



PRESS RELEASE

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CGS Contact: Kelley Karnes
602-791-8278 / kkarnes@cgs.nche.edu

ETS Contact: Alexandra Mazza
609-252-8515/amazza@ETS.org

The University of Maryland Receives ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education

Washington, DC – Today the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) and ETS, a global education and talent solutions company, presented the University of Maryland (UMD) with the 2024 ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admission through Completion. Stephen Roth, Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, accepted the co-sponsored award during a ceremony held at the CGS 64th Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri.

The ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education recognizes promising, innovative proposals to enhance student success and degree completion at the master's and doctoral levels while promoting inclusiveness. The winning institution is selected on the strength of its proposal to meet the award's goals and to serve as a model for other schools. The winner receives a two-year, \$20,000 matching grant.

UMD's proposal, the Graduate Pathways Faculty Fellows program, will establish Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) within graduate programs and departments to address challenges faced by graduate students. These FLCs will involve faculty working collaboratively to develop and implement targeted training in supervision/mentorship, writing feedback, mental health/wellbeing and career preparation.

UMD enthusiastically accepted the 2024 Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education. Roth and his team were inspired by UMD's long history of faculty learning communities and wanted to create one specifically for the purpose of shaping graduate education. He said that he and his team know the connection between student and faculty is critical to student success and this project aims to provide a model for ensuring faculty are prepared to best support that connection.

"I'm truly excited about this award and the recognition it provides to the incredible team of people in the UMD Graduate School who have been envisioning ways to improve student success through advancements in faculty mentoring. I'm grateful to Drs. Linda Macri and Spencer Benson for their work in envisioning the concept," Roth said. "We're grateful to the support of ETS and CGS and look forward to sharing our insights as we progress through the project."

CGS's President, Suzanne Ortega, noted that the project has the potential for scaling to other universities and builds on the strength and collaborative spirit of UMD faculty.

“The establishment of FLCs for graduate education would be beneficial at every graduate school and represents a powerful opportunity for faculty to come together, share expertise and develop best practices that will directly enhance the academic, professional and personal growth of their graduate students,” Ortega said. “We are so grateful to ETS for their support in recognizing this innovative way to promote best practices among graduate schools.”

“Faculty play a pivotal role in shaping graduate students’ academic and professional trajectories,” said Ken Eisner, Managing Director of Higher Education to Workforce at ETS. “The University of Maryland’s Faculty Learning Communities initiative places student success at the forefront through an in-depth, personalized approach to mentorship, mental health, and career readiness. ETS is proud to support this innovative program, which homes in on the evolving, student-centered role of faculty and exemplifies how institutions can empower graduate students to thrive and build pathways to workforce success.”

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About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 460 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.

About ETS

ETS is a global education and talent solutions organization enabling lifelong learners to be future ready. We advance the science of measurement to build the benchmarks for fair and valid skill assessment. We are committed to powering human progress by promoting skill proficiency, empowering upward mobility and unlocking more opportunities for everyone, everywhere. Our assessment products – including the TOEFL, TOEIC, GRE, and Praxis Assessments – as well as our innovative solutions and subsidiaries help 50 million people each year to clarify their strengths and find opportunities for growth in education, work and beyond. We continue to operate around the world, with offices in 25 locations and operations in 200 countries and territories. www.ets.org