

Priority #5: Organizational Factors

Graduate School Organizational Structure

The structure of the Graduate School at SUNY New Paltz is folded into a larger administrative framework that is part of the Division of Academic Affairs. The Graduate School has a separate admission process, administrative office, staff and Dean. The faculty that teach within the programs offered through the Graduate School are within separate academic units. These faculty serve the needs of their individual programs as well as the Graduate School. Within this structure, the Graduate School has no ability to hire faculty directly into its programs. There is complete reliance on faculty to develop academic programs and in most cases to deliver these programs without the benefit or ability to receive additional resources for this development and delivery. The Graduate School has limited funding to support recruiting efforts and no funding to support any of its programs. In essence, the organizational structure of the Graduate School is not flexible enough to deal with the changing market, cannot facilitate creativity and timeliness of program development or implementation. In its current form, this School will continue to be deferential to the needs of academic units which have budgeting, recruiting and programming resources and as a result will continue to demonstrate enrollment reductions.

Current Organizational Strengths	Current Organizational Challenges
Provides "the face" of the graduate programs	Strong external market drivers affecting programming and student interest/enrollments
Administrative support to manage overall flow of admissions and connection with accepted and prospective students	The graduate school does not have a fully online admissions process
Graduate Office handles student issues	
Graduate Council acts to oversee academic rigor	Graduate faculty are housed within different academic units
Graduate Admissions Advisor provides easy access to students re program planning; admission requirements, etc.	Graduate students are a very diverse group of students with distinct needs that are different than the undergraduate students
Graduate Office is the liaison with NYS Ed and SUNY Central	State Ed takes a long time to approve program proposals
Several strong graduate programs	Declining enrollment in several key graduate programs
Strong faculty input and program coordination	Graduate program offerings and proposals compete with undergraduate program resources (time and financial)
2011 US News & World Report ranks New Paltz 7 th among top public colleges	Very limited flexibility for creative and timely program development
Enjoys some autonomy	Very limited funding, no hiring capability, current mission statement unfocused
Utilize both professional and academic faculty	Professional faculty do not have consistent campus titles or position descriptions, promotion structure

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The Graduate School structure worked sufficiently well during a robust economy. It is critical that the structure be reviewed to help determine a more efficient system. The restructuring will provide the ability to embrace a more effective approach to better reflect the needs of the region and beyond. Programs that are offered and promoted should reflect student and employers needs and interests. Faculty and other professionals would be able to provide expertise to design programs in a more agile process. Professional faculty would have a structure and evaluation process that is more consistent with what they do.

Our Current Mission:

The Graduate School at SUNY New Paltz provides administrative, admissions, and academic advising services, and--through the work of the Graduate Council--promotes academic excellence and program and curriculum development.

Rationale for changing the mission:

The current mission of the New Paltz Graduate School reveals some of the functions performed in the School. It does not outline the broad range of activities or types of programs and provides no guidance to help inform future programmatic proposals.

The new mission statement should be student-focused with attention to larger goals than the immediate goal of receiving an education. It also should include a broader range of potential students with emphasis on the rigor of academe with the knowledge of becoming a professional and making a contribution in their field of study

Proposed new mission for the new The School of Graduate and Professional Studies

The School of Graduate and Professional Studies at SUNY New Paltz seeks to meet the educational needs of students in the region and beyond by providing timely, innovative and academically rigorous pre-professional baccalaureate, post-baccalaureate, graduate, certificate and non-credit programs of study in various disciplines using online, field-based and classroom modalities. Programs are designed to prepare pre-professional, professional and career changers to be knowledgeable and skilled, ethical, and culturally sensitive individuals in their profession.

Programs that could be housed in this School:

- All graduate current programs and certificate programs
- All new Certificate programs
- Certain international programs - examples
- Communication Disorders
- Disaster Mental Health
- School Counseling?
- Engineering
- Computer Science

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- Human Services
- Prehealth programs
- Digital Media Management and Marketing
- Non-credit programs (MOOC?)

Potential outcomes of restructuring

This change in organization will allow the Graduate School and the associated programs to become a fully autonomous unit from the other academic units. It will provide an opportunity to address the unique needs and challenges of the programs and provide more specific insight into growing or restructuring future programs. The needs of the region and emerging markets can be addressed in a more responsive manner. A realistic budget with resource management will provide more targeted allocations to address pressing needs including hiring, program development, specialized equipment and space, marketing, and accreditation. By creating a unit of equal size, resources and import to the other academic units, resources across units could be consolidated and more targeted to each unit's specific mission. The restructure will address staffing needs including clarification of professional faculty roles, titles and function as well as addressing the reappointment and promotion process which does not conform well to the current governance structure.

Highlights:

- Separate budget
- Admissions links, processes
- Curriculum oversight
- Ability to “buy out” faculty time for shared faculty
- Routing of course and program proposals will start at the program level in consultation with the Dean. The review and approval process will take place at the “Graduate and Professional School Council”. The UG programs housed within this unit will no longer be routed to Curriculum Committee. This change in process is necessary because the unique structure and needs of the pre-professional programs require a review by an organizational body that is more familiar with the idiosyncratic nature of these programs.
- Bring the Graduate School and the Office of Extended Learning under the umbrella of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies at SUNY New Paltz. Virtually all of our current graduate and certificate programs would be incorporated under the Graduate School track while the ones identified above would be under the Professional School track. The programs identified above would be shifted to the Professional School.
- Employ a specific set of criteria, developed and approved by the Graduate Council, to review new programs and to determine which would be included under the Graduate School and which to the Professional School. The Graduate Dean, in consultation with the Provost and decanal colleagues, would be responsible for

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hiring faculty and staff for the Professional School and, consistent with current practice, would provide input in hiring faculty for graduate programs (i.e., the Graduate School).

- With regard to the approval of new program initiatives, the Provost, in consultation with the Graduate Dean (and as appropriate with relevant Deans—inclusive of the Dean of Extended Learning and the Sojourner Truth Library), would have ultimate authority to approve initial program ideas and program proposals. The usual curricular approval processes will be followed. The Provost, in consultation with the Dean of Extended Learning and the Dean of the Graduate School, will approve non-credit bearing curricular initiatives.