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The Graduate School enhances the intellectual life of the university by enabling graduate and professional students to undertake scholarly study and advanced research, and prepare for professional work in diverse career paths. The Graduate School focuses on the following strategic areas to fulfill our mission:

**Learning and Assessment:** To promote excellence in learning, the Graduate School coordinates the University’s graduate assessment initiatives, and pursues partnership and external funding opportunities to develop innovative structures in support of students’ scholarly and professional development.

**Student Experience:** Through programming and infrastructure, the Graduate School encourages the development of a diverse community, optimizes professional development opportunities, prepares students for a multiplicity of career paths, fosters skills for lifelong health and wellness, and helps students experience considerable flexibility, freedom, and independence in their academic programs.

**Field, Faculty, and Staff Support:** By coordinating the graduate field structure and administering 13 degrees and nearly 100 graduate fields, we strive to deliver seamless, efficient, and aligned services that enable fields to devote their efforts and resources to research, scholarship, and instruction.

**Visibility:** Through internal and external communications, we celebrate and promote the talent, research, and leadership of the graduate education system at Cornell and of our students and faculty, and inform our constituent audiences about important trends and initiatives in higher education.
Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Graduate students are essential to Cornell’s research and teaching mission. As we celebrated Cornell’s Sesquicentennial this year, I am pleased to report that our system of graduate education is thriving. Graduate education involves more than research, teaching, and scholarship. The Graduate School identified six priority areas that support student academic and professional success, fields and faculty, and the student experience. In this year’s Annual Report, we highlight significant accomplishments in these areas and provide a snapshot of metrics and demographic data to understand better our current strengths and challenges.

Supporting student academic success, and providing opportunities for professional, personal, and career development is paramount to the Graduate School mission. This year we developed and presented workshops, seminars, and other events that attracted more than 6,000 graduate and professional student participants. Events like the “Three Minute Thesis Competition,” in which students described their research in three minutes or less to a general audience, fostered communication skills and cross-disciplinary exchanges. Other workshops, like “Learning the Basics of Online Learning and Teaching,” helped prepare students who are interested in careers in higher education.

Cornell University’s Graduate School has won the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools (NAGS)/Educational Testing Service (ETS) Award for Innovation and Excellence in Graduate Education. The prestigious award is given to a NAGS member institution in recognition of outstanding practices from graduate admissions through degree completion. The Graduate School was recognized for its innovative approaches to promoting degree completion and helping students develop a peer writing community through its writing programs. The components include writing consultations at the Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines; peer tutors; dissertation, thesis, and proposal boot camps; daily Write-Ins; a listserv; workshops on writing competitive fellowship applications; and English-language support for international graduate and professional students.

According to Jan Allen, associate dean for academic and student affairs, “Cornell’s graduate academic writing support programs encourage goal-setting, accountability, and development of a robust peer community. This underscores students’ commitment to their writing and degree completion.”

I frequently speak about the excellence of our students and our system of graduate education, but none of this would be possible without the support of our alumni, faculty, fields, and staff, who help our system of graduate education thrive. I am deeply grateful for their exceptional commitment and dedication.

Best wishes,
Barbara A. Knuth
Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

Graduate School wins innovation award

The Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines offers feedback on drafts from peer tutors. Peer tutors receive stipends and professional training, while graduate students receive support for their scholarly and professional communications.

Among the most popular Graduate School offerings are week-long dissertation, thesis, and proposal writing boot camps and writers retreats, which are open to any graduate or professional student. Workshops offer group and individual writing space, food, and appointments with writing and statistical consultants as well as stress-reductions activities and peer support.

Daily Write-Ins at the Big Red Barn
Graduate and Professional Student Center provide free coffee and a quiet place for writers to work on their projects. Write-ins occur Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. when classes are in session. For these come-and-go sessions, students sign in with their name and writing goals. When they depart, they indicate how long they wrote and whether they accomplished their goals.

“I am honored that NAGS has recognized the outstanding contributions of our writing programs. They are truly innovative with a large scope, drawing participants from a wide range of fields and disciplines,” said Barbara A. Knuth, senior vice provost and dean of the Graduate School.

### Graduate School leadership

#### General Committee of the Graduate School 2014–2015

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>FIELD OR AFFILIATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dean Barbara A. Knuth</td>
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<td>Associate Dean Jan Allen</td>
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<td>Associate Dean Jason Kahabka</td>
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<td>Siddarth Chandrasekaran</td>
<td>graduate student</td>
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<td>Tiffany St. Bernard</td>
<td>graduate student</td>
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<td><strong>Members-at-Large</strong></td>
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<td>Professor Cole Gilbert</td>
<td>Entomology</td>
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<td>Professor Maurine Linder</td>
<td>Pharmacology</td>
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<td>Professor Joel Brock</td>
<td>Applied Physics</td>
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<td>Professor Shorna Allred</td>
<td>Natural Resources</td>
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<td><strong>Humanities</strong></td>
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<td>Professor Deborah Castillo</td>
<td>Romance Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professor Rebecca Harris-Warrick</td>
<td>Music</td>
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<td>replaced by Shawkat Toorawa until January 2015</td>
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<td><strong>Social Sciences</strong></td>
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<td>Professor Poppy McLeod</td>
<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Professor Linda Williams</td>
<td>Development Sociology</td>
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<td>Professor Joseph Fetcho</td>
<td>Neurobiology and Behavior</td>
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<td>Professor Paul Soloway</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
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<td><strong>Physical Sciences</strong></td>
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<td>Professor Margaret Frey</td>
<td>Fiber Science and Apparel Design</td>
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<td>Professor Melissa Hines</td>
<td>Chemistry &amp; Chemical Biology</td>
<td>2017</td>
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Assessment is one of the keys to a high-quality system of graduate education. All graduate programs have submitted statements of learning outcomes and associated assessment plans, which are posted on the fields of study section on the Graduate School website. Fields report biennially to the Graduate School on findings and next steps from their assessment activities.

This year, the Graduate School continued our robust assessment of student learning outcomes, student experience, and doctoral alumni career outcomes through a series of surveys targeting different stages of the graduate and professional student experience to understand the areas of learning outcomes, student experience, and career outcomes. Information from these surveys is accessible to faculty directors of graduate studies and graduate field assistants through our online portal, with detailed information for each graduate field and comparative metrics for each broad discipline. Survey results are a key component of the biennial field meetings that Graduate School leadership holds individually with each faculty director, and help identify areas of improvement within each field.

92% OF DOCTORAL ALUMNI SAY THAT CORNELL PREPARED THEM FOR THEIR CURRENT CAREER

GOAL Promote a culture of learning, assessment, and continual improvement in Cornell graduate programs.

student spotlight
Kristen Morris, Fiber Science and Apparel Design, Ph.D.

Some pieces of clothing are more artistic than functional and reflect a designer’s aesthetic. Some pieces are made for average body types and typical daily use, requiring little innovation. But then some clients and some designers need to work together to solve a particular problem where the clothing must specifically fit a unique function. This niche of design must be both innovative and functional, and most of all in order to be useful it has to be collaborative.

Collaborative design in fashion is the research focus of Kristen Morris, a Ph.D. student in fiber science and apparel design. Initially drawn to the glamor and luxury of fashion, Morris ultimately moved her focus from the catwalk to the factory floor, noting the complex integration required to make a functional product for a unique target population. Her research seeks to understand the process by considering all of the stakeholders and interactions involved in the participatory design and development of apparel.

In 2014, Morris led a collaborative design process with the Cornell heavyweight rowing team to design practice uniforms for the athletes. Crew members worked with her to imagine looks and designs for the team, which were then built according to the needs of the rowers. Studying this process for her dissertation research, Morris was able to see firsthand how valuable user input could be in designing for specific athletic conditions.

Before coming to Cornell, Morris helped to design and guide the development of collaborative apparel, including a line of active wear made for pregnant women. Meeting the special needs of a target population – whether pregnant women, astronauts, firefighters, or elite runners – is a process Morris believes would benefit from this type of systematic analysis: “I am inspired by the complex requirements of these populations. I believe that by studying their extreme situations, we can apply and develop innovative apparel technologies and methods to address everyday human needs collaboratively.”

In 2014 Morris received a research travel grant from the graduate school to begin conducting interviews with a shoe manufacturer noted for participatory design and open innovation methods. She has also engaged in her own collaborative design process, working with local runners to design and test a cold-weather base layer shirt.
Assessing Learning Outcomes: The student perspective on achieving intended learning outcomes, as articulated by a graduate faculty task force, is assessed through the Exit Survey administered to all graduating students at each degree conferral period.

Assessing Student Experience: Student perceptions of academic and student life, quality, and frequency of faculty interactions and advising, and program/university climate are assessed through several targeted graduate/professional student surveys, including New Student, Doctoral Experience, and Exit. Information is shared strategically with units across the campus to support initiatives that will improve the student experience.

Career Outcomes: To understand what happens after graduation, we are implementing a Career Outcomes Survey for doctoral alumni who graduated in the past 20 years that will include questions about alumni perceptions of how well Cornell prepared them for their current career, factors that helped them land their first position, and elements of doctoral education that are currently important for students seeking to enter their field. To supplement survey responses, the Graduate School is searching public databases such as LinkedIn for additional insight into our alumni career outcomes.

New and Revised Programs
During 2014–2015, the Graduate School facilitated the following program and curriculum additions, and modifications for graduate fields, which were approved by the New York State Education Department as required.

Field Deactivations
• Cornell-Nanyang Technological University joint M.M.H.

Degree Program Delegations to Colleges
• M.Arch. to College of Architecture, Art, and Planning
• M.M.H. to School of Hotel Administration
• M.Eng. to College of Engineering
• MPS in Management to the Johnson School

New Degree Programs
• Dual MBA/MMH with China Europe International Business School

LEARN MORE
Learning Assessment at Cornell University Graduate School
Visit the newly approved Dual MBA/MMH with China Europe International Business School
Complete list of graduate fields

student spotlight
Hoang Vu, History, Ph.D.

“In Vietnam you do not need to have parents who are diplomats to tell you about history at the dinner table. Every family has the most amazing, most heartbreaking stories to tell, if you take the time to listen. And if you do, you cannot help but be interested in history.”

