



EMORY  
GRADUATE  
SCHOOL

**Dean's Address to the Graduate Faculty  
State of the Graduate School**

*Lisa A. Tedesco*

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Good afternoon and welcome Provost Lewis, colleagues and friends. I'm pleased to see so many of you here, today, in the same room.

As one of the newer members of this Emory community, and with responsibility for things 'graduate,' I did what I believed to be prudent: I read the Graduate School Handbook. And the Handbook declares that "the dean will convene a meeting of the graduate faculty, once a year, late in the spring semester and report on the state of the graduate school." So I worked with our staff to find a time and to send out notices, and I started to think about what to say.

Then I saw one of those lovely printed invitations I hope you all received and suddenly the whole thing seemed bigger than I first imagined. What was I thinking...The "State of the Graduate School Address"—Should I call on audience actors to illustrate my points? Should I expect a rebuttal presentation from the other side of the aisle? Will journalists and pundits count the seconds of applause (dare I hope!) or minutes of utter silence, will I be compared to great dean-orators of the past? ... I started to get dizzy and apprehensive...

As I returned to the calm center of the purpose of this address, I realized that none of these things would happen. And I also realized that the framers of the faculty governance documents wisely provided for an annual opportunity to come together and consider where we are and where we are going.

Without pomp, but with appropriate and transparent ceremony, I am honored to stand before you and give my first annual presentation as Dean of Emory's Graduate School. I will talk briefly about the year that has passed and then move on to several priorities, visions, and dreams that will move us into the future we are here to make, together. There will be time for discussion, and we've planned a reception immediately following for more informal conversation.

I start with a public and heartfelt thank you to the staff of the Graduate School. They have been patient, kind, and generous teachers. Ever ready to answer any question, from the imponderables to those that are surely neurotic, they showed me the Emory way. We've accomplished a great deal this year, inside the Graduate School and beyond, and we will do even more next year. I would also like to thank the DGSs and the graduate program assistants. You are very much what makes it all work, run, and move. The role of DGS is central to all that we do and I hold the role and the

responsibilities in highest regard. Along with the Executive Council, you represent the fundamental academic leadership of the Graduate School. Thank you, all.

From my earliest days on campus, I was eager to learn about Emory and the people that comprise her. This year has been an exciting and productive crash course for me. I have met with a great many of you—and many others who are not here today—in person, one-on-one or in small groups. I have attended countless meetings of committees, councils, and workgroups with faculty, staff, students, and community leaders. I have also had the opportunity to participate in several program reviews of departments that contribute to graduate education, and these too have taught me much about Emory.

You have included me in your conferences and updated my knowledge across a number of disciplines. It has been just a primer, but I have learned something about vernacular modernities, subaltern studies, the benign hegemon, soft power, lossy images, Polya's theorem, the place of trauma theory at Emory, homiletics and Sanskrit. Graduate deans have a special vantage point where we must go beyond—way beyond—our own disciplines on a daily basis.

You have all been generous and gracious in your efforts to help me understand Emory, and I have learned from all of you. Your gifts of time and perspective have made me 'of Emory' and for that I am grateful.

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Even while this has been a year of learning for me, it has not been a year of inactivity. Let me give you some examples.

We have added a new PhD program, housed in this very building: the PhD program in Computer Science and Informatics. This is not only a new program, but also one that is structured in innovative ways.

- In terms of content, faculty in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, in concert with colleagues in the Computational and Life Sciences Initiative of the University's Strategic Plan, designed a program that reaches across units of the University in what is a truly multidisciplinary training program, combining intense coursework in computer science with rotations in biomedical laboratories.
- In terms of funding, the program marks a new path toward financial sustainability at Emory. The program will be supported by converting a funded masters program in computer science into a tuition-generating program. The tuition revenue generated by the master's program is committed to support the doctoral program, along with PI grants, and individual student grants. For the first five years, strategic planning funds and Dean's start-up funds are being used to launch the program.

At peer institutions, the revenue stream that would occasion the greatest comment would be the final one—strategic plan and Dean's start-up funds. We at Emory are extraordinarily fortunate to have access to generous and robust institutional resources. One of the most illuminating things I've observed since my arrival is just how unexceptional these resources are to many at Emory. I am

deeply appreciative of the opportunities and the responsibilities we at Emory have by virtue of the resources our leaders have committed to the strategic planning process.

The part of the funding plan I find most noteworthy is the agreement of the faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science to convert what was a fully funded master's program into a tuition generating degree program. This is new territory for Emory. It is a territory we must move into if we are to secure the additional resources needed to support our ambitions.

Another initiative we have embraced this year is the Graduate School Grant Writing Program. Shortly after arriving on campus last summer I was delighted to learn that colleagues in the Center for the Study of Public Scholarship and the Center for Humanistic Inquiry had for the last several years offered both general and intensive grant writing workshops to students in the humanities and social sciences. I was even more pleased to learn that those colleagues were eager to deepen and broaden their program through the Graduate School. This year we were able to offer a series of grant-related sessions to students at different stages of their careers. The response has been heartening, and I'm pleased to announce that the program will continue. Indeed, the faculty organizers, Professors Ivan Karp, Cory Kratz, and Tina Brownley, are reaching out to colleagues in the sciences to develop similar programs for science graduate students.

On an operational student services level, we have taken on the processing of I-20s for all newly admitted international students in Emory's graduate and professional schools. And with generous support from the University's strategic plan funds, we have increased the Graduate School subsidy of graduate health insurance to 75 percent of the total cost. This is an important development in our efforts to offer student awards that are competitive with or better than those of our peer institutions.

We—and indeed you—have also taken steps to get a good sense of where we stand relative to our peer institutions by participating in the National Research Council's doctoral survey. Over the past several months, Rick Rubinson has contacted you, your colleagues, and in a select number of fields recent graduates and current students, asking you to complete a dizzying variety of questionnaires. The most recent NRC survey took place 10 years or so ago. We have grown a great deal since then, both in size and in the amount of truly excellent work that takes place in our graduate programs. We look forward to survey results that reflect Emory's rising stature among the nation's research universities.

We have been busy with many other projects, including exciting collaborations with leaders of the university's strategic plan themes and initiatives. Finally, though not exhaustively, we have begun to work with several faculty associates on specific projects relating to strategic goals. To name just three examples:

- Professor Mark Risjord of philosophy, the elected chair of the Graduate Executive Council, has worked with us on a review of graduate program handbooks in comparison with Graduate School policies as a first step toward a more comprehensive evaluation of our academic policies and best practices;
- Professor Carey Drews Botsch of epidemiology has recently begun to work with the Graduate School to develop a bridging plan that will help us weather the environment from the next several years of variable NIH funding;

- Professor Michelle Lampl has represented the Graduate School on the College’s Science Distinction Hires Committee.

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Today is an opportunity to step back and look at where we are and where we aim to be.

Our common concern—graduate education—is the center of intellectual development that pushes forward the boundaries of knowledge for the basic elements that comprise natural, social and cultural realms.

There are other entities that are more directly involved in the production of immediately useful knowledge. But there are no others with the single focus of training those who will both conduct basic research and define what good research is—the PhDs of the future.

The Graduate School is the steward of this enterprise. We articulate a vision of intellectual excellence and implement this vision with a set of policies and standards that define doctoral education. We promote a university wide intellectual community where scholars collaborate across disciplines. We advocate for the role and value of graduate education and secure the resources and structures that are critical to successful graduate programs. And we find ways for graduate education to contribute to the overall mission of this great research university.

Here at Emory, the Graduate School is one of nine schools. We support over 40 graduate programs with approximately 1800 students, distributed across faculty and departments from seven Emory schools: the College and the schools of Business, Law, Medicine, Nursing, Public Health and Theology. We bring everyone together; we are at the core of Emory’s intellectual identity. Let’s take a brief but slightly closer look at this identity.

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It is important to note that we are growing, as well as changing.

- In ten years—from the fall of 1996 to the fall of 2006—the number of graduate students grew by almost 25 percent, from 1,451 to 1,751. (See Table and Figure 1, page 10.)
- During those same ten years, the distribution of graduate students changed significantly. In the fall of 1996, the non-College faculty involved in doctoral education accounted for 27 percent of the graduate school student body. In the fall of 2006, that same faculty accounted for 44 percent of the student body. (See Table and Figure 2, page 10.)
- Taking a closer look, it is clear that the change stems from one main source: an increase in the number of graduate school students who study in programs in the health sciences. The College faculty is accounting for roughly the same number of students in 2006 as in 1996. But the health sciences faculty have almost doubled its number of graduate school students (323 to 628, a 95 percent increase). (See Table and Figure 3, page 11.)

