



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

UBCV's Graduate Student Strategy and Operational Plan

2010 – 2015

July 2010

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UBCV's Graduate Student Strategy 2010 – 2015

“As one of the world’s leading universities, The University of British Columbia creates an exceptional learning environment that fosters global citizenship, advances a civil and sustainable society, and supports outstanding research to serve the people of British Columbia, Canada and the world.” – UBC Vision

Creating an exceptional learning environment for UBC Graduate Students requires the University to provide:

Academic excellence and exemplary governance

- through high quality academic programs, excellent student outcomes, and efficient and transparent management of graduate student matters

Equitable funding and resources

- with competitive and transparent funding for both graduate students and graduate programs

Effective recruitment and engagement

- resulting in a diverse graduate student community of the highest calibre that welcomes and supports aboriginal and international students

An outstanding graduate student experience

- in an intellectual and social environment based on quality, equity and mutual respect that promotes successful academic outcomes and enables all students to achieve their potential

Professional and career development

- providing transformative opportunities for academic and professional development of graduate students, and alumni, community and international engagement, to further career options and enable students to become outstanding global citizens who contribute to a civil and sustainable society

Seven measures that would tell if we are ‘on track’

We must also identify and implement measures to indicate if we are ‘on track’ in achieving the Goals of this Strategy. The first six are either already underway or planned – it is much harder to gather data for the seventh.

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| <i>Recruitment</i> | 1. Recruitment quality and numbers |
| | 2. Aboriginal and International enrolments |
| <i>Progress</i> | 3. Program Review Reports |
| | 4. Climate and Culture Reports |
| <i>Outcomes</i> | 5. Completion Rates and Times Reports |
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The purpose of this *UBCV Graduate Student Strategy – 2010-2015* is to provide an overarching framework to guide the University, Faculties and Graduate Programs in providing the best possible educational experience for our graduate students. It is founded on the UBC Vision statement and extends the Commitments and Goals in *Place and Promise*.

The Strategy is supported by an *Operational Plan*, which delves deeper to provide goals, actions and operational guidance at different levels for the many UBC Vancouver units involved in ensuring excellence in our provisions for graduate students.

The graduate student experience is a broadly shared responsibility, relying on effective horizontal and vertical collaborations between faculty and staff from graduate programs, academic departments, Faculties, Enrolment Services, Student Development and Services, Student Housing, the Provost's Office and the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

The core of the academic experience of graduate students arises from working closely with faculty members and fellow graduate students within graduate programs. Many graduate students quickly become junior colleagues, who contribute their own skills and competencies to our learning environment, while they develop and hone others. Recognizing these Faculty-based responsibilities, each Faculty and administrative unit will develop its own discipline-based graduate strategy. This is particularly so for those Faculties that administer their own professional graduate programs.

The effective provision of excellent academic programs for graduate students and the quality of the broader graduate student experience are significantly enhanced by many centralized activities: including funding of scholarships; coordination and guidance in graduate recruitment strategies; presenting an external profile of excellence in graduate studies at UBC; provision of orientation and support programs for students, faculty and staff; professional development programs and travel support for students; and the wider provision of other student services, such as housing and childcare.

1 ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE and EXEMPLARY GOVERNANCE

Providing high quality academic programs, excellent student outcomes, and efficient and transparent management of graduate student matters

a) Review and improve graduate program quality

The academic content of graduate programs is the responsibility of the academic unit providing the program. These units undergo periodic review to evaluate the quality and outcomes of their programs. Through the Graduate Council, the Faculty of Graduate Studies (FoGS) has developed Guidelines to inform these reviews as they relate to graduate programs and a set of pertinent data that FoGS can most easily and consistently provide.

The Guidelines encompass graduate student information including enrolment and recruitment statistics, scholarships and awards, teaching assistantships, training and mentoring, resources, research productivity, completion rates and times, and post-graduation placement. The data provided by FoGS are intended to assist academic units in preparing the graduate program(s) section of their self-study reports.

It is expected that these Guidelines will be increasingly used by graduate programs in 2010 and beyond.

There are diverse ways of constructing graduate education programs across different disciplines, and there are also differences between research and professional programs.

In addition, some graduate programs greatly value the Masters degree as preparation to enter a PhD, while others increasingly allow 'direct entry' to a PhD (or 'doctoral stream' Masters enrolments). Our quality assurance measures, processes and funding must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate and support these differences.

b) Enhance successful transition to graduate studies

Graduate study is different from undergraduate education. It is characterized by increased student autonomy, higher academic demands, closer relationships with faculty, and potentially exciting and rewarding outcomes for both faculty and students. The overall goal is to achieve the timely completion of an excellent degree for every student. To enhance successful transition to graduate study, graduate programs should provide guidelines for incoming students containing relevant information about matters such as program expectations, resources, funding, rights and responsibilities. Effective 'Orientation Programs' for entering students at University, Faculty, departmental and program levels also greatly assist students to 'hit the ground running'. These provisions are not uniformly excellent across the campus.

For some students inadequate language skills can be an early impairment to academic success. Best practice indicates that early identification of language needs followed by appropriate courses to enhance the skills required for graduate success is the most successful strategy. FoGS is currently developing a proposal for English language evaluation and enhanced support, in collaboration with Continuing Studies, for incoming and current graduate students. It is also timely to review the required TOEFL/IELTS levels for graduate entry, which at UBC appear to be among the lowest in the country.

Current students can also find assistance for achieving academic success in the many activities under the umbrella of the *Graduate Pathways to Success (GPS)* program offered by FoGS. For example, seminars on overcoming barriers to completing a thesis are offered every term. An interdisciplinary setting is provided in which students learn to manage their journey through graduate school in a way that balances scholarly effort with attention to personal wellbeing. Workshops are scheduled through the year to help doctoral students to write, format and defend their dissertations. To assist them to fund their research through grants and scholarships, there are also presentations provided by FoGS to explain the expectations of the various funding bodies. A series of sessions on research management and an online course on research ethics will be launched in 2010. Academic success depends on acquiring a range of knowledge, behaviours, attitudes and skills, and the GPS program supports graduate students as they develop in every way.

c) Monitor graduate student progress

An essential component of excellent graduate education is the regular and systematic monitoring of students' academic progress. Although it is FoGS policy that the academic progress of each research graduate student be reviewed annually, there is considerable variation across the university in this regard, and many programs do not carry out such monitoring on a regular or systematic basis.

Unfortunately the many central information systems currently in place fail to provide effective support at the graduate program level. As a consequence, several graduate programs have expended considerable effort on developing and refining information management tools to enable them to review graduate student progress in an effective and timely manner. While these tools help staff to provide a more effective service to students they inevitably duplicate information held within central systems. A collaborative initiative between FOGs and Enrolment Services has begun recently in an attempt to find a more efficient way to provide timely, consistent and accurate information that

supports graduate program management while reducing the duplication of effort across programs.

