



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**GRADUATE COLLEGE**

**MINUTES  
OF  
GRADUATE COLLEGE SPRING FACULTY MEETING  
April 26, 2022  
2:30 – 4:00 PM  
Hybrid: In-person & Microsoft Teams**

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**ATTENDANCE**

12 in-person attendees and 32 remote attendees.

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Cynthia Forehand, Dean of the Graduate College.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the November 11, 2021, meeting were **approved** as written.

**DEANS REPORT:** Welcome/Agenda (slide 1-2) & Research/R1 update by VP Kirk Dombrowski:

Dean Forehand welcomed Vice President for Research Kirk Dombrowski who joined the meeting to give an update on research and R1 status.

VP Dombrowski shared some graphs and figures, noting:

-About 80% of his operation is concerned with sponsored research, UVM is at about \$148 million, and there has been a steady upward trend. Year-to-date, we are up about \$8 million, the bulk of which is made up of federal awards.

-For NSF we are down from last year, but our NSF numbers are small, so small changes look significant. However, there is opportunity for growth.

-DHHS-NIH is back online. UVM had a couple of good years of growth and then fell off a bit last year for NIH funding overall. So far this year, we have about \$56 million in NIH funding, but our goal is \$100 million. We are currently at \$80 million—so, some growth is needed.

-USDA funding: CALS is showing a nice steady incline. That's the goal for all colleges.

-Non-federal awards. We are having a good year for corporate funding. Our corporate funding is already double what it was last year by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Our state funding is falling off, and foundation funding is relatively steady. Most of the growth is in corporate funding; we're up \$4/\$5 million this year.

-We had the 2021 assessment this year, and we came pretty close to getting R1 status.

-The next assessment is in 3 years. The 2024 evaluation will be FY23 data. So, despite the fact that we just got this announcement of the 2021 evaluation in January 2022, the numbers that will count for whether we get R1, begin July 1 of this year (since this is the beginning of FY23).

-The calculation for the R1 is raw average of those top research activity indicators.

-To get to R1, we're projecting that we would need (starting in July) \$200,000,000 in additional science and engineering research expenditures. That is not a huge reach if our numbers continue growing at the rate they've been growing since 2020. The non-science and engineering is also within our reach. The postdocs numbers fluctuate, but we're not far off on that. The number of social sciences, STEM, and non-STEM PHD degrees awarded needs to increase. The Graduate College is doing a great job getting students to finish in reasonable times relative to their programs, but there is no harm reaching out to students who have been in the program more than 5 years to see if there are barriers to their finishing that we can help mitigate.

-In terms of funding we are well above our competitors, but other schools produce more social science PHDs. The Graduate College and OVPR have collaborated to start a couple of new PHD programs in interdisciplinary humanity spaces. Most humanities PHDs take 8 or 9 years to finish though, and it's an open question whether or not we should increase PHDs in these areas with the difficult employment outlook in many of these disciplines.

-VP Dombrowski stated that he has confidence that UVM will get R1 status but stressed that we shouldn't stop being focused on the kind of things that are important to us as university in order to gain that status.

-R1 status shows that you operate at a certain level as a research university and opens up some funding opportunities. Other than open call foundation funding, which is lower-level, private foundation funding is by invitation only.

- OVPR will hold a Research Forum next Wednesday. Among other things, Richard Cate and Kirk Dombrowski will answer questions about the difficulties we've been having hiring.

#### **DEANS REPORT: Outcome of Post-doctoral Position Committee Work (slide 4)**

Dean Forehand addressed some items discussed at the Fall 2021 Graduate Faculty Meeting, including the assembly of committees charged with looking at specific items.

#### **Post-doctoral Committee:**

Since it has been 10-15 years since the University policies regarding post-docs have been reviewed, Dean Forehand noted that a huge change was made a little over a year ago. Fellows will now have the same benefits as associates.

The post-doctoral committee this year worked on salaries and additional benefit recommendations. Units can set post-doc salaries, but they need to be public, and the Graduate College has to sign off on the hiring documents for post-docs.

