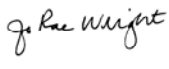




Date: December 29, 2009

To: Peter Lange

From: Jo Rae Wright 

Re: Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Master's Programs

Executive Summary

The entire Ad Hoc Committee on Master's Programs met four times and there were several meetings of the three subcommittees on Finance, Professional Master's Programs, and Academics. We respond here first with a short overview of our findings and then provide detailed replies to each of the queries from the original charge. A list of committee members as well as others who were consulted are included in Appendix I.

There was strong consensus among committee members that maximum flexibility in administration of master's programs is required in order to maintain and promote the diversity of Duke's master's programs. However, it was also recognized that there is a need for a mechanism to provide advice to those wishing to begin new master's programs and to advise schools on how to ensure that ongoing programs are of appropriate quality and can be sustained.

For reference, we are defining professional master's programs as those intended to prepare graduates for entry-level professional employment in government, business, clinical, and non-profit sectors and requiring employment-related courses, internships, and intentional development of communication and professional skills targeted for specific professional work contexts. Research master's do not generally require a workplace skills component and are designed to deepen the student's knowledge of the concepts that drive research questions in a field. They provide the student with necessary grounding for pursuing further research in a field either in an advanced degree program (PhD) or in a private or public sector research context.

The committee recommends that the Provost's office initiate and oversee a Master's Advisory Council comprised of faculty and staff appointed by Deans and Signature Institute Directors. It was suggested that administrative support for staff to the Master's Advisory Council could reside in the Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies office and that the Council should meet on a regular basis (e.g. once or twice per semester or more often as needed). A leader for the Council would be appointed by the Provost's office upon consultation with the Deans. Rotating leadership should be considered.

The Master's Advisory Council will be advisory to the Provost, school Deans, and Signature Institute Directors in several areas including the following:

1. Serve an advisory function to monitor growth of and demand for professional master's programs.
2. Serve an advisory function to assist faculty and staff in development of new professional master's programs.
3. Develop a template and check list for new programs and a FAQ that addresses administrative and financial issues to assist in development of new professional master's programs. (Note that John Simon is in the process of developing a template that addresses SACS requirements for academic issues.)
4. Make recommendations to the Provost and Deans on tuition issues and mechanisms for sharing of revenue and expense for cross-school master's programs.
5. Make recommendations about cross-listing courses between schools and departments and mechanisms for compensation or recognition for faculty teaching in cross-listed courses.

6. Serve as a resource on an as-requested basis for APC and other University committees involved in approval and review of professional master's programs.
7. Make recommendations to the Provost and Deans about professional master's program review processes.
8. Report annually on the number of students and FTEs (dollars) enrolled in master's programs.
9. Serve as a liaison with student service staff (International House, Student Services, housing, parking, for example).
10. Advise the Deans, their staff and the financial aid office on possible ways to address the fact that some undergraduates enrolled in 4+1 programs currently have difficulty with financial aid when they become joint undergraduate/grad students in their fourth year.
11. Make recommendations to the Provost about a policy that addresses how much work is expected for a given level of pay for master's students working as research assistants.
12. Address other issues as charged by the Provost.

Information contained in this document will be a valuable resource for the Council.

The existing and future research master's programs would continue to be administered by the Graduate School, which assists in development of new research master's programs, provides the first step in new program approval process (review by the ECGF), and coordinates program review as part of the departmental review process.

Answers to specific queries in the charge

What are the existing master's programs at Duke University; what are their enrollments? What are their administrative structures? What financial resources support the administration of the programs? Are the existing programs diverse in terms of students and faculty?

See attached list of programs in Appendix 2.

See attached costs for MA in Economics in Appendix 3

Data are pending on administrative structures, financial resources and diversity.

What is the level of oversight of master's programs, both at creation and for review?

Currently, new research masters programs are reviewed sequentially by ECGF, APC, Academic Council, then approved by the Board of Trustees.

ECAC has recommended that a checklist be devised for new professional master's programs. Given the diversity of the programs, the checklist will vary depending on the program and the school. APC will be responsible for ensuring the checklist items have been addressed for new program proposals. ECAC also suggested that the Master's Advisory Council formulate a new program template to be approved by the Provost that includes several parameters such as, but not limited to, expected number of students in the program, plans for improving reading and writing skills of international students, articulation of service requirements, space need analysis, determination of whether courses outside the school will be needed, plans for dealing with academic integrity issues, expectations for minimal performance, process for dismissal or probation, plans for career advising and placement, plans for faculty recruitment, estimation of faculty resources required, explanation of how the proposed program complements or overlaps with existing programs (in content as well as administration), and guidelines on theses/papers/fieldwork/project/internship requirements for a Duke master's degree.