Hoang Vu sees the usefulness of a wide range of historical practices, especially when it comes to understanding the troubled history of his homeland, Vietnam. At the same time, as the son of diplomats, raised in many of the world’s diplomatic capitals, Vu’s exposure to the world of high politics helped inspire him on a path of inquiry into the highest levels of policy making.

A graduate student in history, Vu studies the diplomatic history of Vietnam between the end of the Vietnam War (1975) and the beginning of modern, normalized relations with the West (1995). During this time, Vietnam entered a costly war against Cambodia, ultimately removing the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime, though the quagmire of the invasion itself bore striking resemblances to the ill-fated American invasion of Vietnam a decade earlier.

The diplomatic history of this time — the Cambodian invasion and the successful negotiation of an end to the conflict — is relevant to scholars and policy makers on the global stage today: How was Vietnam able to escape the quagmire of its invasion of Cambodia and rejoin the international system on relatively favorable terms? When is it appropriate to forcibly intervene and remove a genocidal regime? What can the negotiations that led to the successful resolution of the Cambodia conflict in 1991 teach diplomats today who are seeking to bring lasting peace to troubled regions?

While much of the historical scholarship of this time period follows a singular, socialist narrative, Vu’s research seeks to more fully explore the complexity of the forces that led to Vietnam’s foreign policy decisions. In this way, diplomatic history is indispensable to policy makers of our own time who seek a deeper understanding of the world they hope to shape and an awareness of the possible consequences of their actions.
Graduate education is more than coursework, research, and scholarship. An effective and comprehensive graduate education includes a multi-faceted curriculum of academic, professional, career, and personal development programs ranging from thesis and dissertation writing boot camps to external fellowship application workshops.

The Graduate School supports students throughout their graduate studies as they explore career options and develop skills sought by employers in a wide range of settings. Last year, the Graduate School developed a “program chart” to identify and describe core competencies and transferable skills necessary for an effective system of professional development. This year, our writing programs were recognized with the NAGS/ETS Award for Excellence and Innovation in Graduate Education.

Our programs included cross-disciplinary collaborations and developing skills for success in graduate school. We helped new students transition to graduate school through an innovative series of discussion programs where pizza was served and topics covered included everything from sleep and time management to the top 10 skills for success. In the popular Three Minute Thesis (3MT©) competition, students had three minutes to describe their thesis or dissertation and its implications to a general audience composed of students, faculty, and staff.

“Microbes surround our lives,” began Ph.D. student FoSheng Hsu in his Three Minute Thesis presentation on his research into Legionella, a “bad” bacteria that is able to disguise itself in the human body.

The reaction from the crowd in the Biotechnology Building and the combined scores of four judges signaled Hsu’s success, and he was awarded first place ($1,500) in the Cornell Graduate School’s first annual Three Minute Thesis, or 3MT, competition. Hsu also received the People’s Choice Award ($500) by vote of the 100 people in the audience.

3MT was developed by the University of Queensland in 2008. It challenges graduate students to present their research in three minutes to a non-specialist audience. Competitors are scored based on audience engagement, audience comprehension, and their own communication skills.

From three preliminary rounds held in March and April, eight finalists—with research interests ranging from imaging nanomagnets with heat to ethical behavior and misreporting—were selected to compete.

Hsu’s research into bacteria seeks to find out why some lipids in Legionella can disguise themselves in the human body. The answers have the potential to cure Legionnaires’ disease.
Highlighted Student Experience Programs

Fellowship Writing: To help students write successful external fellowship applications, the Graduate School developed workshops on writing for fellowship competitions. Workshop components included expert advice and peer-to-peer fellowship review consultation.

English Language Support Office (ELSO): The Graduate School provides oversight to encourage programming that meets the needs of international graduate students with three-credit hour courses, a weekly workshop series, a tutoring program, a conversation program, and the ELSO Ambassador Program.

Ethics, Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), and Academic Integrity (AI): Research degree students must complete RCR training in authorship, peer review, and avoidance of research misconduct prior to the end of the student’s second registered semester. We developed and implemented events (e.g., workshops, ethics café lunchtime discussions, ethics wizard) and materials to provide information about RCR and AI issues.

Future Faculty: The Cornell University Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CU-CIRTL), funded by the National Science Foundation and the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation, enhanced programming on teaching and mentorship skills in STEM fields, including a popular workshop series and certificate program, “Building Mentoring Skills for a Career in Academia.” Graduate students and postdocs may earn certificates to signify successful completion of various CIRTL outcomes, signaling national-level recognition of these skills and experiences.

Financial Literacy: The Graduate School, in partnership with units across the campus, developed a comprehensive personal financial education program with support from the Council of Graduate Schools. This year, we created CA$H COUR$E—a workshop series on personal finance topics—and a Financial Literacy Festival.

Support Sexual Violence Prevention and Response: The Graduate School was an active participant in making sure that sexual violence prevention efforts required by federal compliance are implemented and are appropriate to the needs of our campus community.

The Graduate and Professional Student Initiative

Graduate and professional students often face competing demands for their time. Finding balance and integrating their personal life into the Cornell experience can be tricky.

