

**ENHANCING GRADUATE EDUCATION (E-G-E) AT VANDERBILT:
CALL FOR PRE-PROPOSALS, 2010-2011**

This document announces the 2010-2011 competition for awards under the Program to Enhance Graduate Education (the E-G-E Program). This is the third cycle of the E-G-E program; the previous two cycles produced a total of eleven awards, six in 2006 and five in 2008. This new call invites faculty to suggest forward-looking ideas and approaches for new efforts to advance the state and recognition of graduate education on the Vanderbilt campus. Suggestions can aim to make an impact that is institutional in scope, affecting the majority of graduate programs, or an impact that is felt chiefly within a more limited range of programs. Full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty members in the Provost's domain (University Central)¹, as well as those holding equivalent ranks in the Blair School of Music², are eligible to apply for funds. Responses to the 2010 call will focus on graduate education at the Ph.D. level and will be submitted in two stages: (1) responses to this general call for pre-proposals followed by (2) responses to individual invitations to submit full proposals, as described herein. The E-G-E Program will provide selected faculty-led groups with seed support for up to three years (1) to initiate efforts that, if successful, will be sustained thereafter from other specified sources, or (2) to cover one-time, nonrecurring costs. It is expected that funding for new awards will begin as soon as possible after July 1, 2011.

Introduction Some ten years ago, Vanderbilt set its sights on building strength and recognition in graduate education and research. The institution's subsequent investments of time, effort and resources have paid off. Today, Vanderbilt can point to an enviable ten-year record of growth and accomplishment, illustrated in the table below. In the most recent cycle, for example, the University offered admission to only 13% of the more than seven thousand who applied for graduate study. Nearly 55% of those receiving offers chose Vanderbilt for their graduate work.

<i>Graduate Education</i>		
	<i>2001</i>	<i>2010</i>
Graduate applications*	2,709	7,140
Offers of admission	974 (36%)	945 (13%)
First-time enrollments**	387 (40%)	515 (55%)
Number of graduate students	1,670	2,228
Ph.D.s awarded	168	247
External funding (total)	\$217.6 million	> \$615 million
* Complete applications		
** Acceptances minus no-shows		

Even though Vanderbilt has already achieved great recognition for graduate education in selected fields and is well on its way to becoming similarly recognized in others, expanding and

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1. Faculty members with primary appointments in the School of Medicine or in the School of Nursing are eligible to participate in efforts led by University Central faculty and focused on (a) Ph.D. programs concentrated within University Central or (b) university-wide, interdisciplinary Ph.D. programs.
 2. There are no Ph.D. programs centered in the Blair School of Music, but members of the Blair faculty are eligible to participate in efforts aimed at enhancing graduate education in allied areas.

solidifying that position will require continued dedication. The task-force report *Next Steps Forward: Graduate Education at Vanderbilt, 2003-2009 and Beyond*, along with the many continuing discussions sparked by its release, identified a number of opportunities for action and investment. (Note: The Task Force report can be found at www.vanderbilt.edu/gradschool, under *Quick Links*.) To be sure, the economic downturn and the economy's slow recovery have constrained resources. But Vanderbilt remains committed to keeping graduate education high on its priority list for investing now-more-limited resources. Last year, for instance, after identifying an especially pressing need, University Central made substantial new, additional funds available to help DGSs and programs recruit top applicants; it will do so again this year.

Even in the absence of an economic downturn, Vanderbilt and all U.S. universities face the challenge that education at the Ph.D. level does not, in and of itself, generate enough tuition revenue to cover its costs. For this reason, investments in graduate education must be made with the greatest care in order to gain the most benefit from the limited resources available for such investments. Unlike undergraduate education, graduate education tends to be discipline-centered or program-centered. Even interdisciplinary Ph.D. programs tend to be forged among just a few allied disciplines. Because it tends to be program-centered, graduate education is multicultural in that it is carried out differently from program to program within a context established more by the national community of similar programs than by the collection of diverse programs on the same campus. And so it is that we turn to the faculty, with their deep understanding of the cultures of their respective areas of study and their common interest in the University as a whole, for serious proposals about how to continue to move graduate education at Vanderbilt forward.

