Graduate Recruiting Task Force (GRTF) Executive Summary
August 29, 2001

Current university enrollment planning calls for approximately a 20% increase in graduate enrollment by 2005-06 and a 30% increase by 2010-11 while at the same time increasing selectivity in the acceptance process and diversity in our graduate student population. The University Research Committee has previously recommended that the Graduate School should take a leadership role in facilitating graduate recruiting on campus. The Graduate Recruiting Task Force (GRTF; Table 1) was developed to make recommendations as to improvements that NC State could make in graduate student recruiting.

During the background development phase, the GRTF focused on three areas including: 1) a pilot proposal program, 2) Director of Graduate Program (DGP) and peer institution surveys, and 3) international applicants. The goals of the pilot proposal program were to provide money to support recruiting for Fall 2001; to help the GRTF determine the extent of financial need at the department/program level; and to give the GRTF an indication of the types of recruiting activities currently practiced at the department/program level. Surveys were developed and distributed to identify key recruiting mechanisms here at NC State and at our peer institutions. Graduate Schools at our peer institutions typically had funds earmarked for recruiting programs ranging from $80,000 - $150,000. The most common “current recruiting activities” at NC State and our peer institutions included web-site development/management, brochure publication, attendance at recruiting fairs, and pre/post- application visitation programs. In regards to international students, the GRTF recognized that recruitment of exceptional international graduate students will contribute to the University’s goal of increasing selectivity in the acceptance process and diversity in our graduate student population. In addition it was the opinion of the GRTF that GSSP costs for international students are substantially greater and departments/programs feel they are limited to a large degree in the number of international students they can support.

Given the University goal of increased graduate enrollment, selectivity in the acceptance process and diversity in our graduate student population, the overall recommendation of the GRTF is that graduate recruitment should become institutionalized and be funded in such a way as to not rely on department/program resources. Specific key recommendations are as follows:

- That the recruiting proposal process, piloted by the graduate school in Spring of 2001, be continued on an annual basis and that it be expanded to a level of up to $5,000 per department or program with a required 1:1 match. Total funding requested is $150,000-$200,000 per year.
- That Creative Services be contracted with to produce a graduate recruiting CD and that this CD be started on immediately in order to make it available for recruiting next fall. Additionally, funds should be made available for annual (as needed) updates of the CD. Development costs of $25,000 plus $2,000 - $5,000 annual costs.
- That the Graduate School web page be evaluated professionally for its ease of use/utility as recruiting tool verses an on-line resource for faculty, staff, and students.
• That an institutional enrollment plan be established for international graduate students.
• The remaining recommendations of the GRTF are summarized in Table 2.

Report of the Graduate Recruiting Task Force (GRTF)
August 29, 2001

Background

Current university enrollment planning calls for approximately a 20% increase in graduate enrollment by 2005-06 and a 30% increase by 2010-11 while at the same time increasing selectivity in the acceptance process and diversity in our graduate student population. As one outcome of this planning, the Graduate School coordinated a Task Force on the Graduate Student Support Plan. That Task Force supported the University’s goal to increase graduate enrollment and recommended that the University give high priority to securing the funding necessary to provide tuition and health insurance for the increased number of students who will be eligible for the Graduate Student Support Plan. The Graduate Recruiting Task Force (GRTF) recognizes that the most critical factor in increasing the number and quality of graduate students at NC State University is adequate financial support including competitive stipends plus tuition and health insurance. The GRTF also recognizes that these funds must be appropriated equitably across all Colleges.

The Graduate School has historically served as a centralized unit for disseminating and receiving application materials and as a provider of University level electronic and printed recruiting materials. In addition, the Graduate School has focused on attendance at recruiting fairs at HBCUs in the Southeastern US at a combined cost of approximately $8,000/year. The University Research Committee has previously recommended that the Graduate School should take a leadership role in facilitating graduate recruiting on campus. The GRTF is a follow-up to two fall colloquia on graduate student recruiting, where faculty discussed current effective recruiting practices as well as future recruiting needs. These colloquia were extremely well received and served to highlight the need for a focused effort on Graduate Student recruitment here at NC State University.

The Graduate Recruiting Task Force

The overall purpose of the Graduate Recruiting Task Force was to develop recommendations as to improvements that NC State could make in graduate student recruiting. Specifically, the charge of the task force was to:

1) Identify effective recruiting programs that currently exist on campus and develop a means to disseminate this information to other departments/programs,
2) Recommend improvements in Graduate School recruiting efforts and resources (e.g., Graduate School web pages, recruiting brochures, attendance at graduate school fairs, subscriptions to student locator services, and minority recruiting initiatives),

3) Determine the resources needed to improve graduate student recruiting across campus and identify mechanisms to obtain these resources, and

4) Recommend procedures for allocating any new recruiting resources.

