

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
October 31, 2012

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CGS Announces Awards to Support the Assessment of Student Learning by Future Faculty

Washington, DC – The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) today announced awards to seven universities to develop new approaches for enhancing graduate student skills and understanding in the assessment of undergraduate learning. Supported through grants to CGS from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the Teagle Foundation, the awardees will integrate learning assessment into programs that prepare graduate students for faculty careers.

The project is designed to identify effective institutional models for improving the preparation of future faculty across all fields, while also examining issues specific to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields, social sciences, and humanities. CGS will work with partnering institutions to develop their findings into best practice guidelines for integrating assessment into faculty professional development programs such as the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program launched in 1993. Project partners will contribute to a web-based clearinghouse of resources on learning assessment.

The institutions selected to receive funding are:

- Cornell University
- Harvard University
- Indiana University
- Michigan State University
- North Carolina A&T State University
- University of California, Merced
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro

An additional 19 universities will participate in the project as [affiliate partners](#).

The Sloan Foundation has invested in the enhancement of introductory and gateway courses in STEM fields, which are vital to U.S. student persistence in science majors and the cultivation of domestic STEM talent. Elizabeth S. Boylan, Program Director of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, commented, “Sloan is committed to assisting future STEM faculty to attain the tools and skills they will need to become highly effective faculty—attuned to how their students are learning and what they, as faculty, can do to maximize the learning potential of all their students. I expect that the institutional participants will greatly enrich the graduate community’s understanding of best practices in this area.”

Projects to prepare future faculty in the humanities and social sciences are supported by funding from the Teagle Foundation. “We are excited about this project because it reaches graduate students at a formative moment in their teaching careers, an approach that will potentially result in life-long commitments to the assessment and improvement of undergraduate learning,” said Richard Morrill, Teagle Foundation President. “The Teagle Foundation looks forward to learning what these forward-thinking institutions will discover and achieve as they work collaboratively across the arts and sciences.”

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The project builds upon the results of a prior partnership with the Teagle Foundation to explore needs and opportunities for the integration of undergraduate learning assessment into PFF programs. “Assessment of student learning is an essential skill for effective teaching, and yet many new faculty are not exposed to useful methods and tools until they are managing the responsibilities of a first job,” noted CGS President Debra W. Stewart. “The awardees and affiliates have shown extraordinary leadership in recognizing this important link between graduate training and successful teaching.”

For more about the role of graduate schools in preparing students for faculty careers, please visit the [PFF project](#) page.

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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*