Cornell College of Business Graduate Synergy Group
Final Report

Charge to the Graduate Student Synergy Group:
1. Define areas across three Schools for achieving synergy of student participation and benefits.
2. Define processes for student governance (student councils, etc.) across the three Schools.
3. Identify risk areas (such as student perceptions) and enumerate plans for risk mitigation.
4. Identify areas that need further work and deliberation.

The committee shall meet formally and informally as needed to discuss issues and guide the formation of the CCB. The committee is requested to submit its recommendations to the Provost by April 15, 2016.

Committee Members

Chris Barrett       Deputy Dean & Dean of Academic Affairs Designate, CCB, co-chair (Dyson)
Barbara Knuth      Dean of Graduate School and Senior Vice Provost, co-chair
Cindy Allen        Executive Director of Academic Operations (SHA)
Linda Canina       Director of Graduate Studies, Graduate Field of Hotel Administration (SHA)
Sean Garner        Student, MBA ’16 Residential Program (Johnson)
Sachin Gupta       Director of Graduate Studies, Graduate Field of Management (Johnson)
Margaret Jodlowski Student, Graduate Field of Applied Economics and Management (Dyson)
Dustin Jones       Director of Baker Program in Real Estate (SHA)
David Just         DGS, Graduate Field of Applied Economics and Management (Dyson)
Gaurav Kankanelli  Student, Graduate Field of Management (Johnson)
Khalid Ladha       Student Representative, Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
Beta Mannix        Associate Dean for Executive MBA Programs (Johnson)
Matt McGranaghan   Student, President of Dyson Graduate Student Association (Dyson)
Diana Narvaez      Student, MBA ’16 Residential Program (Johnson)
David Ng           Faculty, Graduate Field of Applied Economics and Management (Dyson)
Sammakai Richards  Student, President of the Hotel Graduate Student Organization (SHA)
Helene Schember    CCB Launch Preparations Manager (CCB)
Amanda Shaw        Assistant Dean for Student Services (Johnson)
Jason Spencer      Student, Baker Program in Real Estate (SHA)
Cal Turvey         Faculty, Graduate Field of Applied Economics and Management (Dyson)

Overview

The Graduate Student Synergy Group identified key issues of importance and concern for graduate/professional students in the various degree programs associated with Schools in the College of Business and closely related Graduate Fields (see complete degree program list and characteristics in Appendix A). Recommendations regarding how to address each of these key issues are below.

From the perspective of graduate/professional students, particularly related to student expectations and perceptions, it is critical that some type of positive changes (improvements) related to the College of Business occur in academic year 2016-2017. For most of the recommendations below, most of which will take time to address, we also suggest at least one “quick win” that may be possible for the College of Business in AY2016-2017, pending agreement and resources from the College of Business leadership.
Achieving quick wins – i.e., demonstrable positive change in 2016-2017 – is critical toward fostering positive student perceptions of the College of Business.

Many of the recommendations suggest the need for focused Task Forces comprising memberships of appropriate faculty, staff, and graduate/professional students to address the identified issues and make specific policy/program recommendations to CCB leadership and faculty. CCB leadership will then need to assign the appropriate resources to implement necessary actions. We do not presume to be able to identify the specific individuals who should be involved in each of these task forces, but encourage the CCB leadership to appoint effective groups of faculty, staff, and graduate/professional students to each.

**Recommendations from the CCB Graduate Student Synergy Group**

**Recommendation 1, Graduate/Professional Student Governance and Support Groups:** Create and charge a Task Force to define the roles of existing School-/Field-level graduate and professional student groups in governance and community building and propose how to structure and integrate them for College-level governance and community building functions (Appendix B provides a current list of such groups). Consider structures internal to the CCB at the level of the College and the component Schools, and structures external to the CCB such as the graduate fields in the Graduate School and the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA).

**QUICK WIN FOR 2016-2017:** At the beginning of AY2016-17, appoint a graduate/professional student advisory committee (separate from a similar undergraduate body) that reports directly to the CCB leadership, drawing members from the existing School/Field student governance bodies. The graduate/professional student advisory committee might regularly meet with CCB leadership together with the analogous undergraduate body.