This is a good thing.

The health sciences—at Emory and elsewhere—are locations of exciting intellectual developments that promise extraordinary payoffs in making our world a better place to live. Those sciences also bring to the community of doctoral education wonderful opportunities for new interdisciplinary connections and collaborations. Today we see new interdisciplinary fields emerging, and Emory wisely has placed them prominently among the strategic initiatives, global health and predictive health. In addition, new relationships between centers at Emory and between Emory and other institutions in Atlanta and elsewhere, are emerging in efforts to advance biotechnology, regenerative medicine, and drug discovery. Advances in each of these areas are sure to advance both Emory and the public good.

At the same time, this growth and the change it brings need to be understood. We need to explore the opportunities for further growth in the health sciences, and we need to know how this growth restructures both graduate education and biomedical and health science research. We need to ensure that we are preparing students for the full range of biomedical research, to include translational methodologies and approaches and skills in bioinformatics. The growth and the developments that come with these new directions must be sustainable and must build on the resources at our disposal.

To this end, we will conduct a review of the programs in biological and biomedical sciences next academic year. I am very grateful to Professor Keith Wilkinson, who has served as acting director of the graduate division of biomedical and biological sciences during much of this growth. Keith has accepted my invitation to serve as director, and to prepare the self-study that will provide a base for the program review.

The growth in the health sciences areas must also be balanced with growth in the humanities and social sciences. As an intellectual matter, the concerns of the biomedical sciences are parts of complex issues to which the social sciences and the humanities bring vital and necessary perspectives. And as an institutional matter, we will thrive and excel only if we grow as a balanced and well-rounded graduate school. We are not playing a zero-sum game. We are growing as a university.

Colleagues, across all disciplines, your conversations have conveyed to me, with great clarity, your desire to grow. You have let me know that you have great ideas and corresponding ambitions, that you are looking for more graduate students and for resources to create outlets for intellectual creativity, that you are ready to move Emory to the next level of scholarly and creative accomplishment. This growth is essential to faculty recruitment and retention. Great research universities have great graduate schools and the vitality of our faculty aligns with ample accessibility to excellent graduate students and courses of study.

Indeed, the creative process is under way in several areas. We have approved a number of courses, and programs have demonstrated to me their willingness to make improvements and to remain contemporary, cutting edge sharp. There are proposals for new programs at various stages of review, including the 'letter of intention' stage. For example:

- a new doctoral program in music has been approved by the Executive Council, and we are working on a viable funding plan before taking it to the next phase;

- a doctoral program in African American Studies has been proposed and is in review and revision,
- a letter of intent has been submitted for a doctoral program in Environmental and Occupational Health,
- there are discussions, proposals and intent letters on the table for masters programs or certificates in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies, Psychoanalytic Studies, Religion, German Studies, European Studies, Community Building and Social Change, and in areas related to science writing and science teaching.
- I have also heard interest expressed in certificate and masters education in medical humanities.

We are working with constituents to determine how these new programs might advance and leverage strategic themes and initiatives, and how creative revenue models might fund them.

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It is exciting to speak with you about these plans and ambitions and dreams, and the Graduate School stands ready to work with you. Let's talk about the priorities going forward.

The first priority I see for the next several years: grow with excellence. In terms of faculty resources there is already room for growth in the number of graduate students, and Emory will add faculty over the next several years. We need to plan for adding more graduate student lines.

But we must manage this growth so that it sustains and enhances the quality of our graduate programs. This poses several challenges.

We want a larger student body, but we want the growth to consist of students who are at least as good as the ones we admit today. How do we achieve this? How do we reach the most talented and best prepared prospective students who will choose Emory, and how do we convince these students that they belong here?

We want a larger student body, but we want to provide award packages that are at least as good as the ones we provide today. The best prospective students will receive offers of admission from several universities, and the level of support they can expect is an important factor in their decisions about where to go. Any expansion in the number of graduate students must include a plan to fund their years at Emory at a level that can compete with the best among our peer institutions.

Doctoral education represents a significant investment of resources—of money and other university resources, and of the time and hard work of faculty and staff. As we make plans to increase the number of doctoral students, we must make those plans as wise stewards of the resources we will need to invest.