New professional masters programs are currently reviewed by APC, Academic Council, and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Ad Hoc Master's Committee recommends that the professional master's programs be reviewed and voted upon by the department, school and/or institute governing bodies and then continue through the existing university-level approval process (i.e., APC, ECAC/AC, Board of Trustees).

ECAC further recommended that all new proposed programs be discussed at Dean's cabinet.

The review process is addressed in point 3 below.

Is the "hybrid" model of centralized and collegiate administration of master's programs that exists at Duke the best model?

The committee concluded that the hybrid model that exists at Duke is the best and that one of the greatest strengths of current policies and practices is the flexibility that exists and the diversity that the flexibility allows.

One concern about the current administrative model is that some programs suffer from a lack of "ownership" especially in the area of student advising. It was suggested that, for interdisciplinary and cross-school programs, each Dean or Signature Institute Director (or designee) should designate a faculty member to serve DGS (or equivalent) who will work with other school representatives and the Vice Provosts to coordinate activities.

How should professional master's programs be reviewed and evaluated?

ECAC has requested that a subgroup of the Ad Hoc Master's Committee develop metrics for review of professional master's programs. ECAC recommended that the review be done at the department/school/institute level followed by evaluation of the review by APC. ECAC has also requested that development plans for new professional master's programs should include metrics for

success and new programs should conduct some pre- and post- graduate surveying to get the required data. It was suggested by ECAC that reviews should occur approximately every 5 years, but data should be collected on a yearly basis. For new programs that are one year in length, it may be advisable to conduct an interim review at 3 years. The Graduate School will provide the Master's Advisory Council with the template used for review of Ph.D. programs for reference.

How can we provide appropriate incentives for including master's programs in interdisciplinary efforts?

The consensus of the committee was that new ideas for interdisciplinary programs must arise out of the faculty. The committee felt that it is important to reduce, as much as possible, the administrative costs involved in supporting, maintaining and optimizing the programs. The committee also recommends that the Master's Advisory Council make recommendations regarding division of revenue and expense that will optimize the incentives for developing and sustaining interdisciplinary programs. The Ad Hoc Committee recommends that the Master's Advisory Council meet on a regular basis to discuss mechanisms to reduce the administrative burden (cross school collaborations or centralization of services, for example) and to simplify inter-unit arrangements associated with master's programs. These issues should be addressed on an "as needed" basis, since some schools have already established efficient operations for existing professional Master's programs.

What financial model should be used for a) charging and b) allocating master's tuition revenue? What financial model should be used for allocation of master's tuition revenue for interdisciplinary programs that cross departments and/or schools?

The Finance Subcommittee met several times and after careful deliberation concluded that, given the implications and consequences of the different options, their pros and cons should be stated. The final decisions on financial structuring, especially for cross-school programs, will have to be determined by the Deans of the involved schools in consultation with the Provost and with input from the Master's Advisory Council. The committee had some general recommendations regarding guiding principles for distribution of revenue and expense in master's programs and for principles for part time students and students needing additional time to complete their programs. These three items are addressed first.

A) GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALLOCATION OF TUITION FOR ALL MASTER'S PROGRAMS

Different models for allocating master's revenue exist across the university. It is probably not possible or desirable to make all of these identical. However, there are three common principles that can be articulated to guide the philosophy for how revenue should be allocated:

- (1) The revenue distribution plan for each master's program should be negotiated between the entities involved (between schools, departments, institutes and programs as necessary) to address fairly the involvement of each, within guidelines developed by the Council.
- (2) The benefits of master's program revenue should be shared with the entities involved in such a way as to incentivize the starting and running of master's programs.
- (3) A viable financial plan needs to be an important part of any new master's program proposal.

B) GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALLOCATION OF TUITION REVENUE FOR MASTER'S PROGRAMS ADMINISTERED BY THE GRADUATE SCHOOL. Such revenue should:

- (1) Be shared with participating entities.
- (2) Be used to incentivize the starting and running of master's programs
- (3) Help underwrite the costs of the PhD educational enterprise at Duke
- (4) Should support interdisciplinary programs
- (5) Should be used to encourage international student enrollment

- (6) Should help support the costs of running the Graduate School

C) RECOMMENDATION FOR CHARGING TUITION FOR SINGLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Summary of existing models of charging tuition for single school master's programs

- The Graduate School charges a per-credit charge plus a registration fee
- MALS program charges lower per-credit charge plus \$100 registration fee
- Nicholas: flat-rate then per-credit charge after four semesters
- Pratt: MEMP program is flat-rate
- Sanford: flat-rate (to best of knowledge)
- Divinity: MTS is flat-rate (not sure about MDiv or MT)
- Fuqua: MBA is flat-rate
- Law: flat-rate
- Nursing: per-credit
- Medicine: three programs are flat rate and one program charges per credit (CRTP).

In summary, most schools charge a flat-rate tuition. In the schools that charge flat-rate tuition, there is no registration fee in addition to the tuition. The advantages and disadvantages of going to a uniform model of charging flat-rate tuition for all schools were discussed, and the findings are summarized below.

Advantages of going to flat-rate master's tuition for all single school programs for all schools:

- Flat rate would encourage and support better learning, because, as in the PhD programs, students could take as many courses as they and their advisors deem important without incurring additional cost (within the constraints of the overall duration of the specific master's program).
- Financial arrangements would be simpler for joint degree programs.
- A flat rate would allow for registration in two schools at once, since there would not be the need to juggle per-credit and flat-rate tuition structures. Currently, it is difficult for students to be enrolled in two schools simultaneously if one school is charging registration fees per semester, for example, while the student is only taking courses in the other school. Joint enrollment in two schools would enable a more cohesive experience of the student with the resources, faculty, and students of both schools.
- A flat-rate tuition structure is used by most schools currently, so it would harmonize financial structures over the whole university.
- It might be easier to implement tuition remission charges to faculty grants for research assistants in master's programs if there were flat-rate tuition with no separate registration fee.

Disadvantages of going to flat-rate master's tuition for all schools:

- This approach might require a different flat-rate for each entity (an entity being a school, department, or program). This difference in flat-rate would be necessary to account for the different financial constraints of different entities, and would need to be negotiated separately with each entity.
- Flat-rate tuition charge would likely have profound financial impacts on some schools.

Recommendation for charging tuition for single school based programs: Overall, the committee felt that going to a uniform model of charging flat-rate tuition (with no registration fees) for all schools would have more advantages than disadvantages. This topic will need to be vetted by the Deans since the finances of some schools (Nursing, for example) would be greatly affected by such a change.

D). RECOMMENDATION FOR CHARGING TUITION IN CONCURRENT SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Three options were considered: (1) sequential tuition (charge tuition for each entity only during the time the student is enrolled in that entity), (2) blended model (students are enrolled in both entities simultaneously and pay tuition to both entities simultaneously), and (3) blended model with tuition divided on a semester-by-semester basis based on the percent participation of students in each entity.

Discussion: The blended model seems to be a common practice in place at Duke already. In concurrent programs between NSOE and Fuqua, negotiations take place to balance out tuition if a student adds a joint degree later in a program. NSOE has a policy for concurrent programs such that the first school in which the student enrolled is responsible for the student's financial aid for the duration of the student's study in both schools. There are different models of how tuition could be divided between schools when students take courses outside of their school. When Pratt MEMP students take law courses, for example, but are not dual-enrolled, the tuition stays within the MEMP. It was felt by the subcommittee that settling up of tuition dollars between schools for occasional courses taken by students in different schools needlessly complicates the financial model if there are only a few students who take such courses.

Recommendations for charging tuition in concurrent programs: The subcommittee makes the following recommendations for assessing tuition in concurrent programs:

- Adopt a blended tuition model. Students enroll in both programs simultaneously and pay tuition to both schools simultaneously. This approach has the advantage of making the students a part of both educational communities for the duration of their study. It also has the advantage of more consistent and predictable revenue flow to the various entities involved.
- Both schools/programs would need to negotiate how to handle division of tuition dollars for students who drop out early without completing both programs.
- The school in which the student first enrolls will handle the financial aid (and VISAs) for the student's entire duration of study. This approach will be simpler for the students.
- Encourage Deans not to charge students separate tuition to take occasional courses from other schools. Doing so would promote interdisciplinarity and would simplify accounting. (The Graduate School will investigate the number of students taking courses from different schools that are not part of their program. If this is a large number or is not balanced out well between schools, then this recommendation may be revisited.)
- The Master's Advisory Council should help facilitate the various logistical issues involved with concurrent degrees and interdisciplinary studies.

