Structural Transformations to Reduce Time and Financial Burden

Mark Garrison, PhD
Dean, School of Graduate Studies
MSU Mission and Vision

• Morgan State University is the premier public urban research university in Maryland known for its excellence in teaching, intensive research, effective public service, and community engagement. Morgan prepares diverse and competitive graduates for success in a global, interdependent society.

• Founded 1867 as Centenary Biblical Institute.

• One of nation’s leading public HBCUs.
About Morgan State University

- R2: Doctoral Research — Moderate research activity. (70+ million external funds, 21-22.)
- 9600 total enrollment.
- 1500 graduate students (800 doctoral).
- 28 doctoral programs; 70 doctorates annually — 11 are recently approved programs.
- 45 masters programs; 300 masters annually.
- Centralized Graduate School model.
The Problems

• Lengthy programs.
  – Masters degrees taking up to 2 years
  – Doctoral programs with 60 plus hours of coursework and then lengthy dissertation work.
  – No structured stop out point (i.e., masters degree)

• Low funding levels. Many programs are predominately self-funded students.

• Time is itself costly, students languish
The 30/36/60 Framework

• Maryland Regulations:
  – 30 hour Masters degree.
  – Two years of study beyond masters for doctorate.
  – 60 hours from Bachelors to Doctorate.

• Two years of Study at Morgan is 36 credit hours.

• All new programs must comply with the framework.
Considerations for Existing Programs

• Develop proposals for a reduction of credits as outlined above (many existing programs are credit-heavy),

• Develop program changes that provide for the advancement of dissertation activities immediately after core doctoral core courses have been completed, and

• Develop program changes that build significant research or experiential components into the doctoral program from the beginning.
Guidelines for New Programs

• Every doctoral program must incorporate:
  – core competency coursework,
  – elective “concentration,” second discipline or transdisciplinary coursework, as well as
  – substantial research hours.

• 60-hour equivalency might be achieved with 24-30 hours (10 courses) of core and elective courses and 30-36 hours of research.

• 36 hour: 12-18 hours of core and elective courses and 18-24 hours of research to reach the two years of full-time study (36 credits). These 18-24 hours of research could further be divided into research rotations and dissertation research.
Current Transformations

• Most Masters programs working to be one-year programs, at minimum reducing coursework to 30 hours.
• Several existing doctoral programs have restructured the curriculum.
• All new doctoral programs comply with the 36/60 framework and have *en passant* masters. (11 programs).