In 2007 and updated in 2013, the Graduate and Professional Students Assembly (GPSA) developed a strategic plan, the Graduate and Professional Student Initiative (GPCI) for making sweeping improvements to graduate and professional student life. This year, we made progress by establishing eight working groups under the leadership of Graduate School Dean Barbara A. Knuth and Vice President of Student and Academic Services Susan Murphy. Highlighted accomplishments of these groups include special orientation sessions for students with families, a spring orientation for new graduate and professional students, a structural renovation of the Big Red Barn Graduate and Professional Student Center, and the establishment of an English Language Support Office.

Mental Health and Well-being

To support mental health and well-being, and help recognize students in distress, the Graduate School developed programs such as “When Challenges Occur in Your Academic Program” and “Overcoming the Imposter Syndrome.”

CU-Volunteers

To connect students with alumni, we supported CU-Volunteers to identify opportunities for alumni-student interaction, expanded our LinkedIn presence, hosted a networking event for alumni and graduate and professional students, and secured several alumni as speakers for professional development programs in the upcoming academic year.

Postdoctoral Programs

For postdoctoral fellows and associates, the Graduate School supported a number of career-focused programs, including an academic job search series, a leadership series, a series to facilitate career exploration, and a training session on applying for grants in computer and information sciences.

LEARN MORE

Academic Affairs Programs
Student Life Programs
Graduate School Program Chart
Graduate and Professional Community Initiative
Progress Report on GPCI
Over the past few years, the Graduate School has developed tools, processes, partnerships, and structures to support an inclusive environment, focusing particularly on those who are underrepresented in their fields.

With an increased focus on attracting prospective students, the Graduate School began leveraging our admissions software to track admissions and using data to fine-tune recruitment strategies. For example, we can now use data to focus on recruitment partnerships with institutions suggested by graduate faculty. To provide an authentic voice, students serving as Graduate School Student Recruitment Ambassadors traveled with faculty to recruitment conferences and selected universities with the goal of cultivating a pool of diverse applicants.

For current students, our focus was on professional development and student life. Two high-profile programs supported by the Graduate School aimed to promote diversity and excellence in graduate education: The Colman Leadership Program, an intensive three-day leadership immersion program for underrepresented Ph.D. students, and the Edward A. Bouchet Graduate Honor Society, which recognizes the outstanding scholarly achievements of diverse students.

Sara Hernández leads Grad School diversity efforts

By Daniel Aloi

Sara Xayarath Hernández, MRP ’07, director of Diversity Programs in Engineering (DPE) at Cornell since 2009, was named associate dean for inclusion and student engagement in the Graduate School in January 2015 and began her new role in the spring.

Hernández held leadership positions in DPE since completing her graduate studies in 2005. As director of DPE, she developed and oversaw programming and key initiatives in the college focused on recruitment, retention, inclusion, and achievement for undergraduate and graduate students.

Under her leadership, DPE has played a key role in increasing the participation and success of students from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in engineering. She has advised and mentored graduate and undergraduate students and served as co-principal investigator on the Cornell University Engineering Success program, funded by the National Science Foundation, and on the University Centers of Exemplary Mentoring program, funded by the Sloan Foundation. President Barack Obama recognized DPE in 2011 with a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring.

Hernández’s appointment was announced by Senior Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School Barbara Knuth, who led
We supported student groups that targeted the following demographics: women, students of color, LGBTQ students, veterans, and students with families. For student groups focusing on women’s issues, we co-sponsored International Women’s Day, and several Voice and Influence Luncheon Series workshops. We provided financial and programmatic support for student of color events, including the Works in Progress Research series, the Renaissance Ball, Graduation and Recognition Ceremony, and more.

The Graduate School supported the oSTEM (Out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Chapter at Cornell by providing funds for the chapter’s president to attend the oSTEM Annual and also provided assistance for oSTEM’s campus talk, “On Becoming the Next Generation of Leadership for a Diverse STEM Community” with Dr. Eric Jolly.

Special orientation programs were offered for veterans and students with families, along with programs for student parents and employment workshops for student spouses/partners.

Opportunities for students to interact across fields, disciplines, and departments occur throughout the year. Students enjoy meeting one another at the annual Student of Color Welcome Reception (above) and enjoying dinner and dancing at the Renaissance Ball (left).

the search committee. “We are delighted that Sara will be joining the Graduate School and devoting her considerable expertise to the graduate community,” Knuth said. “With her strategic vision and record of achievement, she will advance our work in inclusion and engagement.”

In her new position, Hernández leads the Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement, with a central role in Graduate School efforts to recruit, retain, and support a diverse community of graduate and professional students and postdoctoral scholars. Her responsibilities as associate dean include coordinating and providing student engagement and professional development programming designed to enhance all students’ academic success; preparing students for academic and nonacademic careers after they attain their graduate degrees; and encouraging participation in these programs among students from populations historically underrepresented in graduate education.

As one of five University Diversity Officers, her responsibilities also include helping steer Toward New Destinations diversity initiatives in colleges and units across the university.

“I look forward to joining the Graduate School and collaborating with a diversity of partners on initiatives that will enhance the environment, experiences, and outcomes for our graduate and professional students and postdoctoral scholars, who are all vital members of the Cornell community,” Hernández said when her appointment was announced. “I also look forward to collaborating with the other University Diversity Officers as well as partners throughout the university to support the development, progress, and impact of Toward New Destinations initiatives.”