Eligibility to continue receiving multiyear funding requires evidence that expected academic progress has been made; however, this assumes that we have the tools to monitor such progress. In the absence of an effective centralized system, academic progress templates, based on examples of good practice at UBC, will be developed through the Grad Council Policy Committee and made widely available to graduate programs. Monitoring academic progress using these (or similar) tools is required for Four-Year Fellowship recipients for continued funding. Use of these templates or other similar tools will be encouraged for all graduate research students.

d) Data driven improvement

The Faculty of Graduate Studies, in collaboration with PAIR, is ideally placed to survey, analyze and distribute data related to graduate student programs, outcomes and experiences. The purpose of these analyses and reports is to inform and drive change and quality improvement in our practices and performance. FoGS also provides these reports to the Senior Executive, Faculties and graduate programs for their own strategic planning purposes.

Data have been gathered from UBC graduate students over many years as part of the *G13 Graduate and Professional Student Survey report (GPSS)* (see also 4 a (i) below). FoGS has recently analyzed the 2007 data and the resulting report in 2009 – *UBC Graduate Student Culture and Climate* – provides guidance for improvement at all levels. FoGS will also use these data to compare within disciplines across Canada.

A second report prepared by FoGS – *Graduate Student Completion Rates and Times* – was published in March 2010. It shows that the academic outcomes of graduate programs are quite variable and sometimes less than ideal.

Graduate student *Exit Surveys* were developed and implemented in January 2009, with separate surveys for completers and non-completers. Data from these surveys are currently being analyzed.

FoGS also provides annually to Faculties analyses of SIS data relating to their performance across graduate parameters such as load and completions, completion rates and times, examination outcomes, student satisfaction, and participation in supervision workshops and professional development programs. This will be done down to department level where possible. Interest has been expressed in also investigating domestic/international and age-related aspects of survey results.

e) Improve supervision and graduate teaching

Effective supervision is of fundamental importance to the success and experience of graduate students and is central to the mandate of a world-class, research-intensive university. In the most recent G13 GPSS survey (2010), between 10 and 24% of graduate student respondents did not believe that their supervisor had performed well across the 13 indicators of effective mentoring activities. Poor supervision is unacceptable – it is a disaster for the student and a risk to the University in terms of its obligations.

A recent informal survey of graduate advisors in each of the graduate programs at UBC revealed little in the way of development opportunities for new or existing faculty members and to date UBC has had no centrally-provided opportunities for faculty members to improve their supervisory skills. At a FoGS forum held in January 2008, graduate advisors from 34 graduate programs identified development of faculty in graduate supervision as one of their key needs, and requested that FoGS provide this. In response, FoGS has addressed this critical need in partnership with the Center for

Teaching and Academic Growth, the Graduate Student Society, and UBC faculty members. A series of four workshops for faculty members on graduate supervision, initially targeted towards new or junior faculty members, have been developed and were first provided in 2009/10. Experienced, effective graduate student supervisors from a variety of disciplines are featured in each workshop. In 2010/11 these will be provided to discipline-focused groups.

Graduate teaching and quality of supervision should be appropriately recognized as part of workload, promotion and tenure considerations and in the distribution of resources for graduate education. Service on supervisory committees and examination committees should also be formally recognized.

Information sessions and workshops for grad advisors, faculty and staff, and programs for student and supervisors on graduate issues, also help achieve a level of consistency, transparency and equity in handling of graduate student matters across campus. We need to ensure that faculty members are well informed of their roles and responsibilities in relation to scholarly and research integrity, and supervision generally.

f) Provide exemplary governance

While the responsibility for graduate student administration lies mainly with FoGS, and with Faculties for certain professional graduate programs, Enrolment Services provides the systems required.

Once UBC has completed its 'big budget shakeup', a collaborative review of central administrative processes as they apply to graduate students is essential, with the aim of achieving improved outcomes for all stakeholders, not least being the graduate students themselves. Improvements in enrolment management, including new technologies, infrastructure needs, and more effective communication and coordination between Enrolment Services, FoGS and Faculties, are necessary.

An initial investigation by Enrolment Services and FoGS into our ability to manage graduate student data effectively and to identify supervisors with students identified clear deficiencies. Work is underway to develop an overall process that will resolve these deficiencies.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies has commenced a cycle of review of UBC policy and procedures related to such matters as graduate admission and enrolment, examination, handling grievances and appeals, code of conduct for students/supervisors/university (roles and responsibilities of each), conflict of interest and graduate supervision, research ethics awareness, IP and authorship policy for students. FoGS administrative procedures will also be reviewed for clarity, consistency, transparency, equity and effectiveness.

Furthermore, the appointment of the Ombudsperson in 2009 provides a crucial resource for graduate students. In addition to assisting those already experiencing difficulty, the Ombudsperson has a valuable proactive role to play.

2 EQUITABLE FUNDING and RESOURCES

Ensuring competitive, transparent and sustainable funding for graduate student recruitment and retention, and for viable graduate programs

a) Graduate student funding

UBC has made two highly strategic changes to the way that graduate students are supported – the introduction of the Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) in 2007 to replace the PhD Tuition award, and the Four Year Doctoral Fellowships (4YF) in 2009 – to

provide adequate, equitable and sustainable funding for graduate student recruitment, retention and success into the future.

These changes mark a dramatic increase in the level of funding allocated to support UBC's graduate students. We have been able to make these major changes because of the additional graduate resources of the four-year Provincial Grad Growth funding. At the same time, however, the global financial decline has reduced considerably the funds available for endowed graduate awards and this situation will need careful management for several years.

PhD students are eligible for UBC support through the 4YF (also external sources and GSI). UBC support for masters students is in the hands of Faculties and programs, largely through the GSI. Many of our graduate students are also successful in external award competitions. Ensuring the success of the overall strategy will therefore require careful annual monitoring of outcomes and modifying our processes if required. We need to review whether we have the balance right between funds available for masters and doctoral students. We also need to know if we are recruiting the best students and how to be more strategic in this, particularly for international recruitment.

It is important also to recognize that graduate student funding is an area of considerable interest to many donors and it should be given a high profile in relation to our development efforts.

i) The Graduate Support Initiative

With the introduction of the Graduate Support Initiative (GSI) in 2007, central funds previously provided to PhD students through the PhD Tuition Award were redirected to Faculties to provide graduate awards that can be given to both masters and doctoral students.