Our second priority concerns the stewardship we must exercise: support for student professionalism. A doctoral education is an educational project and intellectual journey that is truly transformative. But we must not lose sight of the fact that it is also training for a future

profession—as a teacher, a researcher, an expert, a leader, whether in the academy or in public service or in the corporate world. To that end, I see a number of challenges.

We need policies and structures—at the level of the graduate school as well as at the level of programs—that clearly define a path towards a degree and the markers of progress on that path. We need mentoring that helps students envision their progress on that path and proactively conduct their graduate education mindful of the goals ahead.

We need a strong set of programs that help students see and begin to claim their place in the professional worlds that follow their degree. We must encourage students to seek review and recognition beyond Emory’s boundaries, in the form of grants, awards, or presentations at significant conferences. We should help students imagine the full range of future professional contexts they can enter after graduation, and provide them with information and resources to help them begin their professional careers. We should teach our students leadership, pedagogy, skills with electronic media and information resources, and the capacity to reflect their work as a public good through public scholarship. These are professional goals that will distinguish Emory graduates from their peers.

We also need support structures that enable our students to address those things that are not part of their education but that can either stand in the way of or facilitate their progress—housing, health care, a balanced life.

Again, I look forward to working with you on these issues—indeed, I am already working with several of you on projects in these areas.

As we plan to grow with excellence and as we seek to prepare the future generation of intellectual leaders to claim their place in the professional world, we must also ask a question about substance. Among the several great research universities, what distinguishes *Emory*?

The answer lies in Emory’s traditions and strategic goals, and it constitutes a third priority: engage complex problems.

Emory has a proud tradition of supporting public scholarship, scholarship that engages problems that exist not just around a seminar table or in a lab but that affect people as they live their lives. Such problems don’t come neatly packaged by academic program, but contain aspects that must be understood and addressed using the tools of a range of disciplines. Here too Emory has a strong tradition of innovative, interdisciplinary work. And here Emory has unique advantages. We are a great research university in a dynamic world city, surrounded by institutions of national and world-wide reach. But we are not an enormously large, anonymous university divided into parts that rarely interact. We are an intimate campus where people meet and talk across programs, departments and schools. We are a place that has the practice and capacity for *authentic interdisciplinarity*—interaction and collaboration across disciplines that move all the participants out of their zone of comfort and produces genuine intellectual growth.

This is part of what our commitment to courageous inquiry means. It means that we, as faculty involved in graduate education, engage the large and complex problems that are on the public

agenda, to step outside our own comfortable and familiar intellectual space to take on risk in search of new contributions to knowledge.

I was struck this weekend, when I read what I expected to be a not so important, very brief essay written by E.O. Wilson for *Vanity Fair*. The essay, “Problems without Borders” describes an approach to understanding and illustrating dimensions of the environmental crisis using the Worldmapper project to juxtapose global health, economic, political, human rights, and geophysical data on a whole world map. In the article, Wilson describes the time we live in as, “Star Wars civilizations ruled by Stone Age emotions, medieval institutions, and god-like technology.”

I was struck by these phrases together and what they imply about how we define problems and search for solutions. If we are committed to courageous inquiry, how will we make room at Emory to engage the thinking and experimentation needed to address problems that have both Star Wars and Stone Age aspects? How can we find a place to make the study of complex problems the stage for interdisciplinary engagement and collaboration among the humanities, social sciences, and sciences, where all have equivalently valued standing in the conversation?

I have begun to explore a vision of such a place within Emory, an institute for advanced graduate studies. This would be a place where graduate students and post doctoral students, Emory faculty, visiting scholars and others from institutions serving the public good, would come together around themes to explore how their different perspectives and expertise contribute to understanding and solutions. You will hear more about this in the coming year.

Our growth needs funding, and this brings me to the fourth and final priority: a strengthened funding model.

Even before I arrived on campus, I heard from the Provost and from many of you that aspects of Emory’s Graduate School budget model didn’t work. On the one hand, Emory’s graduate programs receive extraordinary support from the central University budget. I knew that when I saw the budget. On the other hand, when I arrived everyone told me that we had to find a way to provide health insurance to our graduate students. One of my first tasks was to get to the bottom of that disconnect. How can a Graduate School that enjoys extraordinary central university support be falling behind on student stipends and health insurance? It doesn’t make sense.