“We are very proud of Sara’s accomplishments as director of Diversity Programs in Engineering and as a passionate and effective advocate in the College of Engineering for greater inclusion and diversity,” said Alan Zehnder, associate dean for diversity and faculty development. “Although she will be dearly missed in DPE we are very happy to see that her talents will be applied for the benefit of the entire Cornell graduate community. We look forward to working with her in her new role.”
Cornell University provides generous support for doctoral students with about 97 percent fully funded. Support includes stipend, tuition, and health insurance. In 2014-2015 the Graduate School awarded $12.3M in stipend support, $9.3M in tuition, and $1.3M in student health insurance for a total of $22.8M in graduate student financial support.

The Graduate School also receives funds from alumni through the Graduate Education Fund. We have steadily increased the revenue from our annual fund, which has enabled expansion of student professional and academic development programming. Annual fund dollars for graduate education increased 20 percent from fiscal years 2014 to 2015, likely related at least in part to participation in Giving Day. Gift funds provide essential support for Graduate School professional development and student life programming.

spotlight on grants and funding

The Cornell University Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning Receives $130,000 for Expansion

Great Lakes grant supports efforts to improve STEM graduation rates nationwide

Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields increasingly drive our nation’s innovation and competitiveness, and more STEM-educated professionals are needed to fill in-demand, well-paying jobs in these fields. Yet fewer than 40 percent of students who enter college intending to major in a STEM field complete a STEM degree—if they graduate at all.

To help reduce troubling attrition rates in STEM disciplines, particularly among historically under-represented students, the Cornell University Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (CU-CIRTL) is preparing the nation’s future STEM faculty to be both great researchers and great teachers. CU-CIRTL is part of a network of 22 major research universities across 16 states in which STEM graduate students are learning teaching and mentoring techniques proven to help undergraduate students from all backgrounds stay with their STEM majors and complete their degrees. CIRTL Network universities currently graduate about 20 percent of the country’s new STEM faculty each year.

As part of the CIRTL Network, Cornell University will receive funding from Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation. Great Lakes has committed a total $3.2 million to CIRTL institutions, through spring 2017. Combined with a separate grant CIRTL received from the National Science Foundation (NSF), this Great Lakes grant provides the resources necessary to expand programming at each university, and support cross-network sharing of best practices in future faculty development.

Cornell University’s CIRTL learning community, established in 2011, prepares graduate students and postdoctoral scholars for academic careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, with a focus on three theme areas: evidence-based practice of
teaching; inclusive teaching and learning; and effective research mentoring.

With Great Lakes funding, CU-CIRTL will establish a Graduate and Postdoctoral Certificate Program through which participants can document skill development and competencies related to teaching and mentoring, charting their progression from CIRTL Associate to Practitioner to Scholar, and institute a competitive application process by which interest groups can apply for small grants to develop learning community activities around the three themes: evidence-based teaching, inclusive teaching and learning, and mentoring.

“We will create opportunities for STEM graduate students and postdoctoral scholars to earn certificates demonstrating engagement with evidence-based teaching practices and commitment to fostering inclusive environments in their laboratories and classrooms,” said Barbara A. Knuth, senior vice provost and dean of the Graduate School.

“These activities will weave together professional development training pursued online and locally, expanding our partnership with Cornell’s Center for Teaching Excellence. We expect a third of CU-CIRTL participants will engage in higher-commitment activities disseminating their learning to larger, sometimes national, communities of scholars. A major focus will be on feasible opportunities for postdoctoral scholars to design and implement teaching innovations. Our new small grant program will encourage scale-up of activities that support learning in graduate fields across our STEM disciplines,” Knuth added.

“Together with the CIRTL Network and NSF, we are rising to the national challenge to help more students stay enrolled in their programs, graduate with STEM degrees, and transition to rewarding careers,” said Richard D. George, president and chief executive officer of Great Lakes. “We expect to truly shape the future of STEM education for thousands of future faculty, and an entire generation of undergraduate students.”
The Graduate School provides data, administrative tools and processes, and communication services to support the graduate community.

To better match prospective students with graduate fields, the Graduate School enhanced the “Catalog,” a filterable database of graduate field, faculty, research interests, and concentrations. Now, users can easily search and filter programs by key word, campus location, degree, and academic discipline. The tool helps prospective students identify faculty by name, field, research interests, and concentrations.

For graduate fields, we expanded functionality of the online application system to help fields improve prospect management, recruiting, and admissions/matriculant communications and tracking. We implemented a video interview feature, particularly for use with international applicants, and now accept admissions deposits online.

The site also provides students “quick-views of their data in real time,” according to University Bursar Peter Olcott.

“We students can easily view their bursar, Cornell Card, meal plan, City Bucks, and laundry balances right in the portal. If they need more information they can follow the link for details,” Olcott said.

Kahabka added that when first-year or transfer students arrive on campus, they can “struggle to find all the information they need to enroll in courses, pay their bills, verify their financial aid, and get acclimated to Cornell.”

“Cornell is a large, complex university with many different administrative services

Cornell debuts student portal

By Aimee Cho

After more than a year in development, a new online student administrative portal—partially funded by a gift from Liz Stuntz ’73 and Mayo Stuntz ’71—went live last week—studentessentials.cornell.edu

The development of the Student Essentials site began last fall, when Susan Murphy ’73 Ph.D. ’94, vice president for student and academic services, Joanne DeStefano MBA ’97, vice president for finance and chief financial officer, and Barbara Knuth, senior vice provost and dean of the graduate school, envisioned a new method to deliver student services to Cornellians.