Categories of Submissions This Call invites *pre-proposals* that step beyond the normal course of operations in a department, school or college. **Requests for funds to support routine course development, research, conference travel, organizing conferences, recruiting and/or starting-up faculty, and similar items will not be considered. Nor will requests focused on a single department or program, nor to form new academic departments or degree programs, be considered.** Those interested in developing proposals are encouraged to think of the E-G-E program as complementing historical and ongoing efforts and investments. The question to be asked is what additional, sustainable investment(s) can be made specifically to develop and support graduate education and graduate students that will accelerate Vanderbilt's progress toward its strategic goals.

Pre-proposals are solicited that summarize proposed efforts in two broad categories, Institutional Infrastructure Proposals and Community-Based Proposals, both described below. Awards are expected to be competitive and in all cases are subject to the availability of funds. The E-G-E Program seeks the very best ideas that show genuine promise for making substantive improvements in graduate education at Vanderbilt. The support available for a given initiative is expected to be in the range of \$10,000-to-\$100,000 per year for at most three years. Some three-to-five new awards are anticipated, subject to the availability of funds.

1. Institutional Infrastructure Proposals. Submissions in this category should address issues or needs that are common to all or most Ph.D. programs on the campus. Examples of recent efforts, now already in place, that would have qualified for consideration in this category include the implementation of a university-wide on-line application system to support the graduate-admissions process, adding a staff member to the Vanderbilt Institutional Research Group

(VIRG) to extend its services to the graduate level, and adding an Associate Dean for Diversity to the Graduate School's staff. In recognition of the importance of sustainability and the reality of space constraints, those considering proposals in this category should include appropriate central offices in the planning process.

2. Community-Based Proposals. Submissions in this category should address issues or needs that are common within at least one of four broad intellectual communities: (a) Arts and Humanities, (b) Biological and Biomedical Science, (c) Engineering, Physical Science and Mathematics, and (d) Social Science and Education. Proposals in this category should offer an approach to a problem or an opportunity common to several or all of the Ph.D. programs within at least one of the four communities. For instance, several programs or departments might propose a coordinated approach to recruiting more high-caliber graduate students. Proposals focused on enhancing a single existing Ph.D. program will not be considered in this cycle of the E-G-E competition.

A list of the eleven awards made in the first two cycles of the E-G-E competition can be found in an appendix to this Call for Pre-Proposals. An effort seeded by a previous E-G-E award is not eligible for renewal by means of a second E-G-E award.

Applying for Funds The E-G-E application process will proceed in two stages. The first stage, required for *all* applications, is a pre-proposal stage. A given faculty member may lead (i.e., serve as PI for) no more than one E-G-E submission. After an internal review process, the authors of the selected pre-proposals will be invited to submit full proposals. The submission of full proposals will be by invitation only.

Guidelines for Pre-Proposals Those who wish to propose an E-G-E initiative should prepare a short description in the form of a letter not to exceed three pages in length. Include in the letter the title of the proposed effort, a clear statement of the problem or opportunity to be addressed, the expected benefit(s) of pursuing it, a summary of what will be done and who will do it, a list of which Ph.D. programs stand to benefit from what is proposed, and a list of the faculty who will lead the effort if funded. Include a preliminary estimate of the costs that are likely to be involved. Send one electronic copy (Microsoft Word or pdf) *and* one hard-copy of each pre-proposal letter to: Dennis G. Hall (dennis.g.hall@vanderbilt.edu), Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, 221 Kirkland Hall, no later than **January 17, 2011**.

Guidelines for Full Proposals (to be submitted only by invitation following the pre-proposal stage) Additional instructions of a specific nature, including the submission date, will be sent to those selected for invitation to submit full proposals. A description of the general content of the full proposal follows, for future reference.

