



News Release

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University of Illinois at Chicago Wins ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education

Washington, DC – The fourth annual “ETS/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admission through Completion” was presented to the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) during the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS). The award is sponsored by CGS and Educational Testing Service (ETS). Dr. Karen Colley, Dean of the Graduate College, accepted the award on behalf of UIC.

The award recognizes promising, innovative proposals to enhance student success and degree completion at the master’s or doctoral level, while promoting inclusiveness. The winning institution is selected based on the strength of its proposal to meet the award’s goals and to serve as a model for other schools; it receives a two-year, \$20,000 matching grant.

UIC’s winning proposal seeks to fill gaps in the efforts of its Graduate College to promote the retention and success of underrepresented minority graduate students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Existing efforts that prepare minority students at UIC to enter graduate programs will be enhanced through a new program, “Promoting Success in STEM Graduate Education” (PaSSaGE) Scholars. PaSSaGE will provide ongoing mentoring, professional skills development opportunities, and financial incentives to promote retention and timely degree completion.

Grant funds will be used to provide stipends to minority STEM students as they transition into their graduate degree program, as well as later in a student’s course of study, when it will make available additional funding to each recipient who completes his or her preliminary/qualifying examination and advances to PhD candidacy within the timeframe appropriate for the student’s discipline. Scholars will receive funding to present their work at academic meetings or conferences. As they complete their PhD and move toward the next stage of their careers, PaSSaGE scholars will be eligible to receive an additional award for travel to interview for postgraduate job opportunities.

“ETS is pleased to support UIC in developing new resources to help close the degree completion gap for many minority STEM graduate students,” said David G. Payne, Vice President and COO of ETS’s Higher Education Division. “Providing graduate students with the resources they need to navigate and complete their graduate study is an essential step toward student success, and ETS is happy to contribute to this effort.”

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“The UIC proposal stood out among a very strong field by creating a financial incentive for minority STEM students to achieve the key academic milestones that are essential to degree progress,” said Debra W. Stewart, CGS President. “We are proud to support the students – at UIC and graduate schools everywhere – who will benefit from the implementation and evaluation of programs like the PaSSaGE Scholars.”

About ETS

At ETS, we advance quality and equity in education for people worldwide by creating assessments based on rigorous research. ETS serves individuals, educational institutions and government agencies by providing customized solutions for teacher certification, English language learning, and elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, as well as conducting education research, analysis and policy studies. Founded as a nonprofit in 1947, ETS develops, administers and scores more than 50 million tests annually — including the *TOEFL*® and *TOEIC*® tests, the *GRE*® tests and *The Praxis Series*™ assessments — in more than 180 countries, at over 9,000 locations worldwide. www.ets.org

About CGS

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 92% of the doctoral degrees and 81% of the master's degrees.* The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

* Based on data from the 2011 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees