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

Lisa A. Tedesco
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Welcome to this year's Dean's Address, the ninth that I have delivered. As always, it is my pleasure to share this time with you, to report on the state of the Laney Graduate School and to consider where we are going.

Before I begin, I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Laney Graduate School Executive Council. In addition to a year packed with curricular items requiring their attention, the Council went above and beyond in taking on and moving forward the project on mentoring. I am delighted and proud that their hard work reaches a milestone in a short while when the inaugural recipients of the Eleanor Main Mentor Awards are announced. So, many thanks to this year's Council members: Kimberly Jacob Arriola, Lynne Huffer, Council chair Barry Ryan, Timothy Dowd, Vincent Cornell, Ann Rogers, Sarah McPhee, Lynne Nygaard and Susanna Widicus Weaver.

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Mentoring touches nearly every aspect of graduate education. The desire to be mentored by particular faculty attracts prospective students. Once here, the mentoring relationship often blossoms from those initial one-one-one interactions to broader mentoring networks and passionate engagement with the discipline and field. Mentoring influences the timely progress of students and inspires the quality of their projects. And we know that good mentoring – or bad – can affect the professional development and career preparation of students. From start to finish, mentoring is a cornerstone of the graduate student experience, as well as a substantial component of the work of the graduate faculty.

In addition to celebrating the inaugural Eleanor Main Mentor Awards, I am pleased to report that in fall 2015, we will share with graduate faculty and students two mentoring guides: one for graduate students and one for graduate faculty. Every mentoring relationship is different, and mentoring practices, of course, vary by discipline and field. But there are some guidelines – principles, if you will – that can be applied broadly to most mentoring and advising experiences, and we have

attempted to capture those in these two documents. The guides were prepared in collaboration with a sub-committee of the Executive Council, which also included a graduate student from each division as well as two Directors of Graduate Studies. In addition to benchmarking against peer institutions, we incorporated relevant data from the mentoring surveys administered to graduate faculty and students in fall 2014. The full Executive Council reviewed and approved of these documents, and LGS will put the finishing touches on them this summer.

The mentoring guides testify to the importance of mentoring in graduate education. More importantly, they are the first version of a resource that faculty and students can consult as we navigate the mentoring and advising relationship, and that we will continue to develop and refine.

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Last year, I shared with you the four strategic areas that are guiding our planning and programmatic development: academic identity, professional development and career planning, internationalization, and diversity and inclusion. Beyond planning, however, these areas also provide the context for evaluating our work and progress this year.

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One strategic pillar is academic identity. We are committed to building on Emory's strong tradition of interdisciplinary research and scholarship, and we have a long history of leveraging strengths and resources across schools and departments to construct graduate programs. The most important building block in this process is, first and foremost, the graduate faculty. Graduate faculty set the tone of research and scholarship within graduate programs and Emory at large. Their leadership is essential to setting academic goals related to discovery, research, pedagogy and curriculum. In this way, academic identity is more than the organization of faculty and resources into graduate programs. Academic identity is central to guiding research and scholarship that places the work of faculty and graduate students beyond identities defined by departments, programs, units, and school.

New programs have brought forward new interdisciplinary study. This year, the new Master's in Environmental Sciences recruited its first class. This program integrates ecological and earth sciences with policy and social sciences. Under the guidance of faculty from Environmental Sciences, Environmental Health, Global Health, and Political Science, students graduating from the program will be prepared to work in a variety of settings and will have received training to enable them to relate scientific findings to policy decisions.

We also see this in programs that are evolving and, in some cases, reinventing themselves. The doctoral program in Economics is preparing to resume admissions in fall 2016 after extensive self-evaluation. Program leadership reimagined the program, which resulted in new faculty alignments as well as sharper research foci that build on Emory's strengths in the public health sciences and on close collaborations with the Federal Reserve. The program's proposal to resume admissions was approved by the Executive Council this spring, and the program is now in the external review process.

Both of these examples demonstrate how central academic identity is for shaping – or reshaping – innovative graduate programs that build on Emory strengths, convene faculty in innovative ways, and capitalize on local and regional opportunities for partnership.

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A second strategic area of priority is professional development and career planning. Anyone in this room who works in some capacity with the Laney Graduate School knows that this is an important priority for us. We must consider the context provided by the current job market and respond to the changing career paths of graduates with guidance and programming that is contemporary and competitive. In many ways, this commitment is a graduate form of education for citizenship, one that provides leadership beyond the academy.

By leveraging existing resources with external funding, we are rising to meet this challenge. We continue to engage LGS alumni in our *Pathways Beyond the Professoriate* program, which is attracting more students every year. Other programs are supported by granting agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, an example being the Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training or BEST program, which welcomes its third cohort this fall. And some of our programming is conducted in partnership with other Emory units, such as the Institute for Quantitative Methods, the Office of Postdoctoral Education, and the Woodruff Library.

This year, we also offered a full calendar of events that covered the spectrum of professional development and career planning. From career exploration discussion groups to an intensive weekend workshop on the foundations of a career search, the number of opportunities available to students this year increased tremendously to nearly 60. This summer, we will evaluate the success of this programming and work to refine our offerings, so that we align programming with student interests, and needs, as well as with our own capacity. Our goal is to organize and optimize this programming, developing a *Career Planning and Professional Development Resource Center* where students – and faculty – can draw upon vetted and effective resources to guide and prepare students for a range of professional pathways.

Concurrently, training our students for careers inside the academy continues unimpeded. We continue to offer the TATTO program, annually, and are now offering students additional opportunities to participate in LGS-sponsored TATTO programming. This year, for the first time, we offered *TATTO Extension Sessions*. These sessions, which are not required in order to satisfy the TATTO requirement, build on conversations about contemporary teaching opportunities and challenges, and in some cases, provide hands-on support to students to craft or refine a career deliverable such as a teaching portfolio. And, we continue to partner on program offerings with the Center for Faculty Development and Excellence in areas related to pedagogy and future faculty life.

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To truly understand the professional preparation and career resource needs of our students, we must better understand their professional pathways once they leave us – across years and across placements. This is a national priority in the graduate school community, and it is one of the singular activities that we must get right.

We are collecting some of this information. In addition to the Graduate Education Exit Survey and the Survey of Earned Doctorates, we ask for placement information from graduate programs in the

annual report process. But the accuracy of the data, as well as our understanding and use of it, leaves room for improvement.

This is not just an Emory issue. According to the Council of Graduate Schools, nationally, “there exist no standards, definitions, processes or procedures for collecting or using PhD pathways information.” To remedy this, the Council of Graduate Schools, supported by grants from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and in collaboration with graduate schools around the country, is seeking to advance national and local understandings of the career pathways of PhD holders. This work will build upon the findings outlined in the 2014 CGS report *Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement*. “Over the next nine months, with input from a range of stakeholders in the higher education community, CGS will develop a survey instrument and guidelines for data collection across a broad range of fields. These guidelines will be designed to help universities gather long-term career information from their PhD students and alumni with the goal of improving PhD programs.” The project’s results will be shared in December 2015.

Closing the gap in this knowledge will do several things: It will help us align professional development and career planning resources with student needs; it will help prospective students who look to us to be transparent and share with them the career outcomes of those that have come before them; it will shape – indeed, shift – our perspectives on mentoring and how we understand what student and faculty needs are; and finally, this knowledge will help us communicate the social public value and individual private value of graduate education to audiences who influence policy and appropriation decisions, as well as to philanthropic partnerships.

For the first time this year, we posted on our website PhD program data related to admissions, enrollment, and degree completion. It is our goal to add a component of placement data at one, five and ten years out. It is an important – and right – thing to do, and many of our peers are already doing it. We will look to the Directors of Graduate Studies for help and feedback as we define our practices for collecting data on placement.