“They asked their staff to] think creatively about the way student services can be delivered at Cornell,” said Jason Kahabka, associate dean for administration for the graduate school.

Students looking to take care of administrative matters and access often-used University websites can now do so through this new online academic portal, Kahabka said.

Student Essentials offers links to Student Center, Blackboard, library hours, academic support resources, exam schedules, transcript services, and dining menus and hours.
**Student Essentials**

To help students locate offices and units that can answer common questions, the Graduate School, in collaboration with the Office of the University Registrar, Bursar, and Financial Aid and Student Employment, created Student Essentials, a portal for the University’s central administrative offices.

**Digitizing Records**

Within the Graduate School, we streamlined our own records by digitizing 95,000 pages of student files currently on paper. Using the new electronic records system, the Graduate School can now route, process, and archive documents and forms electronically.

**Self-service Reports**

All graduate fields meet with the Graduate School on a biennial basis. To provide fields with better access to their data, we created self-service reports accessible to the graduate fields from our Intranet. Reports provide data on admissions, diversity and inclusion, enrollment, student academic committee structure, student attainment of required milestones, degree completion, time-to-degree and attrition, degrees awarded, job placement, perceptions of admitting not-attending students, student survey data from new students, doctoral students during their programs and graduating students, and survey data from alumni regarding career outcomes and reflections on their Cornell graduate experiences.

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**student spotlight**

**Daniel Weller, Food Science, M.S.**

Currently, food and waterborne diseases are the second leading cause of death in children under 5 worldwide, yet these diseases are entirely preventable and treatable given appropriate treatment and risk reduction strategies. Fruit and vegetable associated outbreaks cause, on average, more illnesses per outbreak than any other food. And while the problem of foodborne pathogens is significant, there is a shortage of trained food science professionals to help study and regulate these issues.

Daniel Weller is helping to solve both of these problems.

Weller is a graduate student studying foodborne pathogens in produce production environments. His goal is to help identify potential intervention points within the produce production environment to reduce the risk of pathogen contamination of fresh produce. The research he conducts through Dr. Martin Weidmann’s lab helps to identify risk factors associated with on-farm contamination, generating science-based interventions that can help to reduce foodborne disease.

In addition to working on research that will help to reduce pathogen contamination in food, Weller recently finished a research project designed to help meet the international need for well-trained food science professionals. By evaluating the effectiveness of Cornell’s MPS-ALS (Master of Professional Studies in Agriculture and Life Sciences) program, Weller and colleagues from Weidmann’s lab suggest it would be an effective model for the development of course-based graduate programs that help to overcome the shortage of food scientists.

“I think that I am incredibly lucky to have stumbled into a field of research that I thoroughly enjoy and am passionate about.”

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available to students,” Kahabka said. “Most offices have websites, but it can be frustrating for students to visit many different sites to get the information they need.”

Liz and Mayo Stunz partially funded the site because they “specifically wanted to help incoming students connect with the wealth of resources available on campus,” according to University Registrar Cassie Dembosky.

The offices of the University Registrar, Bursar, Financial Aid, and the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly.

Olcott added that during the 2013–14 academic year, the freshman Meinig Family Cornell National Scholars researched how peer schools present information, what portal designs are easiest to use, and what information students use most frequently.

“The Meinig Scholars invested hundreds of hours into this project and the success of this effort is in large part due to the excellent feedback and creative ideas they provided,” Olcott said.

The new website elicited positive reactions from students, who commented on its usability and aesthetic design.

“It’s more intuitive,” said Nicole Edelstein ’15. “If I were to try and look for something, I feel like it would be easier to find.”

Jessica Reuter ’17 added that she likes the “colorful design” of the new site.

The new website is also designed to integrate with the new course catalog website that was also just unveiled, according to Dembosky.

“We heard loud and clear that searching for and enrolling in courses was not easy,” Dembosky said. “I’m really excited about the vastly improved class roster and we’re already hearing great feedback from students in advance of pre-enrollment.”
PRIORITY SIX

visibility

GOAL Enhance visibility of graduate education opportunities at Cornell, and contribute to improving graduate education nationally.

The Graduate School promotes Cornell’s system of graduate education to our audiences around the world by producing targeted marketing and other communications targeted to different stages in the student lifecycle from prospective to alumni.

Prospective Students
- Consider Cornell (print publication)

Admitted Students
- You Belong (print publication)

Matriculated Students
- Welcome to Cornell (series of targeted email newsletters)
- Pocket Guide to Cornell (annotated map of Cornell)

student spotlight
Enongo Lumumba-Kasongo, Science and Technology Studies

What is your area of research?
I am a Ph.D. student in the department of science and technology studies. My specific area of research falls under the umbrella of sound studies, an interdisciplinary field in which the study of sound is used as a means to understand social, technological, and cultural developments as well as to access particular aspects of human experience. Sound studies scholars are interested in topics like the emergence of particular types of listening practices (and therefore new types of listeners); the historical, cultural, and political coproduction of sound innovations such as the phonograph, the radio, and musical instruments; and the implications of sound usage as it emerges in medical contexts, pedagogy, warfare, and entertainment. My research topic focuses on the politics of what I term “community studios”—fixed and mobile sites that exist to provide “underserved” communities with access to free and low cost professional music recording equipment, services, and education. I am very interested in the ways that the institutional status of such spaces as both studios and community resources informs the norms and daily technical practices of engineers, producers, and local artists as well as the ways it informs their assumptions about certain production values like fidelity and quality.