**Recommendation 2, Graduate/Professional Career Services:** Create and charge a Task Force to develop long-term coordinated approaches to career services, addressing both student-facing career readiness programming and employer-facing recruitment efforts, and including the range of career paths of CCB students – private sector business, public sector/government, and academia. Determine the appropriate role for career services at the University level, College level, and in the three component Schools, strengthening services as needed without diminishing services to those student populations currently supported well (e.g., MBA). MMH and MPS students in Real Estate and Applied Economics and Management are particularly in need of enhanced career services support. Resources such as Handshake should be expanded to all CCB graduate/professional students if feasible. Networking and training opportunities should be expanded to include all CCB graduate/professional students.

**QUICK WINS FOR 2016-2017:** (1) Advertise workshops, networking opportunities, and career fairs to all CCB students, allowing all to attend. (2) Share hosting of invited speakers for topics of interest to students across Schools, and on student career readiness programming and career exploration. Begin integrating existing programming as much as possible over the course of the 2016-2017 academic year.
**Recommendation 3, Graduate/Professional Student Research Resources:** Create and charge a Task Force to identify how best to integrate computing, database and library resources for the College across the three Schools in support of student, staff and faculty research. Publicize more broadly the databases, as well as computing resources (e.g., servers, high-speed processors) available to students, staff, and faculty. Resources such as Bloomberg Terminals should be expanded to all students if feasible.

**QUICK WIN FOR 2016-2017:** Publicize available resources widely to all CCB students. Expand offerings if there is sufficient unmet demand and resources available to support those desires.

**Recommendation 4, Graduate/Professional Degree Programs and Courses:** Strategic discussion is needed to examine all existing graduate field (research and professional) degree and professional degree programs and courses/curricula within CCB to identify similarities and disparities, and determine the appropriate future CCB portfolio. (See Appendix A for a list of existing degree programs.)

**Recommendation 4a, Graduate Field Structures for Research Degrees:** The graduate faculty of the graduate fields with research degrees (Applied Economics and Management, Hotel Administration, Management) should consider collectively how best to structure graduate fields to improve student recruitment and enhance academic opportunities and outcomes for research graduate students.

**QUICK WINS FOR 2016-2017:** (1) DGSSs from all three fields should initiate group meeting(s) to begin this conversation and make precise recommendations to the College and Graduate School leadership. (2) DGSs for PhD programs should consider pursuing arrangements for awarding a non-thesis master’s degree for selected minor subjects relevant to students in their major subjects per Graduate School procedures and policies.

**Recommendation 4b, Graduate/Professional Academic Programs for Professional Degrees:** Create and charge a Task Force to examine all the graduate field-based and School-based professional degree programs offered within CCB, to determine whether any consolidation, cooperation, expansion, or other changes may be desirable to improve student recruitment and enhance academic opportunities and outcomes for professional degree students. Also consider whether CCB should request that the Graduate School delegate any professional degree programs (e.g., MBA, MPS) to the College.

**QUICK WINS FOR 2016-2017:** (1) Professional degree faculty from all existing degree programs should initiate group meeting(s) to begin this conversation. (2) If faculty and College leadership support delegation of degree(s) from the Graduate School, complete and file appropriate request documentation with the Graduate School.

**Recommendation 4c, Graduate/Professional Courses:** Create and charge a Task Force to evaluate coordination of course offerings, including (1) identifying courses that cover similar material (redundant courses can be eliminated to free up resources for underserved or high demand courses); (2) expanding course offerings particularly for those topics in highest unmet demand by students or that enhance the curricula in current programs (e.g., business economics
for the Ph.D. programs); (3) coordinating the “most valuable/high demand” courses to make sure they are offered at non-competing times to expand access to more students; (4) encouraging cross-listing of selected courses and creation of new sections to serve the needs of all degree programs’ students; (5) creating appropriate enrollment strategies and mechanisms across Schools, CCB, and the University to “hold” spaces in courses for particular groups of graduate/professional students; and (6) creating additional opportunities for graduate-level courses particularly at the 5000 and 6000 level, leveraging lectures in advanced undergraduate courses when appropriate. These actions will require concurrence from CCB faculty in each School, and attention from each Registrar. Faculty concurrence may be required to approve more students, who have more varying preparation/background, enrolling in their courses. (A list of target courses that are currently in high demand and should be considered for expansion is included as Appendix C.)

**QUICK WINS for 2016-2017:** (1) A limited number of spaces in high-interest courses could be “reserved” for CCB graduate/professional students from the two other Schools different from the offering School. (2) The Directors of Graduate Studies of the three doctoral graduate fields can share with each other the names and syllabi of their PhD-level courses to enhance awareness of and access to doctoral courses.