A third area of strategic priority is internationalization. Our faculty and students are engaged in research in nearly every corner of the globe. The international focus and locations of their research will help us to identify emerging opportunities for exchange and global collaboration. How can we help some of our students connect to global academic communities? The answer will differ by field and discipline, and we will look to faculty and programs to come forward with ideas that build on the connections they, as scholars and researchers, have with colleagues and institutions around the world.

AS mentioned last year, Dr. Roy Sutliff is working with LGS in our internationalization efforts. Roy is an Associate Professor in the Molecular and Systems Pharmacology program in the Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences. He is an active liaison with the Office of International Affairs and with our partner, Dr. Sita Ranchod-Nilsson in the Institute for Developing Nations and The Carter Center. This year, Roy’s travels took him to China, Saudi Arabia and Australia. A product of his efforts is the soon to be announced QED Alliance, a partnership between Emory, the University of Queensland, and the Queensland Berghofer Institute of Medical Research. The Alliance is developing new research collaborations and exchanges that harness the skills, platforms, and infrastructures of the three institutions in the areas of neurosciences, cancer,

and infectious diseases research. We will assist graduate students from QED Alliance Institutes participating in research exchanges at Emory on issues of enrollment and access to professional development programming appropriate to their stage of study. This is an exciting opportunity.

Also this year, we welcomed Mackenzie Bristow as the new director of the English Language Support Program. Under Mackenzie's leadership, ELSP is expanding language instruction services that add to academic communications. ELSP now offers programs that on professional communication in writing and speaking. She is also identifying synergies with other international student serving units at Emory, such as the Office of International Student Life. This activity brings ELSP to the forefront as a place of instruction as well as community for international students and staff. And I'm pleased to report that her efforts to tie ELSP to the broader Emory community are positioning us as the first call for consultation about language support at Emory.

Our fourth area of priority is diversity and inclusion. We recognize that innovative research and scholarship must include diversity and inclusion. To remain competitive as a research university of the first rank, we must recommit and restructure and reframe discussions that tie diversity to access, matriculation, retention, progress and mentoring. We are making progress.

This past fall, the Laney Graduate School welcomed Damon Williams as our Director of Diversity, Community and Recruitment. We are involving Damon in discussions at nearly every level of our operations. Damon is leading LGS efforts to expand and support the Laney Graduate School's student recruitment efforts. He is working with faculty to enhance, promote and support diversity and inclusion as part of student recruitment activities and mentoring initiatives.. This is an incredibly broad charge, and Damon has done an outstanding job in establishing his presence at Emory and connecting us to new networks in national circles.

In addition to Damon's efforts, this year, we continue to bring speakers to Emory to present on diversity and mentoring.

- In October, we hosted Dr. Julie Posselt from the University of Michigan. Her presentation *Mirror, Mirror: Understanding & Challenging Faculty Preferences for Graduate School Applicants Like Themselves* generated thoughtful and provocative conversation on access to graduate education for students from underrepresented minority groups, women, low-income and first generation students. She did not shy away from pointing out, based on her research, the natural tendency faculty have to prefer applicants who are like themselves. But the conversation did not end there. She also discussed what admissions committees can do to go beyond self-similarity to encourage diversity.
- In January, we hosted Dr. Vivian Lewis from the University of Rochester. The slow rate of improvement in diversity of the academic workforce provided the context of her seminar, titled *Supporting the Needs of a Diverse Group of Emerging Scholars through Mentoring*. Based on her published research, she discussed different mentoring approaches and interventions that might be implemented to make improvements in academic workforce diversity. Central to her discussion was understanding programming for senior faculty to be effective mentors for the professional needs of early career academics.

Most recently, in March, LGS convened the third annual STEM Research and Career Symposium. This year, again, more than 100 students (both undergraduate and graduate) attended to present their research and to network with Emory faculty and program leaders for both doctoral and postdoctoral training.

