**Illinois State University  
Academic Affairs  
FY20 Planning Document  
Graduate School**

# Major Objectives for FY20

The Graduate School has recently updated its strategic plan. This plan as well as all four goals within *Educate Connect Elevate Illinois State* will drive the FY 20 Planning document:

Below are the 10 strategies and associated tactics that will guide the Graduate School over the next 6 years.

1. Continue to improve the role of the Graduate School in problem-solving, customer service and leadership
   1. Continue to look for ways to serve our constituents. (ongoing)
   2. Seek to enhance customer service to faculty, staff, and students. (ongoing)
2. Advocate for graduate students, student services, and student scholarship and creative activity.
   1. Work closely with the graduate student senator to communicate issues relevant to graduate students. (ongoing)
   2. Continue to advocate for a second seat on the Academic Senate, which would create representation equal to the percentage of graduate students enrolled at the University. (FY 20)
3. Maintain standards across campus
   1. Re-implement the first year graduate student survey to assess processes and how they chose ISU. (FY 20)
4. Review and improve the thesis/dissertation process including deadlines and formatting.
   1. Increase the number of workshops aimed at assisting students with the thesis/dissertation process. (FY 20)
   2. Develop new methods of delivering workshops and resources through the coordinator of outreach. (FY 20)
5. Provide recruitment assistance to programs.
   1. Ensure that all program websites have the online information form to generate prospect lists. (FY 20)
   2. Develop a communications plan with Admissions to detail how each unit on campus communicates with prospects. (FY 20)
   3. Develop informational resources to recruit external graduate assistantships. (FY 20)
6. Integrate across campus the concept that graduate programs add value to the university in terms of prestige and scholarship.
   1. Gather information and promote the research productivity of faculty who involve graduate students in the research process. (FY 20)
   2. Coordinate with the new director of the Office of Student Research and Innovation on increasing awareness of graduate student research and creative works.
7. Build on the value faculty members have for graduate education to expand program offerings
   1. Investigate the feasibility of an interdisciplinary degree through stackable certificates or other plans of study. (FY 20)
8. Reposition graduate programs so they get more institutional recognition than they currently receive.
   1. Elevate the position of the Graduate School in the minds of upper administration so they are a part of the President’s Points of Pride, mentioned in talking points to community groups, etc. (FY 20)
   2. Request permanent funding for a communications coordinator that would be responsible for marketing including social media, recruitment incentives, and writing stories of collaboration between faculty and students. (FY 20)
9. Advocate that graduate assistants are valuable resources.
   1. Have discussions with colleges and their coordinators about growth of programs directly resulting in the growth of graduate assistants. (FY 20)
   2. Explore opportunities to provide more work experiences for international students. (FY 20)
   3. Continue to advocate our US Congressional representatives to change the tax code impacting graduate assistant tuition waivers. (FY 20)
10. Recognize that graduate students are different than undergraduate students and that different services are required to support them.
    1. Investigatewriting resources on campus for both domestic and international students. (FY 20)
    2. Develop webinars of the professional development series so that part-time students may benefit from the workshops without being on campus. (FY 20)

# Permanent Funding requests - No request from Graduate School

Communications specialist/publications writer

This individual would be responsible for website content, feature stories about graduate education, and social media. A permanent position would gain recognition on campus which would give them access to faculty and students. A constant voice and vision in the Graduate School’s communications would be developed. Most importantly, the individual responsible for communications ought to be tied into a network of communications officers on campus so that information, stories, etc. can be shared efficaciously. Sharing stories about successful graduate students and alumni, their teaching and research activities, and their mentors would serve both to raise the prestige of graduate education on campus, and to recruit prospective students to campus. This position could also play a key role in digital advertising strategies for the Graduate School. This position will help increase the quality of students applying to graduate programs, increase enrollment, increase the scholarly and creative productivity of faculty and students, and increase engagement of students to other entities on campus outside of the department/school, such as the graduate school, career center, office of student research and innovation, etc.

# Strategic Budgeted Carryover - No request from Graduate School

# Provost Enhancement Requests - No request from Graduate School

# Personnel Requests – New TT - No request from Graduate School

# Personnel Requests – Other TT - No request from Graduate School

# Facilities Requests

Graduate School Office Suite Renovation

The Graduate School moved to a more accessible location on the 2nd floor of Hovey Hall as part of an office swap with General Counsel and OEOA. However, the graduate school is now in 3 separate offices without a cohesive structure or signage. This renovation will be funded by the VP for Finance and Planning to unite the graduate school into one location and be visibly recognizable for students, faculty, and staff.