By 2012, GSI funding to Faculties is expected to amount to \$6.76M. This is significantly more than the previous combined UGF and GES funds for both masters and doctoral students (\$5.32M). For reasons of transparency, the GSI program requires Faculties or graduate programs to make their criteria for allocating GSI funds publically available to their graduate students. It is important to ensure this information is provided and updated as necessary.

ii) Four-year doctoral fellowships

The UBC 4YF program was devised for effective recruitment and retention of PhD students – a competitive program of support with a simple marketing message. We want top PhD students – we'll support them to complete their PhD, with both tuition fees and a living stipend for up to four years – and we'll give them an outstanding educational experience. It is a merit-based scholarship program providing four-year fellowships annually for about 185 new PhD students (tuition plus \$16,000 p.a.), for an ongoing total of approximately 750 fully supported students at any given time.

In addition, each year about 200 of our graduate students win highly prestigious external awards for their graduate studies – Vanier, CGS, Tri-council and others. However some of these doctoral awards are for 2 or 3 years only. PhD students who win an external competitive award will receive a 4YF award for the remainder of their first four years of enrolment, subject to satisfactory academic progress.

Outcomes of the 4YF initiative, including the use of enrolment and performance measures to allocate 4YF places to graduate programs, will be monitored. It is also important to review and respond to the outcomes of external competitions annually to maximize our success in future years.

iii) Aboriginal awards

Over the past several years we have been pleased by a steady increase in the number of Aboriginal applicants, in the amount of scholarship funding being offered to Aboriginal graduate students at UBC and in the success of our Aboriginal students in external award competitions such as NSERC and SSHRC.

One specific goal of the 4YF initiative was to allocate multi-year funding packages for Aboriginal graduate students so that there are at least 10 Aboriginal holders of these awards at any given time, ongoing. For Aboriginal students these awards may be used for either masters or doctoral programs, with funding available up to the end of the second year of a master's program or the fourth year of a doctoral program. Stimulated by the Aboriginal Strategic Plan, the VP and AVPAA provided funds to 'kick-start' this proposal in the 2009/10 year. For the first time through the Aboriginal Graduate Fellowships competition, multi-year funding offers were available to new awardees. This was particularly useful given the huge decline in our endowed funds, such as the Paetzold Fellowships, that are used, in part, for Aboriginal graduate initiatives.

Despite these modest improvements, we must review the adequacy and effectiveness of our funding for aboriginal students and develop appropriate targets for improvement.

iv) Graduate Global Leadership Fellowships

A proposal is also under consideration to reserve a small number of 4YF as 'Graduate Global Leadership Fellowships' to support doctoral study for international students showing outstanding leadership in humanitarian and development work in their home country. Fellows would be supported to pursue research and study that would enhance and support contributions already made and which would be of particular use when they return home to apply their newly gained skills and/or knowledge.

We will seek matching external sponsorship for these awards through units such as the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Graduate Global Leadership Fellowships would thus open the way to a world-class graduate education for emerging scholars from countries with developing educational systems, who may not otherwise be able to access high quality graduate education in their home country. Recipients would be individuals with an appropriate academic background and who have an established record of contributing to the development of a civil and sustainable society in their home country through professional, academic or volunteer work.

v) Endowed awards

A considerable number (~475) of our graduate students benefit from our many endowed graduate awards, previously yielding \$3.5M in total. However, in the present economic environment, and with the University's decision to establish stabilization funds for all endowments, the funds available from our endowed awards for the 2009-2010 academic year dropped to ~\$1 million. Some of these awards have been particularly valuable in providing support for Aboriginal students as mentioned above. These funds will need to be managed effectively in the future.

Through development initiatives, there are likely to be excellent opportunities to attract donations for additional graduate scholarships and anecdotally, we are finding that some donors are apparently open to the idea of 'topping up' their endowments for scholarships. These opportunities clearly need to be investigated.

vi) Needs-based support

Graduate students comprise between 1/5 – 1/4 of the student cohort and they are, on average, older than undergraduate students, with greater family and other

responsibilities. Graduate students are also less likely than undergraduates to receive financial support from their parents. While many graduate students meet their basic financial needs through awards and research and teaching assistantships, many also report having to work long hours in jobs unrelated to their academic work to make ends meet. This is counterproductive to academic progress.

Eligibility criteria and allocation of bursary and emergency funding to graduate students (especially international students) will be reviewed in light of differing needs of graduate students and institutional goals of expanded access to graduate study and student success/retention. Student Financial Aid and Awards, International Student Development and the Faculty of Graduate Studies will work together to undertake this review.

Information about actual costs of living in Vancouver and different funding sources available (bursaries, emergency funds and UBC loans) need to be more effectively communicated to graduate students both prior to and after their arrival. This information also needs to be effectively communicated to Graduate Secretaries, Grad Advisors and supervisors as these people will often be the first to be aware of student need.

b) Graduate program funding

It is essential that we provide adequate and targeted resources to maintain excellent viable graduate programs. There has been a level of concern about the transparency and flow of funding and resources for teaching and supervising graduate students across the campus, particularly in relation to interdisciplinary programs as in LFS, ISGP, CfIS and the College of Health Disciplines. This needs to be resolved as a matter of some urgency so that appropriate resources flow transparently to where the students are actually being taught or supervised and to ensure valued programs remain viable.

The new budget model, based on principles of predictability and transparency, with appropriate incentives and aligned with the new Strategic Plan, should resolve this issue. Flow of resources will be linked to graduate enrolment, outcomes and tuition within an overall planning framework of planned and agreed targets.

Provision of graduate student office accommodation is unequal across campus, as is the development of space that promotes collegial interaction between faculty and graduate students. There is an excellent opportunity to broaden the influence and activities of our two splendid Graduate Colleges – Green College and St. John’s College. There is also an opportunity to plan more strategically for graduate and postgraduate student space (and child care) in planned new student residences.

3 EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT and ENGAGEMENT

Resulting in a diverse graduate student community of the highest calibre that welcomes and supports aboriginal and international students

a) Recruiting the best

As seen in *Place and Promise* and the *Research Strategy*, UBC aims to expand its recruitment of outstanding students and faculty from around the world. While the recruitment of the most able graduate students is strongly linked to individual faculty members and graduate programs, graduate student recruitment and enrolment must also be a strategic exercise that involves planning at both central and Faculty levels to achieve excellence, growth, diversity, and the appropriate balance and distribution of students.

Internationally, graduate student recruitment is under great change. We are now in a highly competitive environment where virtually every university in every country has the

goal of significantly increasing its enrolment of graduate students. Addressing this situation requires a coordinated and strategic approach across the university, and more effective collaboration with government and other agencies to position UBC favorably in the global “market” for outstanding graduate students.