Task Force Findings

Recruiting Proposals – Matching Funds. The Graduate School identified a total of $30,000 to be used to match departmental funds, up to a total of $3,000 per proposal. This call for proposals was administered by the GRTF. The goals of this pilot program were to provide money to support recruiting for Fall 2001; to help the GRTF determine the extent of financial need at the department/program level; and to give the GRTF an indication of the types of recruiting activities currently practiced at the department/program level.

The application process consisted of a one-page proposal describing the nature of the recruiting activity, the amount of funding requested, an explanation of the specific use of those funds, and documentation of the departmental match. In addition, the department/program submitting the proposal was asked to identify a contact person, who would report on the efficacy of the funded recruiting activity.

Twenty-one proposals for a total request of $47,891.25 were received. Proposals were distributed to the GRTF members electronically prior to the meeting. The GRTF discussed several mechanisms for evaluation of proposals including: ranking proposals and determining averages, discussing and coming to consensus, and funding all proposals at a ratio of 30,000/47,891.25 (62.6%). It was agreed that the GRTF would eliminate proposals that were not acceptable to the majority and then fund the remaining at a percentage (available funds/approved requests). After eliminating the proposals not funded, the remaining here funded at a ratio of ~85 % for a total of $32,287.

From these proposals, it was evident that there were 4 or 5 general approaches utilized on campus including: recruiting weekends; individual visits; web pages, stipend supplements and advertisement (brochures and advertisements in newspapers/journals). It was also clear that some departments/programs had invested considerably more time and resources to recruitment than others. Of the proposed activities, faculty release time was the only area that the GRTF determined was unacceptable for funding.

Recruiting Efforts on Campus – DGP Survey. The GRTF developed a survey that was distributed electronically to all Directors of Graduate Programs (DGPs).
Specific themes that were identified from the survey that were addressed in subsequent meetings included:

- The annual recruiting budget in departments/programs ranged from $0 to $41,900 and that the average dollar amount spent on recruiting was $5,700/year.
- In regards to future proposal requests, assuming a one-to-one match, the average dollar amount that departments/programs indicated they would request was $5,700/year. This indicates they would continue to spend their dollars and basically double their activities if the opportunity were made available.
- Web Pages – Departments are trying to update themselves. Some are using University resources (Creative Services, etc.) but not all, some colleges have IT personnel, some departments/programs have hired outside web page developers at a cost of $8,000 - $10,000. At this time, the majority of the programming work is being accomplished by students and faculty.
- Campus visits/weekend visits were identified as another commonly used recruiting tool. These visits ranged from individuals for one day to weekends for up to 20-25 students.
- Stipend supplements were considered an important tool for recruiting outstanding individuals once they have been identified and have applied. Resources for this purpose are needed by everyone.
- Advertisements – newspaper advertisements were seen as local draw but were recognized as being important for some programs.
- Brochures and fliers are still deemed useful and necessary recruiting items.
- Assistance with travel to other institutions (recruiting) or having faculty from other institutions come here has been identified as a very effective tool, especially for recruiting from HBCU’s.
- Dot Coms/Peterson’s Guide. There are numerous Internet websites that provide information about graduate schools including ranking of programs, etc. and locator guides. These are becoming popular among prospective students. For example, the site at [http://www.phds.org](http://www.phds.org) includes rankings of graduate programs! This site is partially funded by a Sloan Foundation Grant.
- GRE Locator Service. The Task Force recommended that the Graduate School inform the DGP’s about this opportunity and allow departments to use this service if they desire. The Graduate School has historically been required to contact minority (African-American, Hispanic, and Native American) students in NC (for the Diversity Grant Funds). As such, we may also do a directed search and continue to contact NC residents.

