



Improving graduate education – national & international collaboration

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- The changing nature of 'graduate education'
- Patterns of change – masters, doctoral & relationships between degrees
- The value of networks
- A fundamental tension for graduate schools
- My philosophy....
- *& in the Workshop – effective roles & goals for graduate schools, the big issues in Canada & elsewhere, global challenges & some solutions.....*



Graduate education

From an international perspective.....

- Is 'Graduate Education' a useful grouping? – It now includes such a huge diversity of programs
- Considerable variation within & between 2nd & 3rd cycles
- Often vocational and professional degrees NOT the major focus of graduate schools
- Maybe Graduate Research Education would be better?
- In general trends in masters and doctoral programs similar across most countries with mature education systems



Patterns of change

Masters degrees

- research masters was normal entry to PhD (eg in Canada) Increasingly....
- trend towards 'direct' entry to PhD - particularly in STEM
- diversity of professional & vocational masters degrees
- blurring of distinctions – inclusion of research in professional programs, more 'coursework' in research programs
- 'demand driven' programs – industry, government, business, students...
- 'just in time' programs – often for limited periods
- variation in tuition fees & level of scholarship support



Patterns of change

Doctoral degrees

- the most 'international' degree – collaboration, exchange, co-supervision, international examiners
- broadening of the PhD – increase in professional, vocational, applied research programs
- increasing pressure for
 - mobility of students, international recognition of programs
 - quality assurance - accountability (funders), equity (students), efficiency, effectiveness & transparency (in procedures)
 - interdisciplinarity, global relevance
 - joint degrees
 - improving the 'student' experience
- demands from employers & funding agencies for professional development & transferable skills

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Mobility between degrees & streams

Given this diversity...

- more flexible approach needed to allow movement between 2nd & 3rd cycles
- increasing need for mobility between streams – academic/research, professional & vocational
- need clarity, flexibility & clear standards – '**equivalence**' & '**adequate preparation**' are useful concepts
- need policy & procedures in place to ensure BOTH quality & nimbleness
- need to *anticipate* the environment – 5 yrs, 10 yrs ahead

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& in developing educational systems

- quality of 1st & 2nd cycles improving
- There is a need to develop **partnerships** in 2nd & 3rd cycle programs

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The value of networks

- Graduate education is seen increasingly as a shared & global enterprise - working together to provide the best!
- The balance is shifting from institutional independence (the silo approach) to national and international cooperation through effective collegial networks – especially the research doctorate – the most international of degrees
- For example – CGS (US), CAGS (Canada), UKCGE (UK), Aus DDOGS (Australia), Universitas 21 DDOGS (international network), EUA-CDE (Europe) – the newest – launched this year
- Special purpose meetings & workshops – e.g. like this & the Banff/ Florence 'Strategic Leaders' meetings

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A fundamental tension for Graduate Schools

Graduate schools are most effective when they are

- BOTH a central unit AND a Faculty – administrative & academic
- ALWAYS different and need to be
- funding is also different
- some universities recognise the dual role
& graduate dean *also* a vice provost (or equivalent)



A fundamental tension for Graduate Schools

'Ontogeny' of Grad Schools ... (to paraphrase Louis Maheu 2008)

History has shown us that

- when they are new, lots of important quality work to do
- leads to considerable improvement in equity, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency & consistency of quality
- then Faculties start to want to resume control (sometimes due to misguided ideas about \$\$s)
- and then transparency and Quality Assurance slowly declines....



My philosophy on Graduate Schools....

- unashamedly student focussed
- must be value adding
- talk *and listen* to everyone
- develop carefully – do it once – get it right
- it's about quality, transparency, equity & consistency
- routinely evaluate & feedback for improvement



....at the workshop

- Any / all of the above..... and
- Canada - similarities & differences
- The big issues in Canada (& elsewhere)
- Grad schools - grad programs - grad policy - effective roles & goals, quality, quality assurance, accountability.....



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The Workshop

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The Workshop

- Canada - some similarities & differences
- The big issues in Canada (& elsewhere)
- Grad schools - grad programs - grad policy
 - effective roles and goals
 - quality, quality assurance
 - accountability..... etc.



Canada

- graduate school oversight usually doesn't include professional degrees
- program structures similar to the US – some aspects akin to UK, e.g. require an external examiner for PhD
- graduate funding largely provincial (& institutional) rather than federal
- funding based on enrolments rather than completions
- diverse strategies across Canada for both graduate programs & student support (less consistent than Aus but more than US)



Canada

- no national quality or regulatory oversight - more independent than Aus & UK, less so than US
- BUT well established graduate schools & an effective national network – CAGS
- more welcoming to overseas students e.g....
- tuition fees tend to be low by international comparisons
- visas easier, can work, can stay after two years (don't even check if attending classes ? cf. Aus)



Like many other countries, Canada has

- seen an increase in graduate enrolments in recent years
- particularly in professional and vocational masters
- set challenging growth targets for graduate education in face of declining 'pipeline' of students coming through
- a concentration of graduate research education in a small proportion of 'top' R1 universities
- need for increased student financial support to become internationally competitive
- declining public funding of universities



The big issues

In Canada (& elsewhere)

- acceptability of 'three-year degrees' as preparation for entry to graduate (masters) study (e.g. York & AUCC)
- completion **rates** & times
- provision of transferable skills training – Tri-agency statement on transferable skills; plus ethics, integrity & plagiarism
- mobility between different graduate programs (masters, research doctoral and professional degrees)



The big issues

- no oversight, quality assurance & accountability at a national level, but CAGS → good practice (cf. Aus & UK)
- growth – recruitment & admission – domestic & international
- being international & interdisciplinary – why & how?
- Joint PhDs
- indigenous participation – not great at the graduate level
- funding – needs to be equitable, internationally competitive, liveable
- what about post-docs?



Graduate School Roles

Key roles for graduate schools include:

- *proactive* policy development & procedural oversight (10+ years time frame)
- ensuring transparency, efficiency, consistency & equity in graduate administrative procedures
- program approval & review
- often NOT responsible for professional or vocational masters/'doctorates'



Graduate School Roles

- facilitating the provision of adequate financial resources for graduate students
- developing excellence in research supervision
- providing training in transferable skills, including ethical behaviour, interdisciplinary and multicultural opportunities at both masters & doctoral levels
- monitoring graduate program quality & outcomes, & accountability of programs at the institutional level



Aspects of quality

... for oversight by Graduate Schools

- selection of students
- program structure & content
- professional & transferable skills
- ethics & integrity
- supervision
- monitoring progress
- assessment & examination



Aspects of quality

- the student experience
- handling grievances
- consistency, transparency & equity in procedures
- facilities and resources available
- flexibility & mobility within & between programs
- student funding & scholarships
- evaluation of outcomes, feedback & accountability



Ten goals for a great graduate school

1. Be student focussed and outcome driven
2. Promote research training of the highest calibre – including ethics, innovation & interdisciplinary programs
3. Provide flexible innovative structured programs that lead to a variety of careers
4. Ensure adequate funding for students & their programs
5. Provide excellent support and training for supervisors & administrators



Ten goals for a great graduate school

6. Build strong external links with the community
7. Improve opportunities for aboriginal students
8. *Be internationally relevant & make a global contribution
9. *Anticipate change & future needs
10. Monitor & quality assure through effective data gathering

* How to be internationally relevant?

* How to anticipate future needs?

– use national & international networks effectively !