While aiming for increased graduate student enrolment, it is important to maintain high academic standards for the students we do admit. Admission decisions must be made carefully to ensure that our enrolled students are fully capable of producing first-rate work, and then we must provide engaged, high-calibre supervision and academic experiences that will bring out their best. Admitting more students than we can supervise effectively diminishes the student learning experience and compromises the quality of our graduate programs.

A new *Graduate Strategic Recruitment and Enrolment Committee*, with broad representation from across the University, has been established to develop the principles, strategies and effective processes for graduate student aspects of recruitment and enrolment. It focuses on attracting and improving access to the most able graduate students, increasing our overall numbers, and determining appropriate enrolment targets in the context of our goal of delivering outstanding graduate education. It will also consider the distribution of graduate students between professional and research graduate programs, research masters and doctoral programs and associated funding issues. Plans and strategies emerging from this committee directly contribute to the overall Strategic Enrolment Management of the institution. They also support other strategic goals of the University, including expanding Aboriginal engagement and internationalization in graduate education.

UBC is in the fourth and final year of a commitment to the Provincial Government to grow graduate enrolment. We must meet our growth target and identify whether to advocate for an extension of growth funding from the government. We also need to reflect on our desired undergraduate/graduate balance and the distribution of these places. If we were to decide to rebalance the University’s enrolment towards graduate students, then it would be important to base this on strategically planned targets that recognize potential capacity, student demand, quality outcome measures and the costs and benefits of increasing numbers in different graduate programs.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies works collaboratively with PAIR and Enrolment Services to provide relevant data to inform the development of strategies and targets for recruitment of domestic and international graduate students. Faculties will develop plans for graduate growth based on their capacity, resources and strategic goals. These plans will be integrated and evaluated against the University’s overall objectives in relation to graduate enrolment.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies will continue to consult with programs to enhance their particular recruitment strategies and to serve as a campus hub for graduate recruitment expertise. The Faculty is also improving the University’s capacity to reach out to prospective students around the world by utilizing web-based strategies and social networking engagement. We will also investigate *funded* recruitment opportunities in China, India, Central and South America and elsewhere.

The ‘Rising Stars of Research’ event for undergraduate students has been an extraordinary national success and will continue to be developed to contribute to the recruitment of exceptional graduate students to UBC. The main priority is to identify viable ongoing funding for the initiative. Other priorities include investigating the potential for expanding RSR to international participants, perhaps involving MITACS, and to include the social sciences and humanities in 2010.

b) Aboriginal engagement

Expanding the educational opportunities for Aboriginal students is a key commitment of *Place and Promise* and the basis of the *Aboriginal Strategic Plan*. An Aboriginal Graduate Student Strategy is being developed in collaboration between FoGS and the First Nations House of Learning (FNHL) to develop more effective ways of recruiting, supporting and working with Aboriginal graduate students.

As mentioned earlier, improved scholarship opportunities have been established for Aboriginal graduate students. Our goal is to increase available funding to ensure all meritorious Aboriginal applicants offered admission are able to access entrance funding. Once registered, we need to work more closely with graduate programs to ensure Aboriginal graduate students receive the support and resources they need to complete their programs successfully. Showcasing Aboriginal graduate student scholarship and perspectives will foster improved engagement of aboriginal graduate students. Also workshops have been developed for faculty on 'cross-cultural communication', including Aboriginal issues, cross-cultural supervision and intercultural understanding and for students on cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Many Faculties and individual graduate programs have been and continue to make great strides in increasing Aboriginal graduate engagement (particularly due to funding and Aboriginal faculty hiring commitments). These best practices need to be shared with Faculties and programs that are at an earlier stage in the development of effective Aboriginal graduate strategies.

c) International opportunities

i) Global graduate profile

International engagement is another key commitment of *Place and Promise*. Major goals of the University are to increase the international dimension of our educational opportunities and the capacity of our students to engage internationally. Many initiatives are underway across campus to enhance international graduate student recruitment and to interact more effectively with international students before and after they arrive. The Faculty of Graduate Studies has expanded its web presence directed at reaching out more effectively to prospective international graduate students using web-based interactive tools.

The Asia Pacific Regional Office and our membership in international networks such as U21 and APRU provide opportunities that we should more effectively utilise. We can also build stronger partnerships in Europe through agencies such as the EU and DAAD that could directly benefit our graduate profile. The AUCC has taken the initiative to improve its understanding of the Bologna Process and links with the European Universities Association, and UBC has recently clarified its admission requirements that would allow students with 'Bologna degrees' to enter directly into our graduate programs.

With the approval in 2009 of Joint PhD enrolment at UBC, we can offer the very best students a PhD program that is jointly designed, supervised and examined in collaboration with an international partner university. Development of further international double or joint graduate degree programs would bring considerable value to students and the University.

Regular participation by UBC faculty and staff at national and international Graduate Studies meetings and invited workshops, and contributions to international publications on graduate education, are effective in strengthening UBC's role as a globally influential university and a global leader in graduate education.

ii) Intercultural understanding

A number of opportunities are provided at the graduate level to increase intercultural awareness. These include targeted workshops for supervisors on cross-cultural supervision and intercultural understanding, for graduate TAs on working with diverse student groups, and for all graduate students on cross-cultural communication.

St John's College focuses on areas of equity and diversity, international understanding, and First Nations/Aboriginal initiatives, and in recent years, the College has hosted events that engage with local Asian Canadian and Muslim Canadian communities. In the near future, the College will be the host for the prestigious Society of Dissertation Fellows, which will provide a supportive environment for PhD candidates at UBC to write superior theses from their dissertation research.

There are also funding opportunities for UBC students to gain international experiences. 'Graduate Student Mobility Funding' is available through the Office for Research, in collaboration with Go Global and FoGS. It provides support for graduate research student mobility, both outgoing and incoming. Consideration should also be given to extending the graduate student mobility goals and resources to address the desire of some students for 'non-curricular' international learning and service experiences, and to allow students in professional programs to participate.

There are increasing numbers of international graduate students who wish to visit UBC for research/learning experiences. These students bring valuable skills, knowledge and perspectives to our community and enhance international research collaborations. We need to continue support for these exchanges and also to streamline the process by which we take in and track visiting international graduate students. Current processes are cumbersome and have a low level of compliance.

iii) Graduate students and development

We should develop a strategy that reaches out to collaborate with and support graduate students and programs in developing countries in ways that promote a truly global civil society. There are a number of graduate student initiatives that could strengthen UBC's role in international development, including the Graduate Global Leader Fellowships mentioned earlier, and that might be resourced at least in part by external development agencies, such as IDRC and CIDA.