The committee recommended – and the OVPR, Graduate College and Provost agreed – that all post doc salaries be at least at the NIH National Research Service Award rate, which is based on post-doc years of experience. This change went out to all the units in the last week. This benchmark was chosen in part because it's standard across the country, regularly updated, and easy to find. HR can post the document indicating the minimum salaries based on experience level. Normally raises go in July 1, but for this population, the raise will now go in at the annual year of their appointment.

The data showed that about half our postdocs were under the NIH minimum; half were above, but not far above. Several were far below. Large inequities were addressed quickly. Units can go above the benchmark, and if you're above, you may still see increases, but if you fall below the NIH minimum for the corresponding years of experience then the increase to that level is mandated.

The committee also addressed the previous guideline of 3 years maximum for post-docs. Today, in many disciplines, it's not unusual to have longer post-docs—so, the new standard is 5 years. If someone has a reason to need an exception, an exception request may be submitted.

Previously post-docs had only 6 personal days and 6 medical leave days. Personal days were increase from 6 to 12, and 3-6-bereavement days were added. The request to add parental leave (8 weeks was requested) is on hold until finalization of the staff contracts with the bargaining unit. The establishment of an office of postdoctoral affairs is still under consideration.

A Graduate Faculty member asked a question re: post-docs and visa statuses and OPT.

Dean Forehand noted that many institutions have a three-year window for post-docs (before they have to switch to H1 visas). Post-docs on F1 visas at UVM have only one year of OPT (optional practical training) option, which they can stay and do after they've completed their post-doc Changing to the 3-year window is a significant cost to the institution but something that should be considered.

#### Graduate Stipend and Benefits Committee (slide 5):

*Doctoral stipends.* Note that the committee looked at graduate stipends but has not gotten to reviewing benefits yet. Until recently, an external data set of 50 institutions (about half of which were public land grant institutions), was used in setting a minimum standard for UVM stipends at the median or above. For the last two years, adjustments were also made for cost of living, but it was still considered to be too low. FY23 minimum doctoral stipends will be set using the Vermont Basic Needs Budget (VBNB) for a single person sharing a 2-bedroom apartment with a second person. This represents a 7% increase to \$29,658 (student VBNB calculation was adjusted for FICA, health insurance and comprehensive fees). This is the base minimum for stipends. Some units have gone higher; you can see their stipends by looking at the SPA table.

*Masters' stipends.* About 10 years ago we started increasing doctoral stipends faster than master's stipends. This was partly because doctoral students make a 5- or 6-year commitment. It was decided for FY 23 that the master's stipends will be raised 6% to \$23,802 with a multi-year goal of getting close to the doctoral level.

A Graduate Faculty member asked about funding these increases, given that we have had a tuition freeze for a few years.

Dean Forehand acknowledged that tuition is where the bulk of the money comes from but explained that UVM is hoping to bring in more training grants to help with the funding. When faculty write grants, a certain % of tuition needs to be put on the grant for students they fund with Graduate Research Assistantships.

#### **DEANS REPORT: Course Renumbering (slides 6-7)**

Course renumbering was a long-standing request that has finally made it to the top of the priority list. Necessary Banner changes have been made that will allow this renumbering. This is timely because some programs are running out of numbers. We will take advantage of this change to eliminate upper-level undergraduate courses that are also approved for graduate credit (200-level AGC courses). In the current system, the graduate work in AGC courses is only reflected on the syllabus and not on transcripts. Since we are moving from a 3-digit to a 4-digit numbering system, we are also creating an intermediary level between upper-level undergraduate courses and masters or doctoral curriculum. In the new numbering system, there will be 3 levels of graduate coursework: 5000, 6000, and 7000. In 2023 new Gen Ed course requirements will be coming on board, and the new numbering will allow them to be added in a logical way as well.

During the 2019 visit, the accrediting body noted that UVM needs to demonstrate that there is a separate and distinct graduate curriculum. Adding the middle level during our renumbering allows us to make clear distinctions between undergraduate and graduate coursework. See slides 8, 9 for excerpts from the standards for accreditation and the 2019 report. Slide 10 outlines the UVM response to plan for the 5-year interim report in 2024 and underscores how the new 4-digit system and the intermediary courses will help with this transition.

#### **Frequently asked questions about the new numbering system (slides 11-13):**

Elaborations and/or additional questions:

**Can an undergraduate student take a 5000 XX course as an elective?**

Yes. In fact, they don't even need permission.