**Recommendation 4d, Graduate/Professional Students International Opportunities:**
Leaders of existing international opportunities and program partnerships available to graduate/professional students should be charged to meet as a group, inventory existing programs, and identify opportunities for synergies and new programs within CCB, within and across Schools.

**QUICK WIN FOR 2016-2017:** In AY2016-17, catalog the existing partnerships and overseas learning opportunities available through any of the Schools and publicize those opportunities.

**Recommendation 4e, Graduate/Professional Student Recruitment:**
Develop a graduate/professional degree program landing page for prospective students, directing students to any of the 16 current programs (see Appendix A). Link to CCB, Schools, and Graduate School web pages. Include a FAQ page. Expand efforts to recruit a diverse student body for each degree program (See Appendix D for current student demographic data, and Recommendation 5 below for specific recommendations on inclusion and diversity.)

**QUICK WIN FOR 2016-2017:** Convene a small task force to design and launch the new landing page.

**Recommendation 5, Diversity and Inclusion:** Create and charge a task force to define diversity and associated goals for the CCB; articulate its mission related to diversity including student recruitment, retention, and success; examine existing diversity and inclusion efforts across the Schools; determine resource needs; and identify best practices and how to implement them widely. (See Appendix D for student demographic data.)

**QUICK WINS FOR 2016-2017:** 1) Develop and launch a mentoring program in which continuing graduate/professional students mentor new graduate/professional students who are first generation, female and/or underrepresented minority, and for graduate/professional students to mentor
undergraduates from those same underrepresented groups so as to improve retention and performance of historically disadvantaged groups of students. 2) Develop and launch a mentoring program which will link URM graduate/professional students with faculty and administrators.

**Recommendation 6, Graduate/Professional Student Funding:** The CCB leadership should analyze graduate assistantship, fellowship, and scholarship funding support to the four primary graduate fields most closely associated with CCB with regard to amount, distribution, and equity of resources to attract a high-quality student body, with particular focus on doctoral programs. Specifically with regard to cross-program opportunities for Teaching Assistantships, there may exist opportunity to enhance professional development for PhD students in all graduate fields by providing expanded access to course teaching opportunities and improving the matching of students with courses if CCB can develop more flexible doctoral student funding arrangements.

**QUICK WIN for 2016-2017:** Explore the possibility of CCB resources covering graduate research degree tuition for students supported by faculty or School discretionary resources so as to enhance incentives for faculty to fund graduate students using non-sponsored funds and enable coverage of more graduate students with current discretionary budgets.

**Recommendation 7, Community Communication:** Identify and implement mechanisms to enhance understanding of CCB within the component Schools and across the Cornell community, and to foster productive interactions.

**Recommendation 7a, Report Progress and Solicit Input:** The CCB leadership should hold an open forum discussion before the end of spring semester 2016 featuring the recommendations from the various CCB committees to report out to the campus community and to elicit input from a range of stakeholders, help coordinate among the groups, and help communicate the progress being made.


**Recommendation 7b, CCB Calendar of Events:** The CCB leadership should establish an integrated calendar of events that interest students, faculty, staff, and alumni in the component Schools and in the College overall.

**QUICK WIN for 2016-2017:** Work with communications teams to introduce an integrated online calendar by the start of academic year 2016-17.

**Recommendation 7c: CCB-wide Seminars:** CCB/School faculty and graduate/professional students should organize seminars by both internal and external speakers that appeal to multiple member groups of the CCB, potentially to wide audiences, on topics such as sustainability, international development, and entrepreneurship.

**QUICK WIN for 2016-2017:** Work with College Area Coordinators to offer at least one such seminar series in Fall ‘16 and another in Spring ‘17.
**Recommendation 7d, Share Networking and Training Resources:** Be ever-vigilant and mindful to expand appropriate communications, training, alumni networking and other resources and opportunities in one School to be available throughout the CCB community. Examples include inviting one faculty advisor each from Dyson and Johnson to the Associate Real Estate Council to establish ties with Dyson and Johnson alumni in this network; notifying all CCB students about the Argus Training availability; marketing the Distinguished Speakers Series to all Schools within CCB.

**QUICK WIN for 2016-2017:** Hold at least one all-CCB alumni networking event for all current CCB students and alumni from each of the three Schools.

**Appendices**

- Appendix A: Chart of all graduate degree programs with enrollment and other demographic/descriptive information
- Appendix B: List of current graduate/professional student governance and social groups
- Appendix C: List of courses currently in high demand, to target for expansion
- Appendix D: Graduate and professional student demographic profiles