Executive Summary: Establishing a School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at Dartmouth

Scholarship lies at the heart of all great universities, and the reputation of an institution is largely determined by the success of its graduates, the quality of its research programs, and the impact that both have on society. At Dartmouth, faculty scholarship in many areas, in particular in the STEM fields, depends on robust and high-quality graduate and postdoctoral programs. To advance Dartmouth’s mission of research and education, and in keeping with President Hanlon’s vision for its future, we recommend that Dartmouth establish a School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (GRAD).

The overall mission of the School will be to foster postgraduate academic programs of the highest quality, catalyze intellectual discovery, and prepare a diverse community of scholars for global leadership.

Formation of a new School will demonstrate Dartmouth's commitment to research at the highest level and the important role that research plays in the education of all of its students. It will increase national and international awareness of the quality and impact of Dartmouth’s research programs, and allow it to continue to attract the strongest faculty, postgraduate scholars, and undergraduates.

An administratively independent School will provide a foundation for allocating limited resources so that programs are maintained at the highest possible level of quality. It will also provide a platform to streamline the development and support of collaborative initiatives between departments and schools, enabling Dartmouth to capitalize on its intellectual strengths more rapidly. Finally, it will ensure consistent and ongoing review of programs and policies.

The establishment of GRAD is not intended to lead to an expansion of the scope of postgraduate programs. It will, however, strengthen existing Dartmouth programs that are currently below critical mass, acknowledging that growth in the number of faculty in many areas requires parallel growth in the number of postgraduate scholars.

The Task Force on Graduate and Advanced Studies recommends the following policies and practices be implemented to establish GRAD:

• The existing Graduate Studies Office should be administratively repositioned to report directly to the Provost and its mandate expanded to include oversight of Postdoctoral Affairs. Resources currently supporting graduate students and postdoctoral scholars should be reallocated to the School.

• The pool of Dartmouth Fellowships should be consolidated in the School, and their long-term funding, as well as funding for the core functions of the School, should be secured via a stable financial model, with policies consistent across Dartmouth, that incentivize applications for external funding.

• The Council of Graduate Studies should continue its oversight of policies involving graduate education at Dartmouth, and the Council should ensure that the priorities of the faculties and Deans of A&S, Thayer, Geisel, and Tuck are clearly and effectively communicated to the GRAD Dean. A separate mechanism should be developed to oversee policies involving Postdoctoral Fellows and other aspects of Advanced Studies.
• The school will be responsible for, and will be held accountable for, supporting the professional development of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, allowing Dartmouth’s distinct combination of teaching and research to strengthen all of our scholars. The school will be committed to the linguistic needs and the cultural adaptation of international graduate students and postdocs, and will ensure that all Dartmouth postgraduates become excellent writers and speakers. GRAD will also assist postgraduates in obtaining external funding, help guide them professionally and personally to their future careers, and remain in regular contact with them once they leave Dartmouth.

• The school will work to more fully integrate graduate students and postdoctoral scholars into the Dartmouth community, and will aim to increase opportunities for them to act as role models for undergraduates and research mentors for the ever-increasing number of students seeking experiential learning opportunities.

• GRAD will be an integral component of Dartmouth's overall research landscape. Looking ahead, the Provost should work with the School Deans to advocate for research at all levels. In particular, College leadership should seek funding and resources to enable implementation of the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Working Group on Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creativity.
Establishing a School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at Dartmouth

A report by the Task Force for Graduate and Advanced Studies, July 2015

Introduction:

Scholarship lies at the heart of all great universities, and the reputation of an institution is largely determined by the success of its graduates, the quality of its research programs, and the impact that both have on society. While many universities have graduate programs across the Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences, Dartmouth’s graduate programs, and most of its postdoctoral scholars, are housed mainly in science and engineering, where they are the driving force that enables high impact research in the STEM fields. As Dartmouth looks to a future where it continues to compete with the top universities for the best students, postdoctoral scholars, and faculty members, it is committed to take the steps necessary to ensure the strength and quality of its postgraduate programs. Therefore, in order to more fully support Dartmouth’s mission of research and education, and in keeping with President Hanlon’s vision for its future, this proposal outlines the formation of the School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at Dartmouth (GRAD), whose mission is:

To foster postgraduate academic programs of the highest quality, catalyze intellectual discovery, and prepare a diverse community of scholars for global leadership.

