

UMKC Graduate School Updates

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Topics

- Associate Dean search
- CGS Strategic Consultation Report on UMKC IPhD Programs

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CSG Consultation – three areas of emphasis

1. **Assessment**, Research, and Funding Practices for the IPhD
 2. **Demand** for the IPhD, Career Pathways, the Student Experience
 3. **Recommendations** for a Redesign and/or Restructure of the IPhD Program to align it with best practices for an interdisciplinary PhD program
- **Three consultants:** Drs. Will Cantrell (Michigan Technological University), Paul Gemperline (East Carolina University), and William Karpus (UW-Madison), representing **Council of Graduate Schools**
 - **On Site Visit:** September 22-24, 2021
 - **Final Report:** November 29, 2021

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UMKC IPhD Program

- Launched in 1990
- Goals:
 - **Advance** research and study at the **intersection** of disciplines where innovation and competencies are emerging
 - **Create** opportunities for faculty from smaller programs to partner with other disciplines and contribute to doctoral education
- Currently: 30 active primary discipline IPhD programs

Table 1. Summary of Program Prioritization of each broad discipline category

Prioritization	Master Program				Doctoral Program				Total
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
A. Business/Management	2			3				1	6
B. Law				2					2
C. Health Sciences	3	1	1	1	3		1	3	13
D. Education				7	1	3		4	15
E. Social Sciences	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	10
F. Humanities	3	1	1	2		2	1	1	11
G. Conservatory	6	3		1	3				13
H. STEM	5	6			5	5	1		22
Subtotal	21	12	3	18	13	11	4	10	92
Program subtotal	54				38				92

internal report 2020

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1. IPhD Assessment, Research, and Funding Practices to Inform Sustainability & Reinvestment

- There is an overreliance on two-discipline **coursework** for the interdisciplinary
 - Suggestion: options other than coursework in a co-discipline should be explored
 - Better understand what interdisciplinary research really means (National Report 2018)
- UMKC faculty advocated for removal of the “1” as a **qualifier** to their PhD program to avoid confusing and causing degree candidates to ask if the degree being earned is somehow less rigorous or valuable than a PhD
 - Advertising the program as an IPhD should be revisited, as it still remains as a point of friction for many of the IPhD programs
- Due to UMKC’s decentralized funding model, there is the potential for wide **disparities** in stipend levels across units – stipends at UMKC are well below national averages.
 - UMKC minimum: \$12,500 per academic yr (fall & spring semesters)
 - National average: Biology \$19,060; Computer Sci. \$19,202; English \$16,802; History \$16,364; Physics \$19,766
 - Suggestion: Sustained, strategic investment in areas of growth would be facilitated by centralizing funding for the IPhD in SGS
 - PHD can no longer be viewed as apprenticeship that prepares students for future careers in academia
 - A thriving, robust PhD program cannot be dependent upon the needs for undergraduate instruction.

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2. IPhD Demand, Career Pathways, and the Student Experience

- UMKC’s **data** collection and assessment need to be more reliably and systematically in this critical area.
 - Need to create labor market portfolios for all of the active IPhD disciplines
- UMKC has **assessed** 4-yr enrollment trends by discipline, net revenue, estimated costs, salaries, unit overhead, unit reported evidence of current/future job demand, mission alignment and impact of other regional programs
 - Suggestion: these assessments should be complemented with a **comparative analysis to determine**
 - Which programs are meeting current forecasted labor demand
 - Which programs should grow to meet forecasted increases in labor market demand
 - Which disciplines might be candidates for sunseting due to insufficient labor market demand
 - That analysis would be to implement tracking of IPhD graduates for **long term employment and career placement** [long-term employment and career placement data for IPhD students at UMKC is not being collected; labor intensive and typically require multiple alumni outreach programs – exit surveys, alumni surveys, LinkedIn data. Better to purchase these services]
 - A periodic **academic program review** (at an interval of 5, 7, or 10 yrs) of discipline specific areas within the IPhD be implemented, to include both an internal and external assessment [UMKC has not conducted periodic academic reviews of the IPhD program and its disciplines]
 - Recommend UMKC consider conducting an ‘end-of-1st-year’ survey in addition to an exit survey

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2. IPhD Demand, Career Pathways, and the Student Experience

- Several higher ed consulting firms and commercial data sources for determining demand for graduates of the IPhD Program:
 - Emsi Burning Class Technologies: a labor market analytics firm

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3. Innovative Redesign and Restructure of IPhD Programs in Alignment with Practices of Exemplary Programs

- **Name** changed on the diploma from IPhD to PhD in SGS
 - the organizational structure still reflects the fact that the IPhD program is a collection of 30 disciplinary PhD programs with an interdisciplinary label added to the PhD degree. The label – a major **hindrance** to graduate student training
- UMKC needs to examine the structure of the program due to four major **challenges**:
 - *Declining application numbers and low enrollments: a 37% decrease in applications over the last 5 years*
 - *Low degree award numbers*
 - *Programming that does not align with the UMKC Research Forward Initiative*
 - *How interdisciplinary is achieved*
 - **Suggestion: the options for this range from abandoning the IPhD altogether [which may not be feasible within the UM system] to a grouping of disciplines under umbrella interdisciplinary programs – such as Humanities PhD, Engineering PhD, Natural Sciences PhD, Biological Sciences PhD, Social Sciences PhD**
 - Grouping of the disciplines within a unified interdisciplinary structure would preserve much of the character of the current program, but allow for an emphasis on the interdisciplinary within those groupings
 - Groups would also facilitate a needed student cohort experience

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3. Innovative Redesign and Restructure of IPhD Programs in Alignment with Practices of Exemplary Programs

- SGS perform an extensive marketing analysis of the existing disciplines that constitute the current UMKC IPhD Program
 - Ascertain how well applications are informed about PhD educational opportunities at UMKC
 - Ascertain how well the SGS website contains info that applicants find useful in making decisions
- SGS perform the “win-loss” analysis - acquire info from the National Student Data Clearinghouse on cross-admitted applicants to compare peer and aspirational institution student admission and enrollment
 - Provide insight into whether UNMKC is competitive with peer institutions
 - Support whether an admitted student survey methodology would be useful to ascertain reasons why or why not students decided to enroll at UMKC

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Questions?

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