Many post-secondary institutions in developing countries are seriously lacking in faculty members with advanced knowledge and skills. This provides an opportunity to increase graduate participation in learning and service abroad. A program that would provide resources and academic support for appropriately qualified, senior graduate students from UBC to teach students at institutions in developing country is under consideration.

Individuals from developing countries who obtain graduate education at a world-class institution like UBC often return to their home country to face challenges such as isolation from the larger academic community and poor academic infrastructure. This limits their ability to capitalize on their education and expand its benefits to their home country. These graduates would benefit greatly from relatively modest 'early career awards' that would allow them to remain in contact with their research field for several years, to visit the institutions where they studied, to attend international conferences and/or to provide them with some resources to maintain research and training in their home country. In addition to the benefits to the students, UBC would gain by being able to strengthen our alumni links for the future recruitment of worthy students.

4 AN OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Providing an intellectual and social graduate environment based on quality, equity and mutual respect that promotes successful academic outcomes and enables all students to achieve their potential

a) The student experience

i) Understanding the 'graduate student experience'

The overarching goal of this Graduate Student Strategy is to provide an outstanding educational experience for UBC graduate students from 'enquiry to graduation and beyond'. And the best way to find out about our students' experience is to ask! We are using survey data more effectively to improve practices and to provide feedback to students of changes implemented as a result of their input.

The Canadian GPSS data collection exercise provides us with much valuable information about our graduate students' satisfaction with teaching, research, learning and the quality of student life. Given that 'learning takes place within the social and emotional context of each student's life', FoGS took the initiative to analyse the 2007 data further to emphasize the 'student voice', investigating for the first time the graduate student written comments in the GPSS study. FoGS also conducted interviews with a broad range of campus units (including GSS, student health, child care, counseling, housing, career services and First Nations House of Learning), and reviewed a cross-section of external departmental reviews.

This resulted in the 2009 report "UBC Graduate Student Culture and Climate". The report has helped us to build a more comprehensive understanding of the graduate student experience at UBC in terms of both strengths (intellectual quality of faculty and colleagues) and potential weaknesses (funding and supervision issues) within the system. It provides valuable and detailed insight to inform actions at all levels to improve the graduate student experience. Subsequently analyses have been made at the discipline level to throw light on any discipline differences that may exist. These reports were shared with Deans and Associate Deans of Faculties and with units in the Vice President Students portfolio for their own strategic planning purposes.

Also in 2009, FoGS implemented an Exit Survey for our graduate students. It has two forms – one for successfully completing students and the other for students choosing to leave without completing their degree program. These data will provide further focused information about the graduate student experience at UBC.

After students are surveyed it is important that the findings are made available to all stakeholders, including the students themselves. It is also important that clear information is provided as to how the results of the survey have been and will be used to improve practices and outcomes for the surveyed group. Therefore our own surveys should routinely include an introductory statement about why the data are being collected and the changes that have been made as a result of previous survey results.

Another opportunity to investigate the environmental climate for our graduate students at the graduate program level is during regular program reviews. FoGS has Guidelines for relevant information and data to be included as a regular 'Graduate Studies' component in departmental/program reviews. These Guidelines were endorsed at Graduate Council in Fall 2009.

ii) Communicating with students

FoGS has made extensive use of communication technologies to help students succeed in graduate school and beyond. The newly designed web site features an interactive Events Calendar, which highlights the many ways in which graduate students can become involved with the university. The Calendar shows key institutional dates and deadlines, and highlights growth and development activities offered through the Graduate Pathways to Success program in FoGS and those provided by other units and agencies, including Library workshops, Continuing Studies courses, discipline-based seminars, and opportunities provided by our educational partners. The FoGS Events Calendar is a rich and comprehensive resource for graduate students.

Given the nature of graduate research, graduate students can end up feeling isolated. This is particularly true in those disciplines where the student's research topic is highly individual. Distance can also be an issue for graduate students located outside of the Point Grey campus. These students have reported feeling disconnected from the UBC community as a whole. Special effort needs to be made to develop effective communication and support strategies for students in off-campus research sites such as VGH and elsewhere.

The 2009 *Graduate Student Culture and Climate Report* further identified that many graduate students perceive that most university support services are designed exclusively for undergraduate students. Those services that do exist are not effectively promoted as graduate students appear to lack awareness of them. UBC student service units' websites should be revised to speak directly to graduate students, affirming the availability and relevance of their services to them.

It is clear that we need to create and implement an improved and integrated communication strategy with graduate students. The strategy should include enhanced web-based social networking opportunities to assist graduate students to connect with student services, support people and their peers.

iii) The Graduate Student Society

The *Graduate Student Society of UBC Vancouver* represents and advocates on behalf of all UBC Graduate Students and provides academic, professional, social and recreational services for graduate students. These activities include supporting graduate students in their studies; assisting those facing academic problems; handling grievances; organising social, sport, and recreational events; publishing *The Graduate Magazine* and the annual *Graduate Student Handbook*; and operating the Thea Koerner House Graduate Student Centre, including Koerner's Pub.

The GSS provides another valuable way to engage meaningfully with the graduate student community. It has proved to be an extremely valuable partner in better understanding the needs of graduate students at UBC and developing ways to improve the graduate student experience. In 2008, the GSS Council prepared a detailed report that provides an important student perspective on issues related to financing, housing, childcare, services and governance. Some information in this section is drawn from the comments of the three task forces of the GSS.

The GSS advocacy office also provides excellent assistance to graduate students who are experiencing difficulties with the university and helps students to understand policies, procedures and decisions that affect students.

FoGS and GSS collaborate on key events such as Graduate Student Orientation, and GSS is represented on important governance committees such as Graduate Policy and Graduate Council. However, our ties could be stronger and more wide-ranging. Holding jointly sponsored forums and "town hall" meetings on issues of concern to graduate students would be a productive venue for community-wide dialogue and action planning.

This would also help counter the somewhat department-bound experience of many graduate students, and engage them in the UBC community as a whole.

iv) Campus Life

Graduate students contribute greatly to the teaching and research mission of the University. They also assume leadership roles across many student clubs and organizations, from Residence Life to Athletics and Recreation to peer education and outreach. However, important findings in the *Graduate Student Culture and Climate Report* and the recent Alumni survey indicated that graduate students do not identify as much as they would like with the University as a whole, and do not feel that campus life opportunities are sufficiently visible or tailored to them. Furthermore, they felt they were not generally encouraged by their programs to identify with the University as a whole.