Formation of a new School at Dartmouth will demonstrate Dartmouth's commitment to research at the highest level and the important role that research plays in the education of all of our students.

GRAD will provide a mechanism for strategically deploying resources so that Dartmouth’s programs are maintained at the highest possible level of quality. It will also provide a nimble and efficient platform that will work in collaboration with Dartmouth’s departments, programs, and schools, to develop and support graduate programs that span disciplines, approach problems from multiple perspectives, and unite scholars with shared vision and research interests. This will enable Dartmouth to capture first-mover benefits in emerging areas of intellectual impact.

GRAD will continue to ensure consistent and ongoing review of programs and policies in order to evaluate their excellence and success.

For graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and faculty, GRAD will provide centralized, reliable, “best-practices” services and information, including recruitment of students and postdoctoral scholars, diversity programs, orientation, ethics training, professional development, writing and presentation support, assistance with grant-writing, intercultural advising, and career advising.

GRAD will develop a centralized profile for attracting sponsorship from new donors and funding sources for advanced research. As a School, it will advocate more powerfully for Dartmouth's role in knowledge creation across all the fields in which we host graduate programs and postdoctoral scholars. The school will systematically track our competitiveness with peer
schools by consolidating information about grants earned, student recruitment and retention, and post-Dartmouth career placement.

The GRAD Dean will serve as a more effective communication hub for information and decision-making regarding issues common to graduate study and postdoctoral affairs in all the schools by coordinating directly with the other Deans and reporting directly to the Provost. Additionally, formation of the School provides an opportunity to stabilize the budget and staff lines so that resource allocation can be planned long term and by ongoing priority-setting systems rather than based on short term or one-off requests.

**Core Support for Graduate and Advanced Studies:**

Graduate programs have existed at Dartmouth since a graduate degree in Classics was awarded in 1885. Since then, Dartmouth’s graduate programs have grown to include 17 Ph.D. and 12 Masters programs, and the Graduate Studies Office (GSO) currently supports over 1000 students in one way or another (including Thayer MEM and Geisel MPH). Professional students (Geisel MD and Tuck MBA, together ~1000 students), who are not currently supported by the GSO, would not be part of GRAD. Additionally, although there are approximately 250 postdoctoral scholars at Dartmouth, with the exception of the newly formed Society of Fellows, these highly motivated and productive scholars lack the formal support of an office or administrator specifically dedicated to their needs, such as professional development, grant writing support, and fostering long-term relationships with Dartmouth.

In the short-term, in order to more fully support these scholars and to increase the impact and quality of their work, GRAD should:

- Develop a stable funding mechanism, with policies consistent across Dartmouth, for the current GSO positions of Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies, Assistant Dean of Graduate Student Affairs, Assistant Dean of Recruiting and Diversity, and part-time staff.

- Establish the position of Assistant Dean of Postdoctoral Affairs to serve as contact point, advocate, and liaison for Dartmouth’s postdoctoral scholars. In collaboration with the Dartmouth College Postdoctoral Association (DCPDA), the Assistant Dean should support the professional and personal development of postdocs by leveraging the GSO’s experience with graduate student professional development, as well as DCAL’s expertise in training graduate students, postdocs, and faculty members in educational pedagogy.

- Take over responsibility for funding and oversight of the DCPDA.

- Explore centralizing re/appointments of all Dartmouth postdocs.

- Oversee and support the Society of Fellows Program, as well as associated resources and infrastructure.

