being in Graduate Education*,” co-hosted by the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) and the University of Manchester, with support from Educational Testing Service (ETS) and ProQuest. The Global Summit is an annual event designed to promote international best practices in master’s and doctoral education.

This year’s theme was chosen by an international steering committee to recognize the critical importance of graduate student mental health and wellbeing in a global context, a focus that can’t be answered using a single method or approach. Addressing these concerns while working to destigmatize mental health treatment has become a priority in the graduate education community, but to date, there has been no coordinated global effort to address this issue.

Summit participants shared examples and background on the national and international context of graduate student mental health and wellbeing in their countries and institutions.

Session topics addressed the organizational and administrative challenges to supporting graduate student mental health and wellbeing, including:

- Addressing national trends and perspectives in cultural attitudes, differences in terminology, current research, legal contexts, demographic differences, and health care systems;
- Creating a Campus Culture that Proactively Supports Wellness;
- Addressing the Role of Mentors and Advisors;
- Supporting “At-Risk” Student Populations; and,
- Prioritizing Professional Development and Career Counseling.

Professor Luke Georghiou, deputy president and deputy vice-chancellor at The University of Manchester, commented that, “Well-being and mental health issues among postgraduate

researchers are high on the agenda at The University of Manchester. It has been immensely useful to have learned that this is a shared problem in all parts of the world, and most importantly to share experience on approaches to prevention and early detection of issues, and how to support students and staff in addressing them.”

CGS President Suzanne T. Ortega noted, “One of our shared goals is to foster learning environments that provide all current and future graduate students with the tools and support to succeed. Our discussions over the last two days brought to light new ideas and strategies to take back to our campuses.”

Participants in the summit included deans and other leaders of graduate schools and representatives of national and international associations devoted to graduate education. Along with the United Kingdom and the United States, the countries represented were: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Malta, New Zealand, Rwanda, and South Africa.

The consensus statement and practical actions are attached.

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About University of Manchester

The University of Manchester is a public research university in Manchester, England, formed in 2004 by the merger of the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology and the Victoria University of Manchester and is now the largest single-site university in the United Kingdom. Current enrollment at The University of Manchester is over 40,000 students, including 3,935 postgraduate research students.

About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced 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.