One of our common tasks in the months ahead is to gain a deeper understanding of how we at Emory fund graduate education and how our peers fund graduate education. We’ll need to explore a budget model based on rational cost-centering of the contributions that graduate students make to the teaching and research missions of the university. Let me be clear, if we are to grow the size of our programs, and add new programs, we must do so with three things in mind.

- First, we must protect the substantial, somewhat unprecedented core budget we hold now. We must work with dedication, transparency and accountability to be wise stewards of this extraordinary support, and to leverage these funds to advance Emory’s strategic missions.
- Second, we must receive support for the contributions of graduate students. As they advance in their studies, graduate students contribute in significant ways to the teaching and research missions of many parts of the university. In recognition of those contributions, we will be looking for shared support for graduate student tuition and stipends.



- Third, we must find opportunity and capacity in areas where there is funded research for greater inclusion of graduate students. We must learn about where there is research that could involve graduate students, and we must examine the opportunities and impediments to such involvement.

In addition to these funding sources, I am committed, with a special personal constancy, to working with University colleagues in Development to create the significant endowment that a great graduate school must have. This goal is not an option. It is vital to our re-emergence as a visible leader in graduate education. I am more than eager, in fact, I'm impatient with my desire to identify external sources that will support our ambitions. And I will be calling on you to help me. Everything we know about seeking funds for graduate education tells us that the intellectual contributions of the graduate faculty are at the core of any effective appeal.

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Let me close with a summary message.

We are in an exciting moment. Emory has a well articulated strategic plan with clarity of vision, and Emory has committed resources, talent, and ambition to turn the plan into reality.

The Graduate School is at the core of this vision. Together, we have the opportunity to claim, to animate, and to preserve that central place. Together, we can grow with excellence, we can train a future generation of rigorously educated and professionally prepared intellectual leaders, and we can build on Emory's strength as a university that engages the complex and pressing public issues of our day and tomorrow. And together, we can ensure that the Graduate School stands on strong foundations that support lasting social, cultural and scientific contributions.

I am sustained and nourished by your desire and willingness to engage. I look forward to the days ahead.

Thank you for listening.