One of the keynote speakers for this year's event was Dr. Hannah Valentine, the NIH inaugural Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity. In breakout conversations with Dr. Valentine, we discussed pipeline programs that aim to increase diversity in the professoriate. We both agree that while early pipeline programs are useful and necessary, they are not enough. We also recognize that many of our new PhDs and early career scientists from under-represented groups are selecting careers outside the academy at the very same time they are needed as researchers and leaders in the academy. We must redouble our efforts to understand doctoral and job placement pathways for students of underrepresented groups. It is an opportunity for us as a research university – by definition a high producer of PhDs -- to work at the other end of the pipeline, to partner with academic and non-academic sectors seeking our graduates in order to reach excellence through diversity.

Through strategic planning, targeted outreach and recruitment, and events that bring renowned scholars to Emory to address challenges and opportunities related to diversity, the message we are sending is clear: we are serious about diversity and inclusion. Still, the challenge remains. How do we become the first choice for underrepresented students pursuing the PhD?

A wonderful example of early pipeline programming is the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program. The mission of the MMUF is “to address, over time, the problem of underrepresentation in the academy at the level of college and university faculties.” The program is designed to encourage fellows to enter PhD programs that prepare students for professorial careers. Nearly 50 institutions are involved in this program, as well as a UNCF consortium of nearly forty institutions. This program is producing outstanding, well-qualified undergraduate students from under-represented groups well prepared for graduate education. What can we do to make sure that greater numbers of MMUF students apply and are admitted to the Laney Graduate School?

This is an area where, with Damon's leadership, we are moving from advocacy to strategy. In addition to his recruitment activities and collaboration with graduate programs, we are working to establish a campaign and web presence under the name *EDGE*, or Emory Diversifying Graduate Education. Laney's *EDGE* will focus on programming, fellowship and funding opportunities, and community. Additionally, we are also organizing resources that graduate programs can access to inform and enhance their own recruitment strategies in areas of diversity.

However, more action – and reflection – is needed. And for this, we need the engagement, contributions and perspectives of our programs.

In this year's annual report process, we will ask Directors of Graduate Studies and graduate faculty to share their own processes and strategies for assembling diverse cohorts and mentoring for success. Areas to be addressed will include: identifying broad and deep applicant pools, whole-file review of applications and constructive and inclusive campus visit strategies.

Many programs have positioned diversity as a priority, and I know that programs are increasingly calling on Damon to help map a path forward. This is progress. We also know that we need to do

more. We are committed to creating and strengthening an inclusive, dynamic, and diverse intellectual environment that benefits all by foregrounding the value of difference. But this is not just a student issue.

Faculty diversity is essential to institutional excellence, fundamentally. A diverse faculty attracts a diverse graduate student body, fosters inclusive communities, recognizes and appreciates diverse backgrounds and experiences, and guides the development of a range of professional identities. The Laney Graduate School is not a faculty-hiring unit. We will continue to raise the issue of faculty diversity among our leadership, partners and colleagues. But we need your help, too. As you participate in and influence searches for new faculty, I once again, ask you to continue to move forward with commitments and with strategies that show the value and priority we place on diversity.

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So, from the nuts and bolts of academic identity to moving from advocacy to strategy in areas of diversity and inclusion, we are making steady progress in all four of our areas of priority. We are also making progress in our funding priorities.

If we are to maintain our competitiveness for the best students, we must offer support packages that match or exceed those of our peers. Even in an economic environment of budgetary constraint, we have continued to increase stipends and maintain robust support packages to recruit the best graduate students. These efforts will continue to be priorities. This year, we have notified programs whose students are not on twelve months of support that we are moving to eleven months. We are committed to moving all doctoral students to twelve months of support and will continue to work toward this goal.

In addition, we have deepened our commitment to alumni relations and development. We have identified the new *12 for 12 campaign* that encourages donors to give \$12 a month for 12 months to help us get to 12-month funding for all students. We successfully met the NEH match for the Letters of Samuel Becket project, well before the deadline. We funded an endowment for the Jones Program in Ethics, formerly the Program for Scholarly Integrity. This new resource recommits general fund resources to support students in other ways. We also endowed a fund in the LGS to support the TAM scholars with top-off funding to honor the legacy of Perry Brickman and Art Levin.

