

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE RESPONSIVE PH. D. Innovations in U.S. Doctoral Education

Since the 1990s, many observers have called for change in doctoral education in the United States—and many critics have argued that doctoral education can't change. The Responsive Ph.D. shows that doctoral education *must* change, *can* change, and is *already* changing in creative, effective ways.

A five-year initiative of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, the Responsive Ph.D. offers a range of recommendations for doctoral education, including these:

- promote public scholarship that applies academic expertise to social challenges;
- broaden and reinvigorate efforts to open the doctorate to new populations, particularly from underrepresented minority groups;
- strengthen the authority and administrative capacity of graduate deans;
- foster frequent dialogue among doctoral programs, their alumni, and leaders outside the academy; and
- illuminate paths to alternative careers outside the research university.

The Responsive Ph.D.: Innovations in Doctoral Education, the initiative's five-year report, not only defines this agenda but also offers examples of best practices from a network of leading doctoral institutions.

The Foundation first convened the Responsive Ph.D. in 2000, with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts. Its consortium of 14 founding members (later expanded to 20; see sidebar) defined four challenges for the American Ph.D.: to encourage truly adventurous scholarship; train Ph.D.s to work in varied settings within and beyond the academy; do more to recruit and retain doctoral students of color; and connect more fully and regularly with partners in the larger society. With the initial Pew funding, and with additional support from the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the Henry Luce Foundation, the Responsive Ph.D. universities demonstrated ways to meet those challenges.

Four Principles for Supporting Change

Genuine change in doctoral education, the Responsive Ph.D. has found, depends on four principles:

- **A graduate school for real:** A truly responsive Ph.D. requires *strong graduate schools and graduate deans with real budgets and real scope*—a stronger administrative structure than typically exists at present.
- **A cosmopolitan doctorate:** The doctorate will benefit enormously by a *continuing interchange with the worlds beyond academia*. To become more relevant and garner more support, the doctorate must open to the world and engage social challenges more generously.
- **Drawn from the breadth of the populace:** For reasons of both equity and efficacy, doctoral education must place *a still higher priority on attracting, cultivating, and retaining a larger next generation of Ph.D.s of color*.
- **An assessed excellence:** The quality of doctoral education depends upon *assessment with reasonable consequences*. Attainment of specific objectives can be rewarded through commensurate increases in valued resources.

The Responsive Ph.D. Universities

- *Arizona State University
- *Duke University
- *Howard University
- *Indiana University
- *Princeton University
- *University of California, Irvine
- University of California at Los Angeles
- *University of Colorado at Boulder
- University of Illinois at Chicago
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- University of Kentucky
- University of Louisville
- *University of Michigan
- *University of Pennsylvania
- *University of Texas at Austin
- *University of Washington
- *University of Wisconsin at Madison
- Vanderbilt University
- *Washington University in St. Louis
- *Yale University

**One of 14 founding member institutions.*

Recommendations

While work being done at the Responsive Ph.D. universities will require a test of time, some early recommendations have emerged:

1. The central notion of a graduate school requires strengthening so that it can become a vital force in breaking down barriers between programs and sponsoring a more cosmopolitan intellectual experience for doctoral students.
2. Changes in doctoral policy, as well as in the ultimate standards for the doctorate in each field, should emerge from a continuous dialogue among the faculty who teach doctoral students, the students themselves, and the representatives of diverse sectors that employ doctoral graduates.
3. Departments and graduate schools need to involve Ph.D. alumni more substantively in doctoral training.
4. Doctoral students need both departmental and extra-departmental structures to give their concerns a strong and effective voice and to cultivate graduate student leadership as a component of graduate education and professional development.
5. Information about doctoral education, program expectations, and career prospects must be more transparent to students from the moment they begin to consider a Ph.D.
6. Doctoral programs urgently need to expand their approaches to mentoring, such as through team mentoring, particularly for attracting and retaining a diverse cohort of students.

The Responsive Ph.D.'s Action Agenda for the Future

In summer 2005, deans of the 20 Responsive Ph.D. institutions identified four priorities for the initiative as it looks to the future:

- Emphasize the K-12 pipeline in seeking to increase diversity in graduate education and the professoriate
- Seek new ways to apply academic knowledge to social challenges and promote public scholarship;
- Address the globalization of doctoral education; and
- Improve professional development of doctoral students in a full range of careers.