What inspired you to choose this field of study?
As an undergraduate student at Cornell I was first introduced to sound studies through a science and technology studies course led by Trevor Pinch, who has since become the chair of my committee. In the class we read Dr. Pinch’s work on the class we read Dr. Pinch’s work on...
the history of the Moog synthesizer, and as a digital music producer, I was excited at the prospect of working in a field that welcomes the study of such topics. I went on to declare a major in science and technology studies in addition to sociology, and wrote a senior thesis on digital music software and tacit knowledge.

Why is this research important?
This research is important on a number of different levels. I think that it will help community organizers evaluate the efficacy of programs that are designed to serve under-resourced communities. It is also important because it contributes to the body of work being produced in sound studies, a field that challenges the primacy of visual culture and begs researchers to ask new and interesting questions.

How has your background influenced your scholarship?
My background as a woman, as a hip-hop artist, and as a former elementary school teacher in a low-income community have all influenced my scholarship greatly. My initial research project was born out of a desire to make sense of the lack of other female hip-hop producers I encountered in the pursuit of my craft. Based on the research site I chose—a local community studio—I often later morphed into one more focused on production practices in studio spaces designed for low-income communities.

What else has influenced your thinking as a researcher or scholar?
I also think that my identity as a Black woman and as a child of two academics with an interest in African development has deeply influenced my thinking as a researcher. Racism is costing Black people their lives every day—recognizing this means understanding how privileged I am to be able to pursue my Ph.D. at Cornell, as well as the responsibility that I have to effect positive change from my position of power. I therefore selected a dissertation topic that has the potential to do just that. It is my hope that by interrogating community studio practices I can provide necessary insights into what works and what doesn’t work in these contexts.
statistics
Over the past 10 years, the Graduate School has experienced steady growth in applications for degrees; the application growth rate between 2005 and 2014 was 13%.

As reported by the Council of Graduate Schools, applications to "very high research activity" universities experienced moderate growth between 2013 and 2014, reflecting a 4% increase. Overall applications to Cornell University Graduate School reflected 0% growth since last year; doctoral applications to Cornell University declined 9% in this same time period.

For all degrees, the admit rate over the past 10 years has declined, indicating the increasing competitiveness of Cornell graduate programs. In those same 10 years, yield for all degree types has increased—an indication of the high caliber student Cornell has matriculated. The doctoral admit rate in 2014 was 14%; the yield was 44% (up from 42% in 2013).

**Fall 2005–2014 Admissions Notes**

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Over the past 10 years, the largest application growth in citizenship and gender demographics has come from females representing countries outside the U.S., with a 10-year growth rate of 90%. This same population experienced a 112% increase in admittances and a 140% increase in matriculations over that same time period.

Over the past year growth in international applications slowed to 3%, contributing to the stagnation in overall application growth between 2013 and 2014. Consistent with national trends as reported by the Council of Graduate Schools, the top international countries from which the applications were received in 2014 included China, India, South Korea, Taiwan, and Canada.

Although application growth from China and India did rise between 2013 and 2014, applications from South Korea, Taiwan, and Canada all fell. The Graduate School will continue to monitor this trend over the coming years.

*Degree-seeking students only
Ten Year Review

Application Highlights

75% increase in the number of applications from underrepresented minorities

62% increase in total minority applications

49% overall increase in applications

Admittance Highlights

40% increase in the number of applications from underrepresented minorities

28% increase in total minority applications

37% overall increase in applications

Matriculation Highlights

63% increase in the number of applications from underrepresented minorities

47% increase in total minority applications

45% overall increase in applications

Yield Highlights

2014 yield for underrepresented minorities: 52%

2014 yield for total minorities: 52%

2014 yield for all students: 45%
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Admissions statistics for research degrees indicate healthy gains over the past 10 years, with application growth over that time period at 21%. The largest discipline-related growth was reflected in the social sciences (35% increase), although both the life sciences and physical sciences and engineering showed robust growth since 2005 (25% and 20% respectively). Applications to physical sciences and engineering fields comprise 46% of the total application pool.
Over the past 10 years, there has been robust growth in Graduate School professional degree programs. Overall application growth reflected a 166% increase, and overall matriculations grew 5% since 2005. The physical sciences and engineering disciplines experienced an application growth rate of 173% over the past decade and a 67% matriculation growth rate over that same time period.
Reflecting the same trends as seen in the admission statistics, overall enrollment over the past 10 years reflects a 14% increase, with significant growth in professional master's degree programs (56% over the 10-year period.)

Since last year, enrollment in doctoral and professional master's degree programs experienced modest increase, whereas research master's degree enrollment increased 13%; because the research master's degree headcount is small, the increase has minimal impact on overall enrollment figures.

In 2005, doctoral enrollment comprised 71% of total enrollment, whereas professional master's programs comprised 25% of the total; In 2014, those figures are 59% and 33% respectively.