There is more to do, of course, and we will continue to be wise stewards of our partners' investments in graduate education.

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I turn now to a challenge, indeed, a call to action for us to become advocates for graduate education in our university, in our communities and in our governments.

Many of you have heard me say that the Laney Graduate School is truly a school of the University. Excellent research universities attract and retain a world class faculty who are *field defining*. Our faculty advance excellence and innovation because they have access to graduate students who are *field changing*. This is, for all intent and purposes, the *enabling ground* of the research university. Our

students positively contribute to faculty research productivity, adding to the research profile and standing of the University.

In November, I participated in an AAU workshop on developing strategic narratives to advocate for graduate education. Part of this involves raising the visibility of the graduate mission and crafting the graduate narrative in a way that is compelling to university presidents and chancellors, so that they – in their discussions with leaders at every level – can argue for the value of graduate education. It is an ongoing exercise, and I am pleased that Emory’s President Wagner is a part of it.

All of us in this room understand the importance of graduate education. We live it. But not everyone understands or supports investment in graduate education. This is, in part, because some of those who craft policy or appropriate funds do not know the public, private and national benefits of graduate education.

In this era of budgetary constraint – and in the context of a new Congress and upcoming Presidential election - we must “make the case” for graduate education.

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In December, I travelled with several LGS colleagues to Washington, D.C. for the Council of Graduate Schools annual meeting. The opening plenary remarks were delivered by Janet Napolitano, former Governor of Arizona, former Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and current President of the University of California system. In her remarks – and I think it applies to all of us here – she noted that everyone in the room was a member of what might be called the “coalition of the willing,” because we all support graduate education. But we tend to speak only to other people – to each other -- in the coalition of the willing. We create an “*echo chamber*” where our own arguments play on an endless loop to an audience that already accepts and agrees with each other.”

To make the case for graduate education – at Emory and nationally – we must “grow the coalition,” and we must reframe our arguments. For example, a member of Congress might not see the immediacy of funding higher education, but if he or she knows that by 2020, the number of jobs in the U.S. requiring a graduate degree will grow by more than 2.5 million, that might change the conversation. We can speak to the importance of graduate education to society by using phrases such as *creating new knowledge*, but we must also drill down to concrete examples where academic research yielded new treatment options for various cancers; or, through complex analysis of opportunity, incentive and outcome, guidance is provided on important policy matters; or, through discovery or reinterpretation, we reconsider the way we engage our history or the ways we relate to other cultures.

It is wise to invest in graduate education.

It is wise to invest in those who are dedicated to contributing to, as well as preserving, our understanding of how people experience, process and document the human experience through art, literature, religion, history, philosophy, and so much more. These scholars help us to better understand our world and each other – they also help us to imagine and shape the future.

And it is wise to invest in those that bear the responsibility for teaching and training the next generation of students and scholars.

Everyone in this room knows the importance of doctoral students and graduate education. The challenge, then, is to create an action agenda and expand the coalition, beginning in our own communities. In addition to your hiring units, you are the graduate faculty of the Laney Graduate School. I know that many of you would choose to share your work at other research institutions if you could not engage graduate education at Emory. When you find yourselves in places where graduate education should be discussed but isn't, I ask that you take that opportunity to speak up about the importance of graduate education at Emory and beyond.

We all believe in this work. In her remarks, UC President Napolitano said that, "making the case for graduate education is like running for office. It's a campaign without end – but the victories, when they come, and they will come, bring benefits not just to us, but to society, and for that matter, the world at large."

Making the case means that we must leave our comfort zones, but it is of vital importance if we are to ensure that graduate education continues to thrive here at Emory, regionally, and nationally.

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So, in conclusion, as we approach the end of another academic year, I am pleased, once again, to report that the state of the Laney Graduate School is strong. We have accomplished a lot, but there is more – much more – to do. I am proud to work with you as we move forward together.

Thank you for listening and for your steadfast and dedicated commitment and contributions to the growth and strength of graduate education at Emory University.