The Graduate Colleges - Green College and St Johns College

The two residential colleges at UBC – Green College and St John’s – are dedicated to providing an exceptional experience of intellectual, social and cultural community for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and visiting scholars at UBC. Organized on the principle of a common life centered on dinner-time conversation, the colleges are host to a wide array of academic and artistic events throughout the year, offering programs and amenities that are open to the university and the wider public as well as to resident and non-resident members. Academic programming at the Colleges aims to build upon the strategic goals of UBC. Participation in College life brings people together from all ranks and walks of academic life. Recruitment to residential membership is international and culturally diverse and the colleges have well-established reputations both for the quality of their extracurricular academic programming and for the quality of the life enjoyed by their residents. The Colleges benefit from strong alumni networks that take an active interest in the continuing development of graduate education at UBC.

Other spaces

In addition to the graduate-focussed spaces in GSS and the Colleges, gatherings also take place at the *Global Lounge*, the *Centre for Student Involvement*, and *International House*. International Student Development and Services supports spaces for diverse communities of graduate students, faculty, and undergraduate students to meet and explore areas of interest and relevance that cross disciplinary borders.

Outreach

As a great example of outreach, graduate students drive the *Let’s Talk Science Partnership Program* at UBC. This is a truly inspiring National student-led initiative where schools invite university students into their classrooms to conduct hands-on science activities for their students. Through involvement in this program our graduate students develop leadership, communication and advocacy skills, and build youth engagement in science, engineering and technology. They also benefit personally from the meaningful service experience and social networking with other graduate students. It is a pity that there is not an equivalent *Let’s Talk Arts/Humanities* initiative.

v) Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing is an important issue for UBC Vancouver graduate students. The National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey (2008), found that 74% of UBCV graduate students *felt overwhelmed by all they had to do* in the past year. In the same survey, 46% of students reported that, in the past year, they had *felt so depressed it was difficult to function*. These experiences of graduate students have a direct impact on their academic performance. There is a particular need to support

international graduate students, for whom the transition to Canada, combined with their academic program and family/personal responsibilities can be extremely difficult.

The Faculty of Graduate Studies (through its programs and publications) and the Vice President, Students portfolio (through Student Health Services, Counseling Services, Residence Life, Athletics and Recreation, Access and Diversity) support graduate student wellbeing and resilience. The publication of 'Your Health and Wellness: a guide for UBC graduate students' was a recent positive outcome of collaboration between FoGS, the residents at Green College, and Student Health Services and Counseling Services.

vi) Housing

Immediate concerns for prospective and current graduate students often have to do with the availability and affordability of housing. This has a significant impact on the productivity and wellbeing of student parents. The Housing Task Force of the GSS released its Final Report in May 2009. It is an excellent analysis of the needs of and difficulties faced by our graduate students in gaining appropriate housing.

Addressing housing availability for incoming graduate students is of critical importance as the housing shortage has a significant impact on graduate student enrolment, retention, quality of research and student graduation rates. The Student Housing Strategy, including the Housing Hub Concept, aims to increase significantly on campus student housing within a supportive academic environment. It highlights that this is also an opportunity to expand graduate student housing. It will be important to ensure that this opportunity is followed through.

It would also be valuable to provide, along with admission offers, better information to inform students about the cost of living in Vancouver and to assist incoming students to find appropriate residences and ease their transition to UBC when on-campus housing cannot be made available.

vii) Childcare and parental responsibilities

Another critical issue facing many graduate students is the lack of available and affordable childcare. There is currently an urgent need for childcare at UBC, with the main issues being focused around availability and affordability. With wait times of up to two years despite this recent growth in spaces, childcare for children of graduate students in 1-2 year programs is difficult to obtain in a timely fashion.

There are also issues related to maternity and parental leave rights for graduate students that require resolution. These include maintaining 'student status' for students requiring maternal or paternal leave and thereby maintaining their access to Health care benefits and Family housing. Time on parental leave should not count toward the total years of eligibility for scholarships. Parental rights policy should also include and clearly define rights for pregnant graduate students.

5 PROFESSIONAL and CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Providing transformative opportunities for academic and professional development of graduate students, and alumni, community and international engagement, to further career options and enable students to become outstanding global citizens who contribute to a civil and sustainable society

Provision of professional development activities and career advice received very low scores in the GPSS Culture and Climate Survey. It is evident that the quality and availability of support and services for graduate students varies considerably across the

campus. Graduate students expressed the need for increased support in TA training, assistance with post-degree job placement and understanding alternative (non-academic) career paths. In addition the survey showed that many students were facing challenges in their studies and in addressing health and wellness issues.

In addition to the provision of centralized professional development offerings, some Faculties and programs provide valuable extracurricular opportunities in the context of students' disciplines. These include career-related advice and information, grant and academic writing, research management, teaching opportunities, etc. Graduate student involvement in appropriate Faculty, department and program committees may provide professional development opportunities for graduate students and value to the administration.

In response to the survey findings, and analysis of feedback from graduate students, faculty and staff, FoGS has greatly increased its provision of professional development activities through its *Graduate Pathways to Success (GPS)* program.

a) Developing transferable skills that will enhance career outcomes

GPS offerings now cover a wider range of subject areas, supporting students in polishing their academic study skills and identifying ways in which those skills can be transferred to success beyond graduate school. Examples include academic writing and writing for lay audiences, networking and interpersonal skills, grant writing and project management, and leadership in community service learning. In recognizing that wellness and positive attitudes and behaviours are essential to success and satisfaction in life, the GPS program also offers opportunities for graduate students to acquire greater resiliency in self-management. Skilled staff from agencies such as the Writing Centre, the Wellness Centre and Career Services are brought together to facilitate these workshops for graduate students. This broad-based support is much appreciated by students, as is evident in their feedback and attendance statistics.

Graduate students as TAs are also key contributors to the learning environment at UBC. For this it is important that we provide appropriate training to develop the necessary teaching skills both for their own professional development and to maintain the quality of our undergraduate teaching. Although Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG) has been effective in providing these programs, it is clear that some TAs slip through the cracks resulting in some student dissatisfaction.

Government-funded programs such as MITACS are playing a key role in connecting student researchers with initiatives in business and industry through internships (Accelerate), and providing skills training (STEP and NTT) and postdoctoral opportunities (Elevate). We need to promote these opportunities better to our graduate students postdocs and identify any barriers to their involvement at UBC. GPS staff and the new Postdoctoral Fellows Office in FoGS are working closely with MITACS to broaden our offerings.

Furthermore, in order to prepare for future success, graduate students require assistance in the practical aspects of career building. Graduate-level career services are an essential part of a graduate program at Canadian research universities as more graduate students choose non-academic career paths. Sixty percent of Canadian PhD graduates do not join the academy. Demographic differences, the higher level of education and greater professional experience mean that graduate students (and postdoctoral fellows) require different types of career support than undergraduates. However, resources currently available for career support services to graduate students (and postdoctoral fellows) do not match those devoted to undergraduate career services. We must provide career building skills, career information sessions and career planning with foci and resources that are appropriate for more mature graduate students.