- To enhance research opportunities for graduate students and postdocs, collaborate with other campus groups, including the Enhancing Research Opportunities Program (ERO).
and Office of Sponsored Projects (OSP), to establish a resource to provide active, hands-on support for pre- and postdoctoral grant applicants.\textsuperscript{10} Services should include in-house and/or freelance grant writing and editing, organization of mock study-section reviews, provision of templates, and a platform for sharing grant components among faculty, fellows, and students.

- Support the writing, presentation, and speaking skills of Dartmouth’s graduate students and postdocs having English as a primary language, as well as those with other primary languages, by appointing two dedicated professionals to this role.\textsuperscript{11}

- Maintain support for graduate students as part of RWIT, and expand support to include postdocs.

- Assist in promoting Dartmouth’s international profile by providing funds specifically for fellowships for international graduate students and post-docs, as well as specialized programs in English as a Second/Additional Language for new graduate students the summer before they start their graduate work.

Additionally, beyond the establishment of GRAD, Dartmouth should enact a number of the long-term goals associated with forming a “School of Advanced Studies”. As proposed by the Strategic Planning Working Group on Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creativity (RSC), Dartmouth needs to make a substantial financial commitment to advance RSC for Dartmouth faculty, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and undergraduates. Implementing the specific recommendations of the Working Group would invigorate the research environment at Dartmouth, spearhead more organized decision-making on RSC issues, help attract top talent to Dartmouth from all over the world, create a more inclusive and enriching environment for graduate students and post-docs, and foster cross-disciplinary collaboration among faculty, undergraduates, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. GRAD will be positioned to support the following RSC goals:

- A Sabbatical Institute, which would serve Dartmouth faculty members in all disciplines taking on-campus sabbaticals, visiting faculty on sabbatical, and a visiting scholars program with an emphasis on international faculty.

- Dartmouth Summer Institutes could position Dartmouth as a destination institution for courses, meetings and workshops during the summer quarter. Such programs will bring students, faculty and other scholars to Dartmouth from across the world, creating a dynamic intellectual environment. These Summer Institutes would serve as an important component of the strategy to bolster Dartmouth’s international profile.

- Dartmouth-wide grant-writing support beyond the level of graduate and postdoctoral mechanisms, expanding upon and in collaboration with other campus groups (i.e. ERO and OSP), including conference and symposia grants, research project grounds, and multi-PI and program project awards.
**Governance:**

Currently, the GSO is administratively located under the Dean of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences, and the Dean of Graduate Studies is appointed by the DOF (with a courtesy consultation with the Deans of Thayer, Geisel, and Tuck). Despite being housed in A&S, the GSO oversees a number of programs based in Geisel and Thayer. While this model has served Dartmouth well for several decades, the complex nature and increasing number of interdepartmental and interschool programs, as well as the need to allocate central resources and support among schools, calls for a new arrangement for the governance structure of GRAD. The Task Force recommends the following:

- The School should report directly to the Provost and be administratively independent from other Schools.
- GRAD should directly grant Dartmouth’s Ph.D., M.S. and M.A. degrees. Other graduate degrees could be granted by arrangement with the other Schools.
- The title of the GRAD Dean should be “Dean of Graduate and Advanced Studies”, and the Dean should be part of the senior leadership team in the same manner as the Deans of A&S, Geisel, Thayer, and Tuck.
- Memoranda of understanding should be established to ensure effective collaboration, consultation, and communication with the School Deans, in particular with respect to resources allocated (or reallocated) among graduate programs.
- The school should have a Board of Overseers and (eventually) an Advisory Board to advise the Dean on matters concerning advancement, strategy, and mission.
- The School should consider establishing a “Graduate Faculty” composed of Dartmouth faculty members who are actively participating in graduate programs. This will enable the School to ensure all faculty involved with mentoring graduate students continue to be trained appropriately, kept up to date with policies and practices, and act effectively and in the best interest of their mentees. It will also allow for a more realistic count of faculty involved with graduate programs (i.e. lower our denominator with respect to assessment metrics).
- A mechanism should be developed to oversee policies involving Postdoctoral Fellows and other aspects of Advanced Studies.
- The Council on Graduate Studies (CGS) is effective and should remain, but with its mission modified from the current OFDC description as follows (new text is underlined; deleted text is in strikethrough):

