**Executive Summary of Program Assessment**

*The summary, including this page, should be no more than three pages.*

**Campus:** UMSL

**College/School:** TheGraduate School

**Academic Unit:** (This is an administrative review)

**Date Submitted:** 01/08/13 *(dd/mm/yy)*

**Person Responsible for Success of Program:** Judith Walker de Felix, Dean

**Submitted by:** Pat Dolan, Special Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

**Degree Programs** (All graduate programs at UMSL report to the Graduate School, but faculty in academic colleges are responsible for them.)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Degree (e.g., BS, MA, PhD)** | **Degree Program** | **Enrollment** | | **Number of Degrees Awarded** | |
|  |  | **Most Recent Fall Semester**  **(*provide year*)** | **5-Year Fall Semester Average** | **Most Recent Academic Year**  **(*provide year*)** | **5-Year Average** |
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**Changes Since Last Review**

* An associate dean was added in response to the review of 2005.
* After years of being relegated to undesirable space, Graduate Admissions staff now have an office with more visibility in the heart of the second floor of the Millennium Student Center.
* A new COGNOS search option was developed for Graduate Applications so that graduate program directors can more easily track the status of applicants to their programs. As a result, the percentage of applications that remain pending has declined by 13%.
* The process for admitting non-degree seeking students has been simplified to make it easier for individuals to pursue their personal educational objectives.
* The sub-committees of the Graduate Council have been reorganized to eliminate duplicative effort and streamline the faculty governance of the Graduate School. In addition, the procedures for final approval of policy changes by the graduate faculty have been modified to take advantage of electronic communications.
* Our student population has become increasingly more diverse. The percentage of African Americans on campus is slightly higher than the percentage for the state. UMSL awards more Master’s degrees to African Americans than any other public university in Missouri, and our African American population of doctoral graduates (15%) is more than double the national population of doctoral recipients (6%).
* The university awarded 864 master’s degrees in Fiscal Year 2012, a 19% increase over the last five years.
* Doctoral degrees increased from 61 to 74, a 21% increase over the last five years.

**Strategies or Plans for Improving Program**

* The reviewers agreed that the Graduate School must take a greater leadership role on campus.
  + The current strategic planning offers an opportunity to redefine the mission and recommend new initiatives that will invigorate graduate education at UMSL.
  + As part of the Strategic Enrollment Plan, the Graduate School will review current admissions procedures, use more technology, and conduct a pilot approach to facilitated admissions.
  + Since the campus’ strategic goal is to increase degrees by 20% by 2018, graduate programs must also address attrition and time-to-degree to increase degrees awarded in the short-term.
    - We will work with individual programs to assure that students complete their degrees in a timely fashion.
  + As a result of the Strategic Plan, the Graduate School will hire a corporate recruiter to take UMSL’s message of quality graduate education to corporations, hospitals, schools, and non-profit organizations.
* In response to reviewers’ recommendations on the mission, Graduate School administrators will define roles of the Graduate School and academic departments and review mission statements at comparator institutions to create a more useful mission statement.
* New software and processes should help the Graduate School meet its goal of providing efficient services.
* DARS and Grades First might be tested to facilitate graduate advising across campus.
  + We have started the process to prepare to extend the ImageNow system used for admissions to advising and graduation processes and allow us to move exclusively to electronic forms.
* In view of the nation-wide increase in student debt load, the Graduate School is collaborating with the Office of Student Financial Aid and with the graduate deans at Saint Louis University and Truman State to offer advising programs on Financial Literacy.
* Collaborating with the new director of Alumni Services as well as program directors, the Graduate School will monitor post-graduation career development of UMSL graduates.

**Other Comments**

Our national organization, Council of Graduate Schools, is not optimistic about the growth of graduate education nationwide, primarily because of student finances and the “disruption” of various innovations in the application of technology to education. UMSL’s graduate population, however, is beginning to increase after its high point in 2010 and then a decline. For example, admissions for fall 2013 increased 23% over fall 2012. Although it is too early to determine whether all admitted will enroll and succeed, the dramatic turnaround suggests an optimistic future. In general, the metropolitan environment offers a strategic advantage that the Graduate School intends to develop.