

# **Commission on Pathways through Graduate School and into Careers**

## **Issues and Preliminary Findings**

**Patrick Osmer, Ph.D.**

The Ohio State University

Chair, Commission on Pathways through Graduate School  
and into Careers

# Why this Commission?

- The United States depends critically on our capacity to out-innovate, out-create, and out-think the world.
- Graduate schools develop the competencies needed to address the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.
- To ensure that our graduates reach their potential, we need to illuminate the next phase of the journey:

**The Pathway Through Graduate School And Into Careers.**

# Who is on the Commission?

## Corporate Leaders

- William Green, Board of Directors, Accenture
- Stanley Litow, IBM
- Joseph Miller, Corning
- Russell Owen, CSC
- Ronald Townsend, Battelle

## Ex Officio Members

- Kurt Landgraf, ETS
- Debra Stewart, CGS

## University Leaders

- Patrick Osmer (Chair) The Ohio State University
- Jeffery Gibeling, University of California Davis
- Maureen Grasso, University of Georgia
- Freeman Hrabowski, University of Maryland Baltimore County
- Jan Morrison, Boston University
- Suzanne Ortega, University of North Carolina
- Teresa Sullivan, University of Virginia
- Lisa Tedesco, Emory University
- James Wimbush, Indiana University

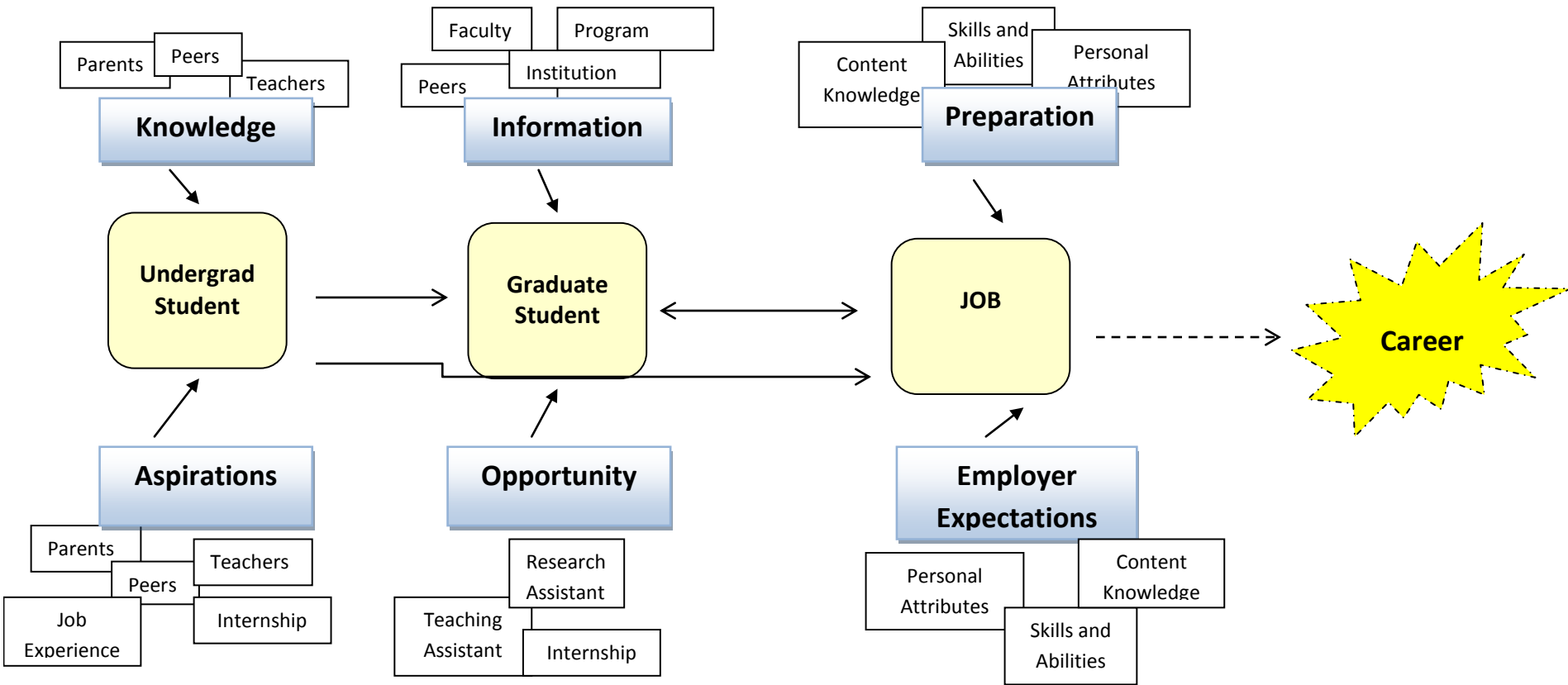
# The Path Forward: The Future of Graduate Education in the United States

- Challenges
  - Changing demographics
  - Attrition and time to degree
  - Debt accumulation
  - Lack of Career Transparency

# Transition Through Graduate Education into Careers: Why Important?

- Estimated that the number of jobs requiring an advanced degree will increase by about 2.5 million over the next decade
  - 18% increase in jobs requiring masters
  - 17% increase in jobs requiring doctorates
- Understanding career options may be a factor in deciding to attend graduate school
  - The knowledge-based economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will increasingly require advanced knowledge and skills
  - Graduate education provides individuals with advanced knowledge and skills and produces innovators

# Sources of Career Knowledge



# Preliminary Findings: Students

- Students believe that a graduate degree is valuable
  - 88% believe a graduate degree provides better career opportunities and over
  - 84% believe it provides increased earning potential
- Information received about career paths is insufficient
  - Over 60% of students received insufficient information about career options prior to entering graduate school
- During graduate school, support is more readily available for “traditional” jobs
  - Academic job search support is more available than non-academic job search support
  - Faculty and research careers are promoted far more by faculty than other careers

# Preliminary Findings: Universities

- Institutions vary in the amount of attention, information, and support provided to students regarding career options
  - 60% of Deans believe that students completing a research doctorate are knowledgeable about career options
  - 89% believe that students completing a professional doctorate are knowledgeable about career options
- Non-academic careers are perceived as inferior to academic positions
  - 43% believe faculty provide more support to those students interested in academic careers



# Preliminary Findings: Universities

- Outcomes are not routinely tracked and vary dramatically within an institution
  - 32% of deans are very dissatisfied with their ability to track outcomes
  - 43% report that the dean's office collects career outcome data
- Establishing relationships with employers is not valued
  - 95% of deans encourage students to use faculty to locate jobs following graduation but only 7% formally encourage faculty to maintain relationships with potential employers

# Preliminary Findings: Employers

- Employers feel that graduate degree holders bring value to their organization; such staff
  - Have advanced knowledge and real work experience
  - Engage immediately in their work
  - Approach and solve problems in creative ways
- Employers feel that graduate degree holders still lack essential skills; these skills include
  - Engaging in teamwork
  - Effectively oral communication (i.e., creating and delivering presentations, discuss technical issues with non-technical individuals,
  - The application of technical knowledge
- Employers feel that graduate schools must have a multidisciplinary focus and teach students how to innovate

# Crucial Questions

- Preliminary findings raise crucial questions about how we are educating and training students
  - Role of professional master's degrees
  - Role of professional doctorates
  - Nature of doctoral education and training
  - Preparation for alternative careers

# Next Steps

- The next version of the report will be reviewed by the Commission in January, 2012
- The final report will be released at the CGS legislative forum on April 19, 2012