  The Council on Graduate Studies (CGS) shall consist of the Dean of Graduate and Advanced Studies, who shall act as a nonvoting Chair, the Chair director (or designate) of each of the degree-granting graduate programs, one member from each
of the A&S, Geisel, Thayer, and Tuck three Professional School faculties, and two graduate students. The Chair shall take the initiative in forming such special committees as are desirable for planning and coordinating interlocking interests of graduate programs with other activities of the various faculties, and with the responsibilities of existing committees of those faculties.

Functions:

1. To recommend to the faculties Dean of Graduate and Advanced Studies, the Provost, and the Trustees principles and policies governing all aspects of graduate education.

2. To review and approve proposals for graduate degree programs (Ph.D., M.S., and M.A.) and to forward them, with recommendation, to the appropriate faculty or faculties of the College Provost’s Academic Planning Committee. Council jurisdiction does not normally extend to those degree programs that are the exclusive responsibility of the faculties of the Professional Schools.

3. To certify to the appropriate faculties Trustees that candidates have met all requirements for the granting of graduate degrees.

4. To submit a report to the General Faculty at the end of each academic year.

The CGS should also provide a balancing voice by representing the interests and concerns of the faculty from A&S, Thayer, Geisel, and Tuck with respect to graduate programs and their influence on the Schools.

- The Task Force recommends that when a new graduate program chair/director is selected, the GRAD Dean and the faculty member’s Dean be notified of the appointment. Unless one of the Deans expresses an objection, the appointment will be approved and the chair/director will become a voting member of the Council of Graduate Studies, representing their program until resignation, replacement, or removal.

- The approval and review process for new graduate programs should be reorganized as follows:

  1. In consultation with Department Chairs, School Deans, and GRAD Dean, faculty members will develop a comprehensive proposal for the new program.

  2. The proposed new program should be presented to, in order, the GRAD Dean, School Deans (and, at their discretion, faculties), CGS, and the APC for review and commentary, and revised as necessary (in consultation with those groups). The purpose of this step is to solicit feedback on the new program, and to have new programs thoroughly vetted during the approval process.

  3. The proposal will be approved by the School Deans on behalf of their faculties (by whatever mechanism they choose). Particular attention should be given to issues involving space, resources, and faculty time (teaching, mentoring, etc.). Letters of support will be obtained from the School Deans at this stage.
4. The proposal, along with letters of support, is sent to the GRAD Dean, who will bring it before the CGS for approval (note this should be at the next CGS meeting, i.e. at least three months from the initial presentation in #2). CGS should review the entire proposal and should vote to approve, deny, or send back the proposal based on criteria including: justification, impact, curriculum and degree requirements, governance structure, and relationship with exiting programs. If approved, any budgetary recommendations or concerns should be forwarded, along with the proposal, to the APC.

5. APC will review the Proposal, focusing in particular on the overall impact of the program and the budgetary aspects. After confirming the viability of the finances of the new program, APC will vote to recommend approval, denial, or revision to the Provost.

6. The Provost will bring the final proposal to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Trustees for approval.

7. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Trustees will bring the final proposal to the full board for approval.

- Formal processes for modifying and eliminating graduate programs should be developed.