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ASSESSING BEST PRACTICES: *Case Studies from 14 Responsive Ph.D. Universities*

Early in the Responsive Ph.D. initiative, the partner institutions identified four key areas of focus:

- **New paradigms:** Far from hindering the evolution of the Ph.D., as some previous studies have implied, scholarship is the heart of the doctorate. Rather than fault traditional research and scholarship, the Responsive Ph.D. asks, *What encourages or discourages truly adventurous scholarship?*
- **New practices:** Teaching and service, as evolving aspects of the doctorate, demand new kinds of training. The Responsive Ph.D. seeks to *make all aspects of doctoral training, including pedagogy, truly developmental, and to make the application of knowledge beyond the academy integral to doctoral experience.*
- **New people:** The Ph.D. cohort, source of the nation's college and university faculty, is not changing quickly enough to reflect the United States' diversity. With additional funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Responsive Ph.D. looked at national recruitment and retention efforts for doctoral students of color (see the separate report, *Diversity and the Ph.D.* [May 2005]), and asked, *is there a way to make the doctorate less insular, less abstract, more attainable for potential Ph.D. candidates?*
- **New partnerships:** Increasingly, Ph.D. graduates find employment in a range of positions beyond the traditional academic posts. The Responsive Ph.D. seeks *an essential and continuous relationship between those who create the doctoral process and all those who employ its graduates.*

To these four, the initiative soon added another emphasis: The need to demonstrate successful doctoral innovations that could be widely replicated, and to create incentives for such outcomes.

In the first five years of the Responsive Ph.D., the 14 founding partner universities offered examples of their most effective doctoral practices, often using the initiative to implement, expand, and exchange ideas. **The Responsive Ph.D.: Innovations in U.S. Doctoral Education** presents summary case studies of these 41 practices; an accompanying CD provides fuller discussions of each.

Forming New Partnerships

Career Goal Setting Workshop Series
Arizona State University

Graduate Dean's Advisory Council
Arizona State University

Career Conversations
Princeton University

Departmental Industrial Recruiting Program
The University of California at Irvine

Ph.D. Career Seminar Series
The University of California at Irvine

Center for the Humanities and Arts Internship Program
The University of Colorado at Boulder

Entrepreneurship Course
The University of Texas at Austin

Connecting the Community: Institute on the Public Humanities
The University of Washington

The K-Through-Infinity Professional Development Initiative
The University of Wisconsin at Madison

Crafting New Paradigms

President's Summer Undergraduate Research Initiative
Indiana University

Exhibit and Exchange Student Lecture Series
The University of Pennsylvania

Navigating the Dissertation
The University of Pennsylvania

Summer Web Workshop Series
Washington University in St. Louis

Exploring New Practices

Faculty Award for Outstanding Doctoral Mentor
Arizona State University

Disciplinary Teaching Certificate
Duke University

Certificate in College and University Faculty Preparation
Howard University

New Student Orientation Program
Howard University

Research in Teaching and Learning Awards
Howard University

Future Faculty Teaching Fellowship Program
Indiana University

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Program
Indiana University

Entering the Professoriate
Princeton University

Humanities Out There
The University of California at Irvine

Lead Graduate Teacher Network
The University of Colorado at Boulder

Seminar on College Teaching: Preparing Future Faculty
The University of Michigan

Faculty Conversations on the Academic Job Search and Academic Life
The University of Pennsylvania

International Teaching Assistant Assessment
The University of Texas at Austin

Huckabay Fellowship Program: Preparing Future Faculty
The University of Washington

Guide to Graduate Student Life
The University of Wisconsin at Madison

FEAST Student-Faculty Lunch Program
Yale University

McDougal Graduate Student Center Fellows
Yale University

Recruiting and Retaining New People

Summer Multicultural Access to Research Training
The University of Colorado at Boulder

Students of Color of Rackham Conference
The University of Michigan

Summer Institute for New Merit Fellows
The University of Michigan

Student and Faculty Advisory Boards for Graduate
Opportunity Minority Achievement Program
The University of Washington

Partners for Success
The University of Wisconsin at Madison

Conference on Graduate Education
Washington University in St. Louis

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity Fellows Program
Yale University

Connecting Resources to Outcomes

Graduate Department Budgeting Allocation
Duke University

Online Graduate Student Demographics
Duke University

Graduate Research Internship Program
The University of Texas at Austin

Graduate Funding Initiative
Washington University in St. Louis