Recommendations for allocating tuition in concurrent programs.

Two options were considered. (1) make it the same for all students in the concurrent program (X% goes to entity A, Y% goes to entity B), (2) divide tuition on a per-student basis depending on how many credit hours taken in each entity. It was felt that the second option was too complicated.

Recommendation: Make the division of revenue between entities the same for all students in the concurrent program. This decision can be revisited if large inequities arise or large numbers of students drop out resulting in tuition sharing inequities.

E) RECOMMENDED PART-TIME STUDENT TUITION ASSESSMENT MODEL

Two options were considered: (1) charge a full semester's tuition all at once and allow no-cost continuation registrations until coursework completed, (2) part-time students pay-as-they-go by credit hour. It is important to make it feasible for some master's students to do part-time study, but not to encourage it. The first option above

would not incentivize students to complete their studies quickly. The second option is thus more efficient, but the tuition rate should be higher than normal to discourage part-time study.

Recommendation: Part-time students would pay per-credit tuition rather than flat-rate tuition, but at a rate higher than prorated flat-rate (to discourage part-time status, but to enable it to be affordable to students who need part-time status). The part-time tuition model would differ from the subcommittee's recommendation for full-time students, who would be assessed a flat-rate tuition. Note that some existing programs, such as Nursing, have part-time students and this recommendation would not apply.

F) RECOMMENDED MECHANISMS TO ACCOMMODATE STUDENTS NEEDING ADDITIONAL TIME TO COMPLETE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS (IF WE MOVE TO FLAT-RATE TUITION)

The subcommittee feels that there should be some provision made to accommodate students needing a small amount of additional time to complete their degree (e.g. those repeating the qualifying exam, those needed additional time to complete their thesis or take additional course) without charging an additional full semester's flat-rate tuition. The model for part-time students was adapted to this situation.

Recommendation: After the regular length of program, students needing more courses would pay tuition on at a per-credit rate (at a higher rate than prorated flat-rate tuition, similar to the case for part-time students). If a student needs only to complete non-course-related work, that student would pay a continuation fee but no tuition in subsequent semesters.

Are there opportunities for master's students to do internships in the Triangle that are not currently being utilized?

Individual programs should address this issue.

What should the requirements be for faculty status in master's programs?

The committee recommends that SACS faculty guidelines should be followed. SACS guidelines state that faculty should have an earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. Upon approval of the relevant school dean, an appropriate level of experience or professional recognition may substitute for an earned doctorate/terminal degree.

Should Duke be promoting "4 + 1" or "5 year master's programs" in which talented undergraduates can begin master's study in the last semester(s) of their undergraduate careers? If so, what tuition structures would best serve such programs?

The committee was enthusiastic about supporting the 5 year master's programs. Currently, the major barriers to some programs are financial due to differences in tuition charges for undergraduates and master's. In general, it is difficult to have blended tuition since students enter 4+1 or 3+2 program at different times (and thus require different retroactive tuition back payments between schools). UG tuition is higher than master's tuition so it would not make sense for students to pay UG tuition for 3 years and then grad tuition for 2 years since the University would lose revenue.

Recommendation: Charge undergraduate tuition for 4 years then graduate school tuition for fifth year. Graduate school and UG school will divide the revenue for the overlapping year(s). This recommendation is contingent on the university being able to work out financial aid so that it doesn't disadvantage undergraduate students (Susan Bonifield said there had been some problem with UG students not being eligible for financial aid once they become joint UG/grad students in fourth year). The Masters' Advisory Council should work with the financial aid office to address this issue. This recommendation is primarily for the combined UG/Master's programs that deal with the Graduate

School and not for other schools that may have combined UG/Master's programs (e.g., NSOE – which wants to keep its current 3-2 model). This recommendation will be needed to be discussed further by school finance leaders and Deans.

Should institutional or sponsored research projects be allocated tuition remission, in the same way that those projects are allocated tuition for PhD students?

Background: The Graduate School enacted a new policy in 2009-2010 year to charge “tuition remission” in place of the previous registration fees for PhD students. This improved compliance for compensation amounts that are charged for graduate student effort on grants. The committee considered whether a similar policy of converting registration fees to tuition remission is appropriate for master's students enrolled in the Graduate School who are paid on research grants. (This tuition remission policy would not apply to master's students serving as TAs.)

Discussion: There are differences between the situation for master's students and PhD students paid on grants: (1) compensation amounts for master's students are quite variable, whereas PhD student stipends are largely uniform across programs, and (2) there are considerably fewer master's students who are paid on grants.