**What happens with my AMP students?**

Right now, an accelerated entry student can take a 300-level or 200-level course approved for graduate credit. That doesn't change. Basically, it's now 5000 or 6000. They would need permission to take 6000 level courses, and a 7000-level course wouldn't be appropriate, as that level is for doctoral students.

**What about my graduate students taking undergraduate courses?**

There is a policy for that. A doctoral student can have 6 credits of non-graduate coursework count towards their degree and a master's student can have 3 credits of non-graduate coursework count towards their degree. That hasn't changed. It's just that the non-graduate coursework now changes to 3000- and 4000-level and the graduate coursework is 5000-level and above.

**Is there a limit to the number of 5000-level or higher courses that an undergraduate student can take?**

No, but AMP students can't double count more than 9 credits (and 6 in some programs) for undergraduate and graduate.

**Can we offer 3000- or 4000-level courses in the same room with a 5000-level course?**

It is discouraged. We will probably have a policy each semester that says with prior approval. We are really trying to move into more graduate curriculum, and this means getting more graduate students so you can be at capacity and can afford to give courses at the graduate level. We will not be offering any opportunity to cross list farther apart than that. 3000- and 4000-level courses will not be cross-listed with 6000- or 7000-level and 1000- and 2000-level courses will not be able to cross list with 5000-level.

A Graduate Faculty member asked if senior leaders have thought about this in the hiring plan? Dean Forehand replied that it has been brought up in the meeting that the deans have with the Provost.

A Graduate Faculty member commented that the elimination of 200-level AGC courses will affect interdisciplinary programs. Dean Forehand noted that some of these 200AGC courses could become entry level disciplinary graduate courses appropriate for interdisciplinary programs. Dean Forehand noted that it might be possible to create a policy that allows more undergraduate credit hours for doctoral students who need specific prerequisites, but at the master's level, it would be difficult to defend such a policy to the accreditors. Dean Forehand invited a longer discussion about this at a later date.

A Graduate Faculty member mentioned that they probably have enough graduate curriculum for the doctoral students, but not for the master's students and wondered if they'd be able to offer that degree. Dean Forehand indicated that a variety of solutions will need to be explored, such as creating efficiencies where possible, combining some programs, increasing the master's population, and creating solid preparatory courses for students outside a particular discipline. There are a lot of ideas in the works.

**DEANS REPORT: Admissions and Enrollment Management Update Spring 2022 (slide 14)**

Graduate Admissions & Enrollment AY Comparison (slides 15-16):

See slide 15 for a graph of AY comparison of 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23 (values for the admissions cycle in progress as of 4/25/22; applications are still arriving, programs and students are still making decisions).

Comparisons for AY 20-21 & AY 21-22 showed a 30% increase in applications, 13% increase in #admitted, 1% decrease in new enrollment, 8% point lower admit rate, 6% lower yield rate. Much of the increase in applications was in programs without capacity.

There has been a big focus on bringing in more international students, and that growth has been significant (but we started with a low number for the size of our institution (for both the undergrad and graduate levels). See slide 16 for International Graduate Admissions & Enrollment AY comparisons for

AY 20-21 & AY 21-22: 46% increase in applications, 66% increase in # admitted, 155% increase in new enrollment, 5% point higher admit rate, 11% point higher yield rate. There has been a very large increase in students from Iran, Nigeria, India and Ghana as well as more moderate increase from Brazil, Mexico, Zimbabwe and Jordan. The Graduate College has been targeting international students with Study International campaigns, which is a recruitment group for international students and also through Education USA fairs, which recruit in Africa.

A Graduate Faculty member raised the housing issue in the context of more students in general and more international students in particular.

Dean Forehand agreed that housing is an ongoing problem and explained that one issue is that the City of Burlington has not yet given UVM permission to change the easement on the Trinity Campus in order to be able to put up the structure designated for graduate housing. There have been significant efforts in this area and UVM continues to explore a variety of other/additional options for graduate students in general and international students in particular. The planned growth is definitely dependent on finding housing solutions.

