

# Challenges of Innovation in Doctoral Education

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## About the Graduate Center

CUNY, a Public University with 25 units  
500,000 Students

Graduate Center, principal doctoral degree granting unit  
4300 students (4000 doctoral, 300 master's)  
32 Programs

Consortial System: 141 central faculty and 1900 at CUNY campuses  
All student teaching at other campuses; 7% of 100,000 courses university-wide

Admit and graduate about 500 new doctoral students each year

Five-year packages for significant number of students since 2003  
By 2015 all student in Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences will have a five-year fellowship or five years of tuition

# What are the key challenges?

- Path and timeliness to degree
- What happens to our graduates?
- Diversity and access

# What do we need to look at?

- Structure and content of doctoral study
- The data
- The admissions process
- Why do students want doctorates?
- Why do “we” want them to have doctorates?
- How are expectations for all phases of doctoral study defined, communicated and followed up?

# What are we doing?

- Programs creating and posting time lines to degree—including professional development
- Programs making data on time-to-degree and placement available
- Making expectations clear to students and faculty— role of outcomes assessment
- Academic and non-academic career development

# What are we doing?

- Full funding model—greater selectivity, hard decisions
- Digital training
- Exploring incentives for programs to innovate

# How do we measure success?

- Are extremes being addressed?
- Assessing progress toward individual milestones; interactive tracking—is making expectations more explicit effective?
- Are programs taking initiative in re-examining what they do and innovating? This has to be an essential part of what discipline-centered doctoral education is about.

# Final Thoughts

- The academic world is changing along with the rest of the world
- Goals of doctoral candidates may be changing
- Faculty and (prospective) students need to make informed choices
- However we approach the culture of doctoral education, we have to be aware of it
- None of this works without programs engaging and taking over the lead.
- Don't panic. It's a process.