Council of Graduate Schools
ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admission to Completion

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GRADUATE COLLEGE UIC

PASSAGE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

PaSSaGE Scholars Program
Promoting Success in STEM Graduate Education

Important First Steps for the Dean
- Vision for the Graduate College
- Vision for Diversity Efforts
- Consideration of Other Initiatives

Steps in Grant Planning and Writing Process
- The Reality-Stage One
- The Reality-Stage Two

The PASSAGE Scholars Program

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Define vision for your Graduate College

Perform a needs assessment to determine what should happen to achieve that vision

Consider university, local, state, and national needs and potential partnerships

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Vision for the UIC Graduate College

To move the GC from an administrative/compliance college to one that serves students' needs with respect to:

Professional development and career preparation

Stipend funding to promote timely degree completion

Graduate program relevance to contemporary careers and overall program quality

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Vision for the UIC Graduate College Diversity Efforts

Diversity efforts at the university and in the GC had been strong but I wanted to reorganize the GC efforts to:

Provide more in-depth and prolonged research experience for URM undergraduates interested in graduate school.

Provide a "home away from department" mentoring program for URM graduate fellowship recipients to evaluate whether we could promote their retention and degree completion via early identification of road blocks.

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University, Local, State and National Initiatives

University-wide diversity strategic thinking and planning effort

K-12 to faculty pipeline programs for underrepresented groups

Training the workforce in STEM disciplines

Partnerships with local community colleges

Steps in the Grant Planning and Writing Process

1. **Carefully define the group you are going to serve**
   All URM graduate students or a subset of URM graduate students?

2. **Evaluate gaps in services to those students.**
   Mentoring? Pipeline? Career Development? Other Services?

3. **Determine which service gap fits with funding mechanism-be realistic!**
   What can you do with $30, 000?

4. **Make sure the proposal responds to the entire award statement.**
   "From Admission to Completion"

5. **Think outside of the box and seek advice from outside the group.**

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The Reality……

Stage One

We started late and had only a month!

First meeting: Dean and two diversity group members
                   (Drs. Aixa Alfonso and Lunaire Ford)

Decisions made: Focus on STEM graduate students and
                   improving the undergraduate to faculty pipeline.

One person wrote first draft

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Steps in Grant Planning and Writing Process
Stage One

1. **Carefully define the group you are going to serve**
   Incoming URM STEM graduate students

2. **Evaluate gaps in services to those students.**
   URM undergraduate to faculty pipeline

3. **Determine which service gap fits with funding mechanism-be realistic!**
   What can you do with $30, 000?

4. **Make sure the grant responds to the entire award statement.**
   "From Admission to Completion"

5. **Think outside of the box and seek advice from outside the group.**

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Stage Two

First draft was good, but too broad, incorporated our new initiatives but it wasn't clear how money would be used, or how it encompassed the "from admission to completion" theme.

Second meeting-brought in additional people including those outside the diversity group to brain-storm.

Rewrote (quickly)!

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Steps in Grant Planning and Writing Process
Stage Two

1. **Carefully define the group you are going to serve**
   Incoming URM STEM graduate students

2. **Evaluate gaps in services to those students.**
   URM undergraduate to faculty pipeline….but more specifically a summer transition program to give URM STEM students a head start on their research.

3. **Determine which service gap fits with funding mechanism-be realistic!**
   What can you do with $30, 000? Fund housing and stipends for six students in the summer before they start graduate school.

4. **Make sure the grant responds to the entire award statement.**
   "From Admission to Completion" Added incentives for completion of preliminary/ qualifying exam =$500 to go to discipline specific meeting or course, and for completion of degree = $500 to travel to job interviews.

5. **Think outside of the box and seek advice from outside the group.**
   Our special projects coordinator, a History graduate student, could see through the details and identified our focus!

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The PASSAGE Scholars Program

Who   A summer transition experience for 6 incoming URM STEM graduate students.

What   A summer research rotation with a faculty mentor in their new department
A series of weekly workshops led by faculty and senior doctoral candidates
Assigned senior graduate students as peer-mentors

Logistics   Students live as a group in two bedroom suites in one of the new on-campus apartment/dorms. We arrange and pay for housing.

Students are admitted early and register for a "research rotation" course in their respective departments/programs. We waive tuition and pay fees associated with summer semester.

Students receive an additional $4000 stipend for the summer.

Selection   Competitive application, students selected by faculty advisory committee who also determined final program structure and who facilitate weekly workshops.

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UIC PASSAGE Scholars 2013

Braulio Rodriguez
FairField State University
Biological Sciences
LAS

Vanessa Nepomuceno
U of South Carolina
Pharmacognosy
COP

Chris Perez
CalTech
Mathematics
LAS

Kevin Vissuet
UCSD
Mathematics
LAS

Magdalis Gonzalez-Vega
U of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez
Department of Physiology and Biophysics
COM

Ben Richardson
U of Chicago
Medicinal Chemistry
COP

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PASSAGE Scholars Calendar Summer 2013
Dr. Lunaire Ford, Director

Week One

June 17th	Program begins, students move in
June 18th	Orientation, department and lab visits
June 19th	Campus tour, get IDs
June 20th	To Lab/Department!
June 21st	Behind the scenes guided tour of Field Museum

Students doing research full time except for 4 workshops:

June 28th	Workshop 1: What to Expect in Grad School
July 12th	Workshop 2: Reading and Analyzing a Research Paper
July 26th	Workshop 3: Writing a Research Paper/Abstract
August 9th	Workshop 4: Giving a Research Talk

Final Program Report Due on August 9th (last day)
Students can remain in housing until August 15th
Semester starts August 26th

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Scholars Meet
Research Mentors

Grad College Staff

Faculty Advisory Group

Senior Grad Students

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Scholars and Their Peer Mentors at the Field Museum

Scholars with Lunaire and Aixa

Magdalis and Geovannie

Christian and Ben

Scholars and their peer-mentors

Tristesse and Vanessa