#### **DEANS REPORT: GEC Update (slides 17-18)**

Dean Forehand highlighted some actions taken by the GEC committee since the last Graduate Faculty meeting, including holding 8 meetings, reviewing 10 Graduate Faculty membership requests, evaluating 30 new courses & 300 course changes, and reviewing nominations/selecting winners for several annual graduate student awards. Additional actions include approving 2 new PhDs, curriculum changes, setting new time to degree limits for professional doctoral programs, and adding a requirement that Emeriti Graduate Faculty members accepting new student advisees have a Co-advisor for the student.

#### **NEW BUSINESS (slide 19)**

A Graduate Faculty member asked about any forthcoming actions to support the units in marketing their programs, wondering if there is going to be something centralized.

Dean Forehand mentioned the Graduate College's work with Education USA and recent work to generate stories about multiple graduate programs. There have also been some work to increase international recruiting, and UVM will add an additional travel recruiter who will be doing both undergraduate and graduate recruiting and who will work out of Jay Jacob's office. At the university level, Joel Seligman has been talking about putting together a shared services model so that some resources will be available for recruiting at the graduate level. There has also been some evaluation of marketing and communications models that will include graduate education. There is movement in this area, but it is slow due to hiring issues.

A Graduate Faculty member noted the need for internal communication about new programs too—especially those that serve multiple disciplines. Dean Forehand offered some ways that information currently gets disseminated and agreed that it is something to consider in the communications planning.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

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# Graduate College

Graduate Faculty Meeting  
4-26-22

Presented by:  
Cindy Forehand  
Dean of the Graduate College  
University of Vermont Graduate College

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## Agenda

- Welcome
- Approval of the November 11, 2021 Minutes
- Research and R1 update – Kirk Dombrowski
- Dean's Report – Cindy Forehand
  - Outcome of Post-doctoral Position committee work
  - Outcome of Graduate Stipend and Benefits Committee work
  - Managing the transition of 200 level courses approved for graduate credit (200AGC) for the renumbering project
- Admissions Report
- Activities of the Graduate Executive Committee – Cindy Forehand
- New business
- Adjourn





THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
**GRADUATE COLLEGE**

## Research and R1 update

Presented by  
Kirk Dombrowski  
Vice President for Research

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# Dean's Report

Outcome of Post-doctoral Position committee work

## Approved:

- Minimum salary now set at level of NIH National Research Service Award, which depends on year of appointment
- Length of maximum appointment changed from 3 to 5 years
- Increased personal days from 6 to 12 (in addition to 6 days medical leave)
- Added Bereavement Leave

## Still under consideration:

- Parental Leave
- Establishing an Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

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# Dean's Report

## Outcome of Graduate Stipend and Benefits Committee work

- FY23 minimum doctoral Stipends will be set at the Vermont Basic Needs Budget level for a single person sharing a 2-bedroom apartment with a second person (represents 7% increase to \$29, 658)
  - Student VBNB calculation adjusted from the community number for FICA, health insurance and comprehensive fees
- FY 23 minimum master's stipends raised 6% to \$23,802
  - Multi-year goal of getting closer to, or the same as, the doctoral level

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# Dean's Report

Managing the transition of 200 level courses approved for graduate credit (200AGC) for the renumbering project

200AGC courses will become either an undergraduate (3/4XXX) course or a graduate course (5XXX)



## Why the course renumbering now?

- It was a long-standing request that finally made it to the top of the list.
- We finally have the resources to do it.
- There were several other projects that were higher priority, such as the Banner INB upgrade, Navigate implementation, DegreeWorks implementation, response to COVID, and many smaller projects.
- Though not originally linked to accreditation, fortuitous timing allows us to use this renumbering project to address a significant issue identified in the 2019 NECHE Accreditation report: our use of the 200AGC course construct to provide graduate curriculum.

[https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation#standard\\_four](https://www.neche.org/resources/standards-for-accreditation#standard_four)

- **Graduate Degree Programs**
- 4.20 Graduate degree programs are designed to give students a mastery of a complex field of study or professional area. Programs have an appropriate rationale; their clarity and order are visible in stated requirements, in relevant official publications, and in the learning outcomes of graduates. Learning objectives reflect the high level of complexity, specialization, and generalization inherent in advanced academic study.
- 4.21 Graduate programs are not offered unless resources and expectations exceed those required for an undergraduate program in a similar field.