A program involving a combination of support through the GPS program in FoGS, discipline-focused mentoring in Faculties, and practical career guidance through Career Services, is currently being planned to ensure that students transition out of graduate school to successful careers.

b) Enhancing links with alumni and the community

Findings from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and other sources suggest that embedding scholarly activities in community settings results in a high rate of satisfaction among students. We need to enhance opportunities for graduate students to link with both local and international communities and to connect with alumni who can be role models.

A program on Leadership in Community Service Learning has been developed in collaboration with UBC's Learning Exchange to engage graduate students with the community. After participating in training sessions, graduate students mentor undergraduate students as they work on community-based projects in the downtown eastside of Vancouver.

FoGS sponsors seminars on working with business, industry and governments, and the session in the fall of 2009 had an international focus. Representatives from federal and provincial agencies and the Public Services Commission explained to graduate students how they might find and apply for positions abroad. Their insights into worlds beyond graduate school broadened the horizons of the students, both literally and figuratively, and reinforced the message that studies at UBC may lead to roles with global impact.

Alumni have the potential to provide a great deal of support to graduate students. Not only can they speak with empathy and insight about the graduate school experience, they personify the success that follows on from a graduate degree. The intention is to recruit Alumni who hold prominent positions in business, industry, government or the not-for-profit sector to show students how to bridge the gap between graduate school and career.

c) Fostering ethical understanding and global responsibility

Exposure to the principles of ethics and scholarly integrity are considered essential components of the best graduate programs. Some graduate students have access to such programs within their department but most don't. FoGS is approaching this need in a number of ways, including the development of an online ethics course, the development, with the Office of Research Services, of a Responsible Conduct of Research handbook, the provision of ethics-related offerings through the professional development program, and the embedding of ethical aspects in much of the programming. In addition to centralized programs and documents however, there needs to be visible "buy-in" and participation by students' mentors and program faculty members in program- or research-group-specific activities that foster an ethos and competency in ethical understanding and conduct. Again, a sharing of best practices and assistance as appropriate by FoGS in the development of such activities or programs would be valuable.

Acronym List:
(with apologies)

4YF	Four Year Fellowship
APRU	Association of Pacific Rim Universities
AUCC	Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
AVPAA	Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
CFiS	College for Interdisciplinary Studies
CGS	Council of Graduate Schools
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DAAD	German Academic Exchange Service
FNHL	First Nations House of Learning
FoGS	Faculty of Graduate Studies
GES	Graduate Entrance Scholarship
GPSS	Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey
GSI	Graduate Support Initiative
GSS	Graduate Student Society
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IELTS	International English Language Testing Service
ISGP	Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program
LFS	Faculty of Land and Food Systems
MITACS	Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems
NCHA	National College Health Assessment
NSERC	Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement
NTT	Networking and Technical Training (MITACS)
RSR	Rising Stars of Research
SSHRC	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
STEP	Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Program (MITACS)
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UGF	University Graduate Fellowship
VGH	Vancouver General Hospital

Graduate Student Strategy 2010 – 2015

Operational Plan

This *Operational Plan* delves deeper to provide a number of goals and actions that could be taken up at several possible levels, some of which are suggested below, by the many UBC Vancouver units involved in the excellence of our provisions for graduate students.

1 **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE and EXEMPLARY GOVERNANCE**

Providing high quality academic programs, excellent student outcomes, and efficient and transparent management of graduate student matters

<i>Academic excellence</i> Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Regularly review and improve graduate program quality	- include a graduate studies component in regular program reviews	Faculties
	- be proactive in policy and academic program development to anticipate changes in academia and the work environment 5-15 years ahead	Faculties
Provide research training of the highest calibre	- provide excellent support and training for supervisors (and graduate administrators)	FoGS
	- include opportunities for students to develop an awareness of interdisciplinarity, innovation, ethics and transferable skills	Graduate Programs
Evaluate and improve graduate student outcomes	- evaluate survey data to understand and respond to student needs, identify areas for improvement and improve student satisfaction, completion rates and times	FoGS, PAIR & Grad Programs
	- also investigate domestic/international and age-related aspects of survey results.	FoGS & PAIR

<i>Academic and program support</i> Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Enhance support for successful transition to graduate study at UBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide clear guidelines to students about program requirements, resources, funding, rights and responsibilities, mutual expectations - provide effective orientation and English language evaluation and training for incoming and current graduate students - regularly brief staff on graduate administrative matters - review UBC's required TOEFL/IELTS levels for graduate entry against national standards 	Graduate Programs & FoGS FoGS & Continuing Studies FoGS FoGS & Grad Council
Improve quality and outcomes of supervision and graduate teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide workshops on effective graduate supervision for all faculty members and encourage particularly new supervisors to attend - ensure appropriate recognition of graduate teaching/supervision and service to promote and reward good practice - ensure broad understanding of rights and responsibilities of both faculty and graduate students 	FoGS & Grad Programs FoGS & Grad Programs FoGS

<i>Exemplary governance</i> Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Effectively monitor the academic progress of graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - institute regular review of graduate student progress, particularly after reaching candidacy, and develop strategies to improve completion - improve central administrative processes as they apply to graduate students for more effective enrolment management 	Faculties, Grad Programs & FoGS Enrolment Services & FoGS
Ensure transparent, consistent, effective and equitable policy, procedures and administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish a cycle of review and improvement of graduate policy, procedures and administration - undertake a collaborative review of the overall process and the interface between Enrolment Services and FoGS and develop an appropriate strategy for improvement 	FoGS & University Counsel Enrolment Services & FoGS

2 EQUITABLE FUNDING and RESOURCES

Ensuring competitive, transparent and sustainable funding for graduate student recruitment and retention, and for viable graduate programs