A possible scenario for a master's student would be the following: under the current policy, the student may be compensated \$12,000 per year for work performed, whereas under the tuition remission policy the student may be paid \$8000 as stipend and \$4000 as “tuition remission.” The tuition remission amount would reduce by \$4000 the amount of tuition the student would need to pay, and thus the old policy and the hypothetical tuition remission policy would compensate the student the same net amount. However, the tuition remission policy would reduce the tax liability for the student because income tax would not be charged on the amount designated as tuition remission. The tuition remission policy would also benefit the PI of the grant paying the student because F&A charges are not assessed on tuition remission.

A problem arises in that the amount paid to master's students on grants varies considerably from laboratory to laboratory and program to program, ranging from a few thousand dollars per year to several tens of thousands of dollars, depending on the work requirements of the particular grants. Because this compensation is not standardized for master's students as it is for PhD students, there may be considerable difficulty in determining how much tuition remission should be granted for a given level of stipend compensation to a particular masters student.

Cindy Robertson reports that the number of master's students currently being paid as Research Assistants on grants is relatively low, and the number of students who convert from PhD programs to terminal master's is smaller still. Thus, the significant complexity of determining how to prorate tuition remission based on stipend does not seem warranted in view of the small number of students involved.

Jim Luther reports that other private institutions (such as Vanderbilt) have considered this issue and have transitioned to tuition remission for PhD students but not for master's students. Our policy would be consistent with other institutions if we were not to go to a tuition remission model for master's students.

A separate issue arose during discussion: how should Duke promote consistent and fair expectations for the amount of work to be performed by master's students paid from grants? One could imagine a hypothetical scenario where a faculty member offered to pay a master's student \$4000/year to perform work as a research assistant on a project, but expected the student to be in the laboratory 20 hours per week because it was a “valuable research experience.” Another professor might pay a different master's student \$12,000/year for 20 hours/week of work in the lab. The absence of

standardization in the amount of compensation for master's students could lead to situations in which unequal expectations about the quantity of work performed by students in return for a given level of compensation occur. The subcommittee feels that the workload for a given level of pay should be clarified by policy in order to promote consistency and fairness.

Recommendations:

1. The subcommittee does not recommend a tuition remission policy at the current time for master's students.
2. The subcommittee recommends that a policy be developed to indicate clearly how much work is expected for a given level of pay for master's students working as research assistants. This recommendation is in response to the wide range of compensation given to master's students. Such a policy would promote fairness. It is suggested that the Master's Advisory Council or a subgroup develop and recommend a policy to the Provost.
3. Exceptions to the standardized workload for a given amount of pay could be considered on a case-by-case basis in exceptional circumstances.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing dual degrees (MD/MBA, JD/MD, MEM/MBA (environment), MPP/MBA, MEM/MBA (engineering), JD/MA, JD/MBA, JD/MEM (law))?

The subcommittee emphasized that these programs are diverse and that this diversity and flexibility should be maintained. However, as noted above, it appears that no one takes sufficient ownership of some of the programs to insure that students are effectively advised or that their programs are pedagogically coherent. This topic should be addressed in more detail by the Master's Advisory Council.

How do the current and potential master's programs interface with and contribute to (or compete with) other forms of graduate and undergraduate education?

Clearly the development of any new programs (master's or otherwise) requires resources of faculty, staff, and administrative time and effort as well as financial resources. A template for new program development that contains such information as well as a review of proposed programs by school and institute leadership committees will help ensure that these issues are addressed. The committee also discussed the fact that there are constraints on undergraduate admissions (driven by housing and student services, for example), and constraints on Ph.D. admissions driven by finances and faculty size), but it is less clear that there are such constraints on the size of master's programs. It will be important to monitor growth in these programs and to be attentive to the impact of increased program size on the University resources, culture, and the character of the institution. It is important to be strategic about these issues, as outstanding new programs may develop relatively late in the time, and their development could be constrained by limitations on student numbers. It is recommended that the university try to avoid a significant penalty on "last in" programs since they could be the most valuable.

The committee was unanimous in agreeing that there are many positive impacts from establishing new master's programs including providing a critical mass of students for some courses and programs, providing links for advanced undergraduates, and fulfilling the strategic initiative of knowledge in the service of society. Such programs can also provide a unique and valuable option for students from a career development perspective. Employment opportunities and competing in a global economy can be enhanced for students in these programs, making the programs potentially central offerings for the university's mission.