## Last accreditation visit March 2019

- [https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Accreditation/Final\\_NECHE\\_Report\\_062519.pdf](https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Accreditation/Final_NECHE_Report_062519.pdf)
- NECHE accreditors were concerned with the number of credits in graduate programs that were 200 level courses approved for graduate credit – noting specifically that not all course syllabi for these courses had the required clearly defined graduate level expectations exceeding those for undergraduates in the courses. (asked for syllabi at visit – random look)
- The NECHE team met with ~25 graduate students from across the university and noted graduate students were quite dissatisfied with the lack of graduate curriculum. The students noted that in their 200 level AGC courses they felt like they were there to baby sit undergraduates. (last minute request – not planned as part of the visit preparation)

## UVM response to plan for the 5-year interim report in 2024

- Address this issue by ensuring all newly approved 200 level courses with a graduate option clearly differentiate graduate from undergraduate expectations.
- Review all existing syllabi for all courses in this category (200AGC) to ensure compliance (or remove the approval of the grad credit option for the course).
- Problem: enforcement of the use of the graduate standard for 200AGC is cumbersome, labor intensive and results in a course not recognized by other institutions as graduate level.
- Now, the renumbering project allows us to instead insert an entry graduate level to segregate 200AGC to its own truly graduate level. (This was a direct suggestion of the NECHE reviewers noting it is standard at other universities while the 200AGC approach is not.)



## Frequent Questions

Will advanced undergraduate students be able to take 6xxx courses as electives?

Yes, with instructor permission (which isn't required for 5XXX)

Which course levels will count toward the graduate degree for AMP students?

5XXX or 6XXX

Will a graduate student be able to take a 3xxx/4xxx level course that is outside of their program for credit? For example, could a Math graduate student take a 3xxx in CS and have it count toward their degree?

Yes – under same policy as now for 200 not AGC: 3 credits for master's, 6 credits for doctoral

Is there a limit to the number of 5XXX or higher courses that an undergraduate student will be able to take? For example, rules are currently in place limiting the number of graduate credits that can be taken by AMP students, and it's unclear how this will work as we move forward.

Nothing currently limits the number of graduate level courses an undergraduate can take. What is limited is how many credits can double count towards both UG and G transcript. So they can take whatever number of graduate courses, but they get undergraduate credit on their transcript.

AMP rules won't change- its just the courses taken as a UG to count towards both degrees will be 5XXX or 6XXXX rather than graduate version of 200AGC or 3XX.

Can we offer 3/4XXX courses at the same time in the same room with 5XXX courses?

Yes, but discouraged given the NECHE accreditation report.

Can we offer 3/4XXX courses at the same time in the same room with 6XXX or 7XXX courses?

No.

Can we offer 1XXX or 2XXX courses at the same time in the same room with 5XXX courses (or 6XXX)?