Establishment of a Campus Recruiting Weekend – DGP Survey. The GRTF developed a survey that was distributed electronically to all DGPs. The consensus of those responding to the survey was that a recruiting weekend, coordinated by the Graduate school was not needed. The main reasons stated for that conclusion was that recruiting is better done at the department level and in small groups and that there is a need to highlight the department in the limited time available. Finally, there was strong encouragement to continue the experimental recruiting proposal concept initiated this spring. Departments were much more interested in the flexibility it created for other options like web page development, brochures, etc.
Recruiting Efforts at Peer Institutions – Survey. The GRTF developed a survey that was distributed electronically to Graduate Deans at our peer institutions. Specific themes that were identified from the survey that were addressed in subsequent GRTF meetings included:

- Graduate Schools at peer institutions typically had funds earmarked for recruiting programs ranging from $80,000 - $150,000.
- The majority of Graduate Schools responding operate a centralized program for applications, and admissions procedures.
- The majority of Graduate Schools responding serve as the coordinator for minority fellowship programs and for multidisciplinary programs.
- Many of the respondents had a full-time recruiter that coordinated general recruiting programs and also targeted recruitment of students from under represented groups.
- Targeted diversity recruitment efforts focused on recruitment fairs with mixed opinions on effectiveness and earmarked assistantship/fellowship funds.
- The most common “current recruiting activities” included web-site development/management, brochure publication, attendance at recruiting fairs, and pre/post- application visitation programs.
- Most Graduate Schools were involved in conducting some form of workshops on best recruiting practices (GRE Locator Service, SCT Banner’s recruitment model, etc.)
- In regards to “most effective recruiting practices”, peer institutions listed competitive stipends, campus visitation, recruiting supplements, and establishing partnerships at HBCU’s as their most effective practices.
- In regards to “least effective recruiting practices”, peer institutions listed posters, blind mailings, and recruiting fairs as the least effective.

International Students – Current Practices/Needs. The Task Force spent considerable time discussing international student numbers and recruitment of international students. Key points of agreement from those discussions are summarized below:

- The GRTF recommends that an institutional goal or enrollment plan for international graduate students should be established.
- Recruitment of exceptional international graduate students will contribute to the University’s goal of increasing selectivity in the acceptance process and diversity in our graduate student population.
- GSSP costs for international students are more and departments/programs feel they are limited to a large degree in the number of international students they can support.
- In programs where US applicants are limited, recruiting outstanding international students is important.
- Recruitment of international students is most effectively accomplished by establishing a relationship with particular institutions with a reputation for providing good students. This can be done through alumni and faculty at the institution. Faculty visits to the institution(s) can be beneficial. Support for such travel should be considered.
- The Graduate School can assist by identifying programs that fund international graduate students and helping to evaluate the “quality” of the program. Numerous people cited the former Royal Thai Scholars Program as an example of the type of
program that should be identified and encouraged. A program at Michigan State University where prospective students from China are interviewed prior to acceptance was discussed. Two departments (Chemistry and Physics) currently have plans to send two faculty members to Beijing to interview applicants.

- The point was also made that we should not allow the fact that an international student has funding to influence the admission process. They are not always the best students and often their funding is suspect.
- The need for year round English training and for the ESL Summer Institute to be a year round program was discussed.

Task Force Recommendations

Charge 1 - Effective Recruiting Programs & Dissemination of This Information

The GRTF recommends the following steps should be taken to support Department/Program recruiting efforts on campus (Table 2):

- That the recruiting proposal process, piloted by the graduate school in Spring of 2001, be continued on an annual basis and that it be expanded to a level of up to $5,000 per department or program with a required matching component.
- That Creative Services be contracted with to produce a graduate version of the undergraduate CD and that this CD be started on immediately in order to make it available for recruiting next fall. Additionally, funds should be made available for annual (as needed) updates of the CD.
- That the Graduate School sponsor “topical forums” for DGPs or their representatives. These forums should include presentations/demonstrations by DGPs or on campus resource personnel. Topics should be identified in advance through DGP surveys and should also include “updates” on new information/policies/ procedures from the Graduate School. Topics recommended included Web page design, visitation weekends/recruiting visits, student information/data handling (new Apply Yourself package) and the GRE Locator Service.
- That recruitment remains at least an annual discussion among DGPs such that it remains a priority at the department/program level.
- The Task Force recommended that the ESL Summer Institute should be funded year round to better assist supported students. A new individual was recently hired to work with the ESL training program so opportunities for year round training may become available.
- The fact that some institutions offer provisional admittance to students and have English programs to assist students in preparation for the TOEFL exam was also discussed. The question was asked “Would we entertain a program where students were funded by their government to do the ESL Program and if they completed the program and passed TOEFL, they would be accepted?” We would need to have a year round ESL Program and they would have to accept non-enrolled students. A program of this nature exists at Iowa State University. The Task Force recommended that the ESL faculty should be involved in this decision and that a recommendation should be made based on national trends. The point that Visa issues would also have to be considered was also raised.
**Charge 2 - Graduate School Recruiting Efforts**