**Finance:**

Given that the very nature of Dartmouth as a research university depends on maintaining the faculty-led research programs enabled by graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, it is critical that Dartmouth commit resources to ensure its long-term viability. GRAD must have secure and sufficient resources in order to maintain and improve the quality of its core functions and programs. Currently, as a result of budget changes during SBRI, the GSO is funded largely via tuition recovery from training grants – an unstable basis for provision of core services. Dartmouth Fellowships (DFs) and other graduate stipends are currently routed through the A&S budget, with Geisel and Thayer also contributing a significant number. Additionally, the policies by which tuition is charged to training and research grants varies significantly among A&S, Geisel, and Thayer. These asymmetries need to be corrected. Therefore, the Task Force recommends the following:

- Funding for Dartmouth Fellowships (DFs) and similar funds currently housed in A&S, Geisel, and Thayer, should be moved (or transferred annually) to the GRAD budget. At the time of transfer, existing DF distributions in the graduate programs would be preserved with a “bedrock” clause, with any reallocation resulting in a decrease over 5% (cumulative over time) requiring approval of the affected Dean(s) of the School(s) housing the affected faculty, or, in the case of disagreements, arbitration by the Provost.

- To strengthen existing programs, complement the growth of faculty associated with the cluster hiring process, and to provide a mechanism for the GRAD Dean to incentivize and reward excellence, additional support for DFs should be developed. Resources will be distributed to programs by the GRAD Dean based on merit, strategic purpose, or as a
result of external review recommendations, and maintained only if clear metrics of success are met by the programs.

- The Task Force believes that the purpose of DFs is to provide the foundation for graduate programs. Therefore, although the School believes that instruction in teaching and communication techniques is important for all graduate students, GRAD will not have any Teaching Assistant (TA) expectation for students receiving a DF; individual graduate programs will establish their own teaching requirements.

- As warranted by being part of GRAD, the Thayer Ph.D. program should receive DF support from GRAD.

- A financial model should be developed to assure the long-term stability of Dartmouth’s graduate programs, as well as the core functions of the GRAD office (e.g. admissions, registrar, judicial, student affairs, writing and speaking support, professional development, diversity, and recruiting).  

- Recovery of tuition and institutional allowance revenue derived from research training grants should be standardized. Outside of A&S, the current practice is that the Schools retain such funds, and any mechanism developed should incentivize applications for such awards.

- Funds should be budgeted to cover compensation for the GRAD Dean.

- The School requires an independent finance expert to manage the School and program budgets.

- GRAD will be able to support and manage the administrative, support, and programming budgets of graduate programs that include faculty from multiple departments/schools (e.g. MCB, EEES). For graduate programs and departments with complete (or nearly complete) overlap, keeping such budgets within the department could make sense, as decoupling and accounting for split services would be difficult.

- While it makes sense to identify support for courses in new and interdepartmental/interschool programs, and such funds should be housed in GRAD, it could be difficult to move all FTE resources for graduate courses into the School. The Task Force views faculty participation (including teaching graduate courses) in graduate programs as integral to the profile of the research active faculty hired by School Deans; i.e. if a faculty member will be part of a graduate program, the hiring Dean recognizes that some effort will be spent mentoring and teaching graduate students, and should be prepared to support such efforts.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Within existing offices at Dartmouth, part time dedicated FTE should be identified for both GRAD Alumni Relations and Development. Dartmouth should maintain contact and
communication with postdoctoral scholars after they leave Dartmouth, and foster continuing relationships with them.

- GRAD should work collaboratively with the Outreach Office in order to increase and strengthen outreach activities.

- The GRAD administrative office should be located in a central location on campus, as befitting an independent School at Dartmouth with such a broad discipline reach.

- Dedicated social space for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars should be identified on campus, both to recognize the importance and position of postgraduates in the Dartmouth community, as well as to foster a sense of community among postgraduates. The space should be centrally located and allow for multiple use activities, including studying, social events, etc.

- Campus planning should specifically address the needs for affordable housing for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, within walking distance of campus (of particular importance to international scholars). Centrally located, affordable housing is key to ensuring a vibrant graduate community and helping its members feel at home at Dartmouth.

**Approval Process:**

Regarding the items proposed herein, the task force recommends the following approval process:

1. The Task Force plan will be reviewed, modified and approved in principle by the President and Provost, in consultation with the School Deans, with the understanding that approval in principle is not a commitment of resources or agreement to provide the levels of resources recommended in the report.

2. If substantial revisions to the plan report are proposed in step #1, the Task Force should review and approve the revised report.