Over the past 10 years, enrollment in the physical sciences and engineering has grown 40%, averaging 4% growth each year. Enrollment in fields in the humanities and social sciences, while fewer in headcount, has also increased over the same period, with the humanities enrollment growing an average of 0.4% each year since 2005, and enrollment in the social sciences growing an average of 1.4% over that same time period. Enrollment in the life sciences reflects a 10% decrease over the last decade.
Overall enrollment in doctoral programs over the past 10 years has dipped slightly (-2%), with growth in US female enrollment (10%) offset by declines in male enrollment (both US and international) and enrollment by females from international countries.

Overall enrollment in research master's programs has shown steady growth over the past 10 years (85%), with a significant jump in the international populations: research master's enrollment by both females and males from international countries increased at an average annual rate of 14% over the decade, resulting in an overall international enrollment increase of 183%. In the same 10 years, research master's enrollment for students from the US increased 35%.

Enrollment in professional master's degree programs increased in all categories over the past 10 years, with an overall growth of 56%. In the past decade, significant growth has come within the population represented by females from international countries, an average annual growth rate of 14% resulting in a 10-year leap of 193%.
In preparation for the Cornell University Sesquicentennial, President Skorton wrote the following in the *Towards New Destinations* report: “We must remain true to the inclusive vision of the university’s founders and continue to strive for a more diverse university community.”

Over the past decade, Cornell University Graduate School has embraced this vision, increasing underrepresented minority enrollment 30%. Students of color represented 14% of total enrollment in 2005 and 16% of the total enrollment in 2014.

Over the past year, enrollment growth was a moderate 3%. As illustrated in the chart however, 15% more students self-reported as having multiple ethnicities, one or more of which is considered as underrepresented minority.

(Note that ethnicity is not officially reported on international students; detailed ethnicity information and statistics are on U.S. citizens or permanent residents only.)
## Graduate Student Enrollment by Field, Fall 2014 (includes inabsentia students)

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## Graduate Student Enrollment by Field, Fall 2014, continued

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Graduate Student Degrees Awarded within Discipline, by Degree Type, Award Years 2006–2015

**HUMANITIES DEGREES AWARDED BY DEGREE TYPE, 2006–2015**

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**LIFE SCIENCES DEGREES AWARDED BY DEGREE TYPE, 2006–2015**

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### Physical Sciences Degrees Awarded by Degree Type, 2006–2015

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### Social Sciences Degrees Awarded by Degree Type, 2006–2015

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Graduate Student Degrees Awarded by Gender, Citizenship and Degree Type, 2006–2015

GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH U.S. CITIZEN AND PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS

GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH INTERNATIONAL STATUS

[Graphs showing degrees awarded by gender, citizenship, and degree type from 2006 to 2015 for U.S. citizens and permanent residents, and international students, with specific numbers for each year and degree type.]
In 2006, Cornell granted 639 degrees to international students. By 2015, that number increased 55% to 989, and represented 72 countries from Afghanistan to Vietnam.

Of the 2,222 total degrees awarded in 2014–2015, 1,222 were professional master’s degrees, 513 were research master’s degrees and 487 were doctoral degrees. Doctoral degrees awarded increased 2% over the past 10 years, and the number of professional degrees presented to graduate students grew 67% over that same time period.

In award year 2015, degrees granted in the physical sciences represented 54% of total Graduate School degrees awarded; the social sciences accounted for 30%; and humanities and life sciences degrees awarded comprised the remainder at 15%.

Women earned 44% of total degrees granted in award year 2015; 45% of these women were international. Of the 436 women representing non-US countries, 68% earned a professional master’s degree.

Of the total 974 women awarded Cornell Graduate School degrees in award year 2015, 80% earned the degree in the physical and social sciences.

The percentage of minority students earning degrees over the past 10 years has increased 32% and the percentage of under-represented minority students earning degrees over the past 10 years has increased 42%. Total minorities (including under-represented minorities) comprised 16% of those earning graduate degrees in award year 2015.
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Graduate students are supported through assistantships, fellowships and funding from other sources, including funds paid directly to the student. A fellowship is an arrangement in which financial support is given to a graduate student to pursue his or her degree without any obligation on the part of the student to engage in teaching and/or research in furtherance of the university academic mission. Fellowships are generally merit-based awards intended to support a student in a full-time course of study.

Assistantships are an arrangement in which financial support is given to a graduate student who engages in teaching and/or research in furtherance of the university academic mission, as well as his or her graduate education. At Cornell, assistantships include teaching assistantships (TA), graduate assistantships (GA), graduate research assistantships (GRA), and research assistantships (RA).

Please note: The financial support charts do not contain information on the 227 graduate students enrolled in absentia for Fall 2014.
## Graduate Student Financial Support by Discipline and Degree Type, Fall 2014

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Note: does not include in absentia students
## Graduate Student Financial Support by College and Degree Type, Fall 2014

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## Graduate Student Financial Support by College and Degree Type, Fall 2014, continued

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Note: does not include *in absentia* students.
## Doctoral Support by Discipline, Fall 2005, 2009 and 2014

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Note: does not include *in absentia* students.
### Median Time to Degree—Doctoral Program by Field

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Average Completion Rate—Doctoral Program by Field

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