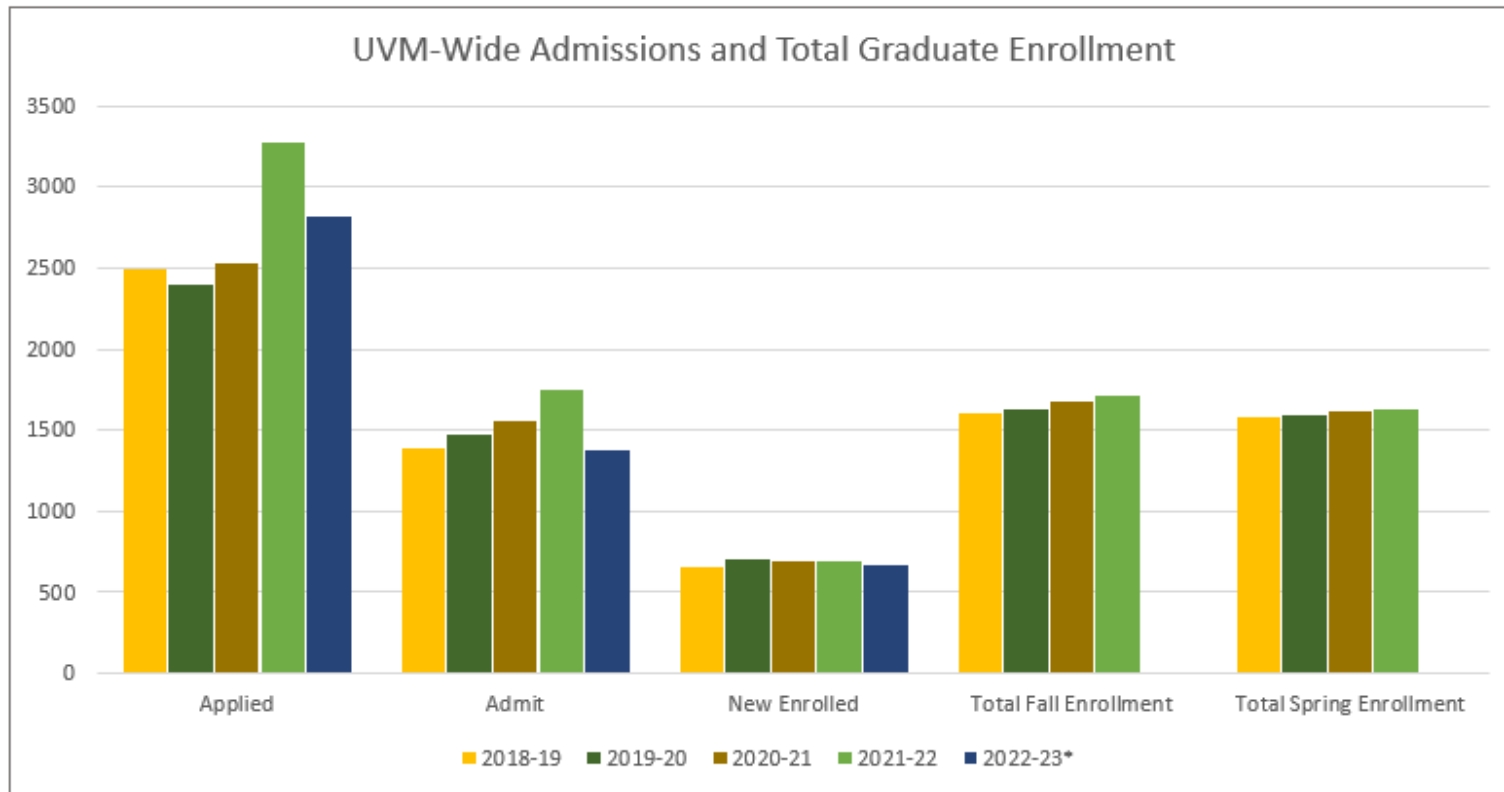
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THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
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Admissions & Enrollment  
Management Update  
Spring 2022

# Graduate Admissions and Enrollment AY Comparison



As compared to AY 20-21, for AY 21-22 this represents:

30% Increase in Applications

8% point lower Admit Rate

13% Increase in # Admitted

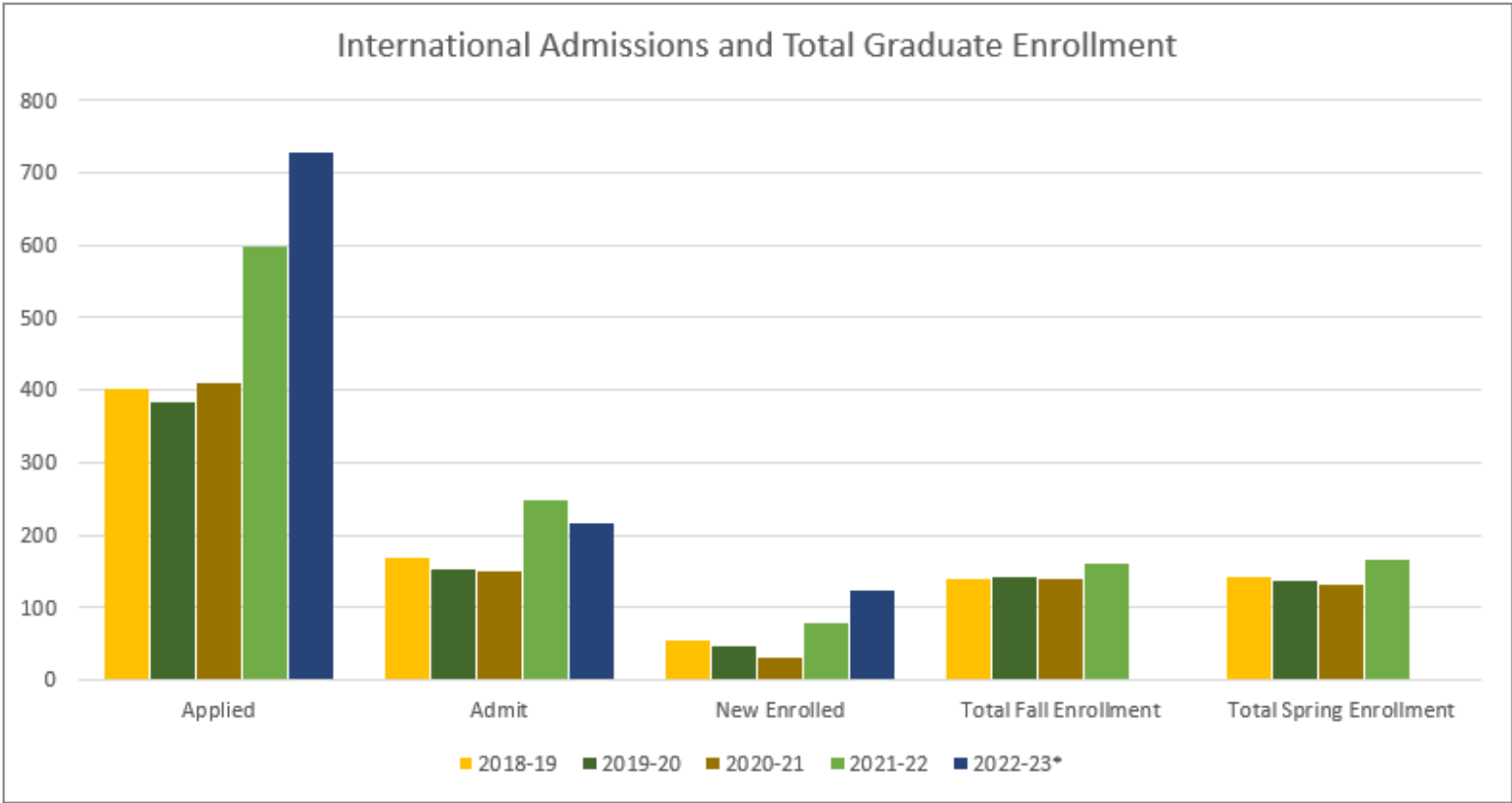
6% point lower Yield Rate

1% Decrease in New Enrollment

Much of the increase in applications was in programs without capacity.

\*2022-23 values are for admissions cycle in progress as of 4/25/22: applications are still arriving, not all programs have made admit decisions, nor all students made enrollment decisions.

# International Graduate Admissions and Enrollment AY Comparison



As compared to AY 20-21, for AY 21-22 this represents:

46% Increase in Applications	5% point higher Admit Rate
66% Increase in # Admitted	<u>11% point</u> higher Yield Rate
155% Increase in New Enrollment	

\*2022-23 values are for admissions cycle in progress through 4/25/22.

2022-23 139 countries – 6 new    Largest increases: Iran, Nigeria, India, Ghana

Smaller increases: Brazil, Mexico, Zimbabwe, Jordan

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# Graduate Executive Committee Actions

- Eight meetings since the Fall Graduate faculty meeting
- Reviewed 10 Graduate Faculty membership requests
- Reviewed 30 new courses and 300 course changes
- Reviewed nominations/applications for student awards
  - Votta and Fialho Awards
  - Sustainable Research Fund grants
  - Graduate Teaching Assistant of the Year Award
  - Thesis and Dissertation of the Year Awards

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# Graduate Executive Committee Actions

- Approved new PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision
- Approved new PhD in Social-Emotional-Behavioral Health and Inclusive Education
- Approved minor changes in curriculum:
  - Materials Science
  - Medical Science
- Approved change in time to degree limits for professional doctoral programs from 9 years to 7 years
- Approved requirement that Emeriti faculty accepting new student advisees have a co-advisor for the student



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# Other

- **New Business**
- **Adjourn**