3. The plan for GRAD will be presented to the School faculties for discussion and comment. The Task Force, the Provost, and the President will consider any recommendations for modification.

4. The plan will be put before the General Faculty for endorsement. Changes to the OFDC need to be approved by all of the separate Faculties.

5. The plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval.
Notes:

1 Task force members: Andrew Bernard, Jack Byrne Professor of International Economics, Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth; John D. Birkmeyer, M.D., Professor of Surgery, Professor of The Dartmouth Institute, Geisel School of Medicine; Rebecca Biron, Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature; Deborah Hogan, Associate Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, Geisel School of Medicine; Adam Keller, Instructor in Community & Family Medicine and of The Dartmouth Institute; Chief of Strategy and Operations for The Dartmouth Institute, Geisel School of Medicine; F. Jon Kull (Chair), Rodgers Professor at Dartmouth College; Professor of Chemistry; Dean of Graduate Studies; Dean Madden, Professor of Biochemistry, Geisel School of Medicine; Russell Muirhead, Robert Clements Professor of Democracy and Politics and Associate Professor of Government; Brian Pogue, Professor of Engineering, Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth; Adrian Randolph, Leon E. Williams Professor of Art History; Associate Dean of the Faculty for the Arts & Humanities; Elizabeth Smith, Dartmouth Professor of Biological Sciences; Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences; Ross Virginia, Myers Family Professor of Environmental Science; Director, Institute of Arctic Studies within the Dickey Center for International Understanding

2 Alternate names: School of Graduate Studies and Advanced Scholarship (GSAS); School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS)

3 Alternate mission statements:

To sustain innovative postgraduate academic programs of the highest quality. To prepare a diverse group of the most promising scholars to be responsive global leaders in their areas of expertise.

To foster exceptional postgraduate academic programs, catalyze intellectual discovery and creativity within a diverse community of scholars, and support the rigorous training and development of future leaders.

4 Programs will be externally reviewed at least every seven years, but can be reviewed more often as deemed necessary by the GRAD Dean.

5 PhD (A&S unless indicated): Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Chemistry, Cognitive Neuroscience, Computer Science, Earth Sciences, Engineering Sciences (Thayer), Programs in Experimental and Molecular Medicine (Geisel), Health Policy and Clinical Practice (Geisel, TDI), Mathematics, Molecular and Cellular Biology (Biodesign), Biochemistry [Geisel], Genetics [Geisel], Microbiology and Immunology [Geisel]), Pharmacology (inactive, now part of PEMM), Physiology (inactive, now part of PEMM), Physics and Astronomy, Psychology and Brain Science, Quantitative Biomedical Sciences (Geisel).

M.S. and M.A. (A&S unless indicated): Chemistry, Comparative Literature, Computer Science, Digital Musics, Earth Sciences, Engineering Sciences (Thayer), Health Care Deliver Science (Geisel/Tuck), Health Policy and Clinical Practice (Geisel, TDI), Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, Master in Public Health (Geisel, TDI), Masters in Engineering Management (Thayer), Physics & Astronomy.

6 15%-20% FTE anticipated at outset.

7 FY ’15 funding from Provost $13,250.

8 This would require new FTE, but by centralizing it would allow FTE in many other units to be decreased.

9 Currently the newly established Enhancing Research Opportunities Program (ERO) is administered though Geisel.
Could initially be a part-time position.

The GSO currently supports a full-time multilingual specialist, but offers no professional one-on-one writing or speaking support for English primary students.

PhD, MA, and MS Enrollments 2013-14: Total 857; A&S 422 (49%); Geisel 281 (33%); Thayer 154 (18%)

Other modifications to the OFDC will also be required. As described in the OFDC, changes to the OFDC require “ratification by the separate faculties of arts and sciences, medicine, engineering, and business administration.”


During SBRI, much of the GSO staff were taken off of subvention and are currently funded by a 90% recovery of the tuition and institutional allowance revenue derived from research training grants obtained by students and programs in A&S.