Table and Figure 1

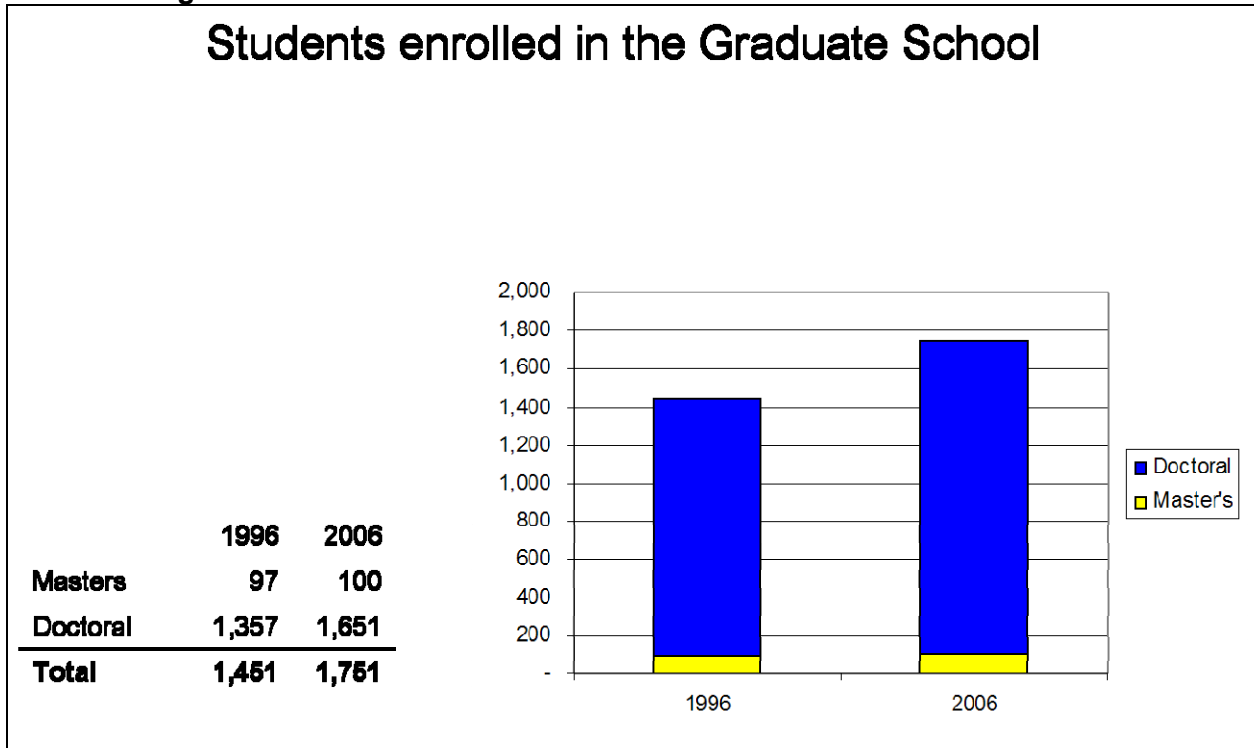


Table and Figure 2

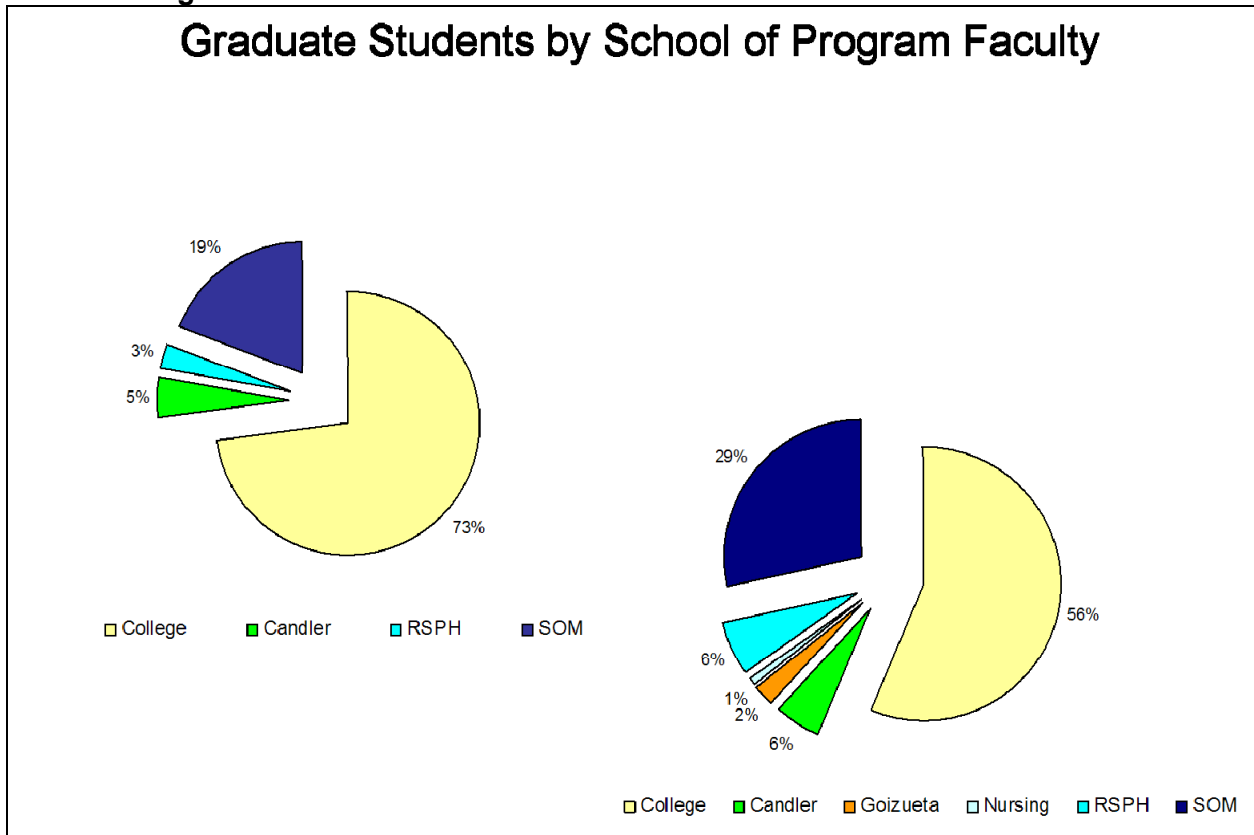


Table and Figure 3