<i>Graduate student funding</i> Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Ensure that our merit-based awards are externally competitive and effectively and transparently administered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improve our success in Tri-council, Vanier and other external funding competitions - provide transparency, equity and efficiency in the allocation of merit-based awards to students - regularly review the 'scholarships and awards' program to ensure we are recruiting excellent students, growing our graduate cohort and have the right balance between funds provided for masters and doctoral students 	GC Scholarships Committee GC Scholarships Committee & FoGS GC Scholarships Committee
Support Aboriginal engagement and international development by providing targeted graduate student support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish at least ten multi-year funding packages for Aboriginal students undertaking graduate study - review the adequacy and effectiveness of our funding for aboriginal students and develop appropriate targets for improvement - identify matching external funding to support up to eight 'Graduate Global Leadership Fellowships' for prospective international students showing outstanding leadership in humanitarian endeavor in their home country 	GC Scholarships Committee FoGS & FNHL FoGS & Central Development
Increase UBC graduate support funding in both absolute and relative terms, including support from non-traditional sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus Development Office efforts on acquiring additional funding for graduate scholarships to support an increasing proportion of our research graduate students - work with CIDA and other appropriate groups to provide matching funds for certain awards 	Development Office VPRI
Ensure graduate students are not prevented from successful completion solely due to a lack of financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improve communication with graduate students and program staff about needs-based financial aid eligibility and availability - review bursary eligibility and need, particularly for international students, with Student Financial Aid and Awards, International Student Development and Graduate Studies 	VPS & FoGS VPS

<i>Graduate program funding</i>		
Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Provide adequate and transparent flow of resources to support graduate teaching and supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure that this is resolved effectively with the development of the new budget model 	Provost Office & VPF
Increased graduate student space including space that promotes collegial interaction between faculty and graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review opportunities for additional graduate student space in the library, the two graduate Colleges and when planning new student residences 	Housing Hubs Steering Committee

3 EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT and ENGAGEMENT

Resulting in a diverse graduate student community of the highest calibre that welcomes and supports aboriginal and international students

<i>Graduate recruitment</i>		
Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Be a university of choice for outstanding national and international graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop recruitment and communication strategies to attract and retain the best graduate students with a mix of local, national, international origins and academic backgrounds 	VPI, Faculties & FoGS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determine planned and agreed enrolment targets that are in alignment with program funding, space and supervisory resources 	Provost Office
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support graduate programs in establishing effective recruitment strategies that meet their particular requirements and capacity 	FoGS
Establish a diverse graduate student community of the highest calibre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - achieve a strategic increase in enrolment and diversity of graduate students 	Faculties
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognize and provide for the particular needs of Aboriginal and International Graduate Students 	Faculties & FoGS

<i>Aboriginal engagement</i>		
Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Expand opportunities for graduate education for Aboriginal students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide appropriate funding packages for Aboriginal students entering graduate study 	GC Schols Committee & FoGS
In collaboration with the FNHL and other University units, provide appropriate support to enhance recruitment and retention of Aboriginal graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop more effective ways of recruiting, supporting, communicating with, and graduating Aboriginal graduate students - provide workshops and other fora for supervisors and students to learn about Aboriginal issues and perspectives 	FoGS & FNHL Faculties & FoGS

<i>International opportunities</i>		
Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Increase opportunities for graduate students to engage internationally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide workshops on cross-cultural communication and intercultural understanding for supervisors and students - extend graduate student mobility goals and resources to include 'non-curricular' international learning and service experiences, and students in professional programs - streamline processes for international graduate students engaging in academic visits to UBC 	FoGS and Cont Studies VPRI & VPS FoGS & Enrolment Services
Enhance UBC's reputation as a global leader in graduate education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - work effectively with our international partners for development of and enrolment in double or joint degree programs - actively contribute to international networks (such as APRU and U21), and conferences and publications on graduate education 	VPRI & Faculties FoGS & International Office
Strengthen UBC's role in international development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - plan and resource opportunities for graduate students to participate in learning and service abroad - investigate ways for international students to retain academic connections with UBC after return to their home country 	International Office IO and VPRI

4 AN OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Providing an intellectual and social graduate environment based on quality, equity and mutual respect, which promotes successful academic outcomes and enables all students to achieve their potential

<i>The graduate student experience</i> Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Understand and respond to the graduate student voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish responsive channels for transparent dialogue and feedback on the graduate student experience 	FoGS, Grad Programs & VPS
Enhance the graduate student experience and campus life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a specific plan to promote graduate student life, opportunities and resources - expand services to support graduate student wellbeing, particularly considering international graduate students and graduate students in crisis. - ensure the new Student Union Building includes features specific to supporting the graduate student experience and collective grad student campus life - expand plans for childcare and housing with particular attention to the specific needs of graduate students. - embed procedures for regular review and improvement of graduate programs, resources, outcomes and the graduate student experience 	FoGS FoGS & Student Services VP Students VP Students FoGS & grad programs
Expand the roles and reach of the Graduate Colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - academic programming to focus in areas of equity and diversity, international understanding, interdisciplinary enquiry and First Nations/Aboriginal initiatives - develop synergies between Green College, St. John's College, ISGP, Peter Wall Institute, Continuing Studies, Liu, MOA, etc. for the benefit of graduate students - Green College to create exchange opportunities with graduate residential colleges overseas - St John's to create a prestigious 'Society of Dissertation Fellows' with a dedicated writing environment 	Green & St John's Colleges

Develop an effective communication strategy with graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide better information and support for incoming students about cost of living and housing - improve awareness of opportunities and student services for graduate students - develop enhanced web-based social networking opportunities for communication with students - establish a series of discussion forums, jointly sponsored by the GSS, FoGS and VP Students to focus on the graduate student experience 	<p>FoGS & Student Services</p> <p>FoGS & all relevant web-sites</p> <p>FoGS & CTLT</p> <p>GSS, VP Students & FoGS</p>
Support GSS and other graduate student led initiatives for the benefit of all graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognize, support and celebrate the contributions of graduate students to research, teaching, campus life and the wider community - invite Postdoctoral Fellows to contribute to the scholarly and social life of graduate students and other graduate communities 	<p>FoGS & Faculties</p> <p>PD Fellows Office</p>

5 PROFESSIONAL and CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Providing transformative opportunities for academic and professional development of graduate students, and alumni, community and international engagement, to further career options and enable students to become outstanding global citizens who contribute to a civil and sustainable society

<i>Professional and career development</i> Goals	Actions	Responsibility Level
Provide graduate students with opportunities to develop transferable academic and research skills that will enhance their career prospects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promote flexible and innovative graduate programs that enhance academic, personal, leadership, and professional competencies - improve the resources available for career/job seeking guidance and support for graduate students (and postdoctoral fellows). 	<p>FoGS, Faculties & Grad Programs</p> <p>FoGS & Career Services</p>
Enhance external links with alumni and the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expand opportunities with MITACS for graduate involvement in internships and career development - provide opportunities for graduate students to explore different career options, involving alumni where appropriate - encourage involvement of the profession/alumni in advisory committees of programs 	<p>MITACS, FoGS & Alumni Office</p>
Enhance ethical understanding and behavior, social awareness and global responsibility in all graduate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide opportunities for graduate students to be actively involved in public dialogues on controversial issues 	<p>FoGS & Faculties</p>