A. Full Proposal Narrative (no more than 15 pages, single-spaced; type no smaller than 12-point Times)

The narrative should describe the proposed initiative in as much detail as possible, explaining the problem(s) or opportunity(-ies) being targeted, the approach(es) being proposed, the measures of success and the benefits of that success. It will be important to communicate the

ways in which what is being proposed represents a genuine improvement over the *status quo*, with the potential to make a significant advancement in graduate education at the Ph.D. level. Proposals should situate the proposed effort within the appropriate context and include enough background and general information to make it understandable to faculty reviewers from a broad range of backgrounds. Those preparing proposals should keep in mind that each proposal will be read by Vanderbilt faculty drawn from the arts and humanities, the social sciences, engineering and the natural sciences. At minimum, the narrative should address the following questions:

- What is being proposed and what are its goals?
- Which faculty, departments, schools/colleges or university offices will be involved in the proposed initiative?
- How does the proposed initiative present Vanderbilt with an important opportunity?
- How distinctive is this proposal? If it parallels activities underway or being considered on other campuses, what are the arguments for pursuing the proposed effort at Vanderbilt?
- How will the proposed initiative operate, if funded?
- Which criteria should be used to measure the initiative's progress, both yearly and in the long term, if funded?
- If the effort is to continue beyond the E-G-E seed period, then how will it be sustained?

B. Full Proposal Budget

In general, each budget must: (1) present a financial plan showing no more than three years of support from E-G-E-program funds; (2) include the full set of true costs to implement what is proposed; (3) identify and explain/justify each major expenditure category and each intended major expenditure; (4) identify, explain and document the arrangements made *prior* to submitting a proposal for any space needed to accommodate what is being proposed.

C. Submission of Full Proposal

In response to an invitation, three hard copies and one electronic copy (Microsoft Word or pdf) of each proposal should be submitted to Dennis G. Hall, Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, 221 Kirkland Hall, dennis.g.hall@vanderbilt.edu. The submission deadline will be included in the invitation.

Appendix: Previous E-G-E Awards (award dates in parentheses)

Title: “Graduate Recruitment Coordinator for the School of Engineering;” (2/1/06)

Submitted by: George Cook (Assoc. Dean) and the ten members of the School of Engineering Graduate Committee.

Title: “Trans-disciplinary initiative on environmental systems (TIES);” (2/1/06) Submitted by: Calvin Miller with participation by the faculty of the departments of Earth & Environmental Sciences and Civil & Environmental Engineering.

Title: “Vanderbilt Prize for Undergraduate Research in Physics and Astronomy;” (2/1/06) Submitted by: Bob Scherrer, Vicki Greene and Rob Knop, Dept. of Physics and Astronomy.

Title: “Robert Penn Warren Fellowships;” (2/1/06) Submitted by: Helmut Smith, Carolyn Dever, and Mona Frederick.

Title: “Training Institute Fellowships in the Social Sciences;” (2/1/06) Submitted by: Neal Tate (Chair) and Marc Hetherington (DGS).

Title: “Recruitment coordinator for underrepresented graduate students;” (2/1/06) Submitted by: Carolyn Dever, Holly Tucker, Keivan Stassun and Roberta Bell.

Title: “Latin American Visiting Resource Professors;” (3/1/08) Submitted by Edward F. Fischer on behalf of the Center for Latin American and Iberian Studies and collaborating faculty.

“Recruitment and Development of Graduate Students;” (3/1/08) Submitted by Benigno Trigo on behalf of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

“Grant and Fellowship Proposal Writing Workshops for Graduate Students;” (3/1/08) Submitted by seven faculty members and two staff members representing A&S, Engineering, Divinity, Peabody and the University: Holly McCammon, Roberta Bell, James Byrd, George Cook, Lynn Enterline, Victoria Greene, Craig Anne Heflinger, Susan Kuyper and Mitch Seligson.

“Social Science Dissertation Fellowships;” (3/1/08) Submitted by Holly McCammon, Dan Cornfield, Jeremy Atack, Richard Blackett, Karen Campbell, Beth Conklin, and Marc Hetherington.

“Prof 101: Launching Successful Faculty Careers;” (3/1/08) Submitted by five faculty members and one staff member representing A&S, Divinity, Engineering, Peabody and the University: Holly McCammon, Jimmy Byrd, George Cook, Craig Anne Heflinger and Allison Pingree.