- It is recommended that the Graduate School web page be evaluated professionally for its ease of use/utility as recruiting tool verses an on-line resource for faculty, staff, and students.
- Brochures – The preparation and updating of a graduate school brochure should be continued until such time that the Internet and other electronic media make it obsolete.
- Database Assistance – The ApplyYourself information request system should be purchased and after one year its suitability as an information request system should be evaluated. The Graduate School should hold a “topical forum” to train DGPs and their staff on the use of this system. In addition, the Graduate School is encouraged to continue evaluating the on-line application process with the goal of streamlining the process from the information request stage through acceptance.
- Recruiting Fairs – Continue with a primary focus on recruitment for diversity.
- Diversity Grant Funds – Current policies, including utilizing a portion of the funding for recruitment should be continued.
- The Graduate School should assist in identifying programs that fund international graduate students and helping to evaluate the “quality” of the program.

**Charge 3 - Resources Needed and Mechanisms to Obtain:**

3a) **Resources Needed:**

- Recruiting Proposal Program – This program should be continued on an annual basis. The GRTF concluded that since growth in graduate enrollment is a key University initiative, funding for recruiting those students should be a high priority in the University’s business plan. Said funding should be at a “significant” level, such that it would create interest in new recruiting efforts at the department/program level. The survey data collected indicates the dollar amount per request should be raised to a minimum of $5,000 and the GRTF recommends the total dollar amount available should be $150,000 - $200,000. The requirement for matching funds should be continued. A permanent source of funding (other than the Andrews Fellowship money utilized in 2001) should be identified.
- Graduate Recruiting CD. The development of a CD for recruiting purposes is highly recommended by the GRTF. Further, the GRTF recommends that funds to hire the necessary writer be made available immediately. Preliminary estimates from Creative Services indicate the total cost of development will be $25,000. In addition, it is recommended that $2-5K be made available annually for updates. This CD must: be inclusive with all colleges highlighted; be designed such that departmental information can be attached as an “add on”; and needs to be interactive with the web page materials already developed.
- Recruitment of international students is most effectively accomplished by establishing a relationship with particular institutions with a reputation for providing good students. Support for travel for faculty visits to such institutions should be considered as one option for the recruiting proposal process described above.
3b) Mechanisms to obtain resources:

- In regards to the recruiting proposal program, the GRTF recommends that the $150,000 - $200,000 should be requested in the Graduate School Compact and made available through the Office of the Provost and/or the Vice Chancellor for Research & Graduate Studies.

- In regards to the recruiting CD, several Colleges and Multidisciplinary Programs have been contacted in regards to funding the cost of development for the CD. At this time, approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ of the required resources are available. To expedite production, the GRTF recommends that the Graduate School consider utilizing Andrews Funds to cover the remaining cost of production. In regards to the recommended $2,000 - $5,000 needed for annual updates, the GRTF recommends that this be added to the Graduate School compact and that Provost Office funds be utilized.

- In regards to the remaining GRTF recommendations, the following sources for the resources needed to advance our recruiting efforts in the Graduate School and at the department/program level were identified: NC Legislature, NC State University State Appropriated (16030 Funds), Contracts and Grants, University Development.

**Charge 4) Recommended Procedures for Allocating New Resources:**

- In regards to the recruiting proposal program, the GRTF recommends that the Graduate School handle development and dissemination of the RFP and collection of the proposals. It is also recommended that a committee, made up of one DGP’s from each College and chaired by one of the Associate Deans of the Graduate School, be convened annually to evaluate proposals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Affiliation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duane Larick</td>
<td>Assistant Dean, Graduate School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margaret King</td>
<td>Senior Associate Dean, Graduate School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Allen</td>
<td>Business Management – Prof. &amp; Director MSM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ed Bowden</td>
<td>Prof. of Chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Fox</td>
<td>Prof. Dept of Curriculum &amp; Instruction (ABGS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harold Freeman</td>
<td>Associate Head/DGP Textile Engineering, Chemistry &amp; Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Kilpatrick</td>
<td>Head, Chemical Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Laster</td>
<td>DGP Department of Microbiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carol Love</td>
<td>Associate Dean, College of Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail O'Brien</td>
<td>Associate Dean CHASS, Prof. of History</td>
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<td>Wayne Place</td>
<td>Prof. of Architecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muquarrab Qureshi</td>
<td>DGP, Department of Poultry Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Risman</td>
<td>DGP, Department of Sociology &amp; Anthropology</td>
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Table 2. Itemized Graduate Recruiting Task Force Recommendations.

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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>ESTIMATED COST</th>
<th>FUNDS AVAILABLE</th>
<th>FUNDS CURRENTLY REQUESTED</th>
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