

PRESS RELEASE

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Debra W. Stewart Announces Plans to Step Down as President of Council of Graduate Schools

Washington, DC — Debra W. Stewart announced today that she will step down as President of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) effective June 30, 2014. Since July 2000, Stewart has served as president of the leading national organization in the United States dedicated to the advancement of graduate education and research.

In a message sent today to graduate education leaders of the 547 CGS member institutions, Stewart said, “It has been a great privilege to serve as your president. CGS is a strong organization and you, the CGS deans, are the foundation of that strength. Your engagement makes the work we do here in Washington a privilege and a pleasure.”

Stewart plans to remain actively engaged in graduate and higher education issues, initially turning her energies to writing and research on graduate education as a Senior Scholar at CGS.

Robert Augustine, Chair of the CGS Board of Directors and Dean of the Graduate School at Eastern Illinois University, said, “Debra Stewart has provided dynamic and visionary leadership for CGS during a period of rapid change in graduate education and research. Under her direction, the council has become a nationally and globally recognized 'think tank' on graduate education, advancing best practices that have been adopted by a remarkable number of institutions.”

During her tenure as CGS President, Dr. Stewart has led groundbreaking initiatives in the area of research, public policy, institutional benchmarking and global graduate education. In the best practice research area, the council has advanced the graduate community’s understanding of factors associated with degree completion at the master’s and doctoral level; led the development of the highly successful professional master’s degree; and, in partnership with member institutions, developed best practices for research integrity education for graduate students, among other projects. Stewart has also led the council in advancing one of the council’s key policy issues, developing the highly-skilled human talent needed for the 21st century economy and workforce, by building collaborations between graduate institutions, business leaders and policy makers.

In the international arena, Stewart has been instrumental in expanding the council’s international membership with the goal of promoting better collaboration and understanding among CGS’s North American members and graduate institutions worldwide. To support these efforts, Stewart led the creation of the Strategic Leaders Global Summit on Graduate Education, an annual CGS event that has brought together graduate education leaders from 30 countries in its seven-year history.

A national search for Stewart’s successor will be formally announced later this month.

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 78% 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 2012 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees*