February 26, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Associate Deans, Directors of Graduate Studies, Graduate Faculty and Students

FROM: Charles Caramello, Associate Provost & Dean of the Graduate School

SUBJECT: Overall Report on Enrollment Targets for Doctoral Programs

I. Background

In accordance with the Strategic Plan, the initiative Excellence in Graduate Education, Parts I and II, was designed to gather and analyze information on doctoral programs and to arrive at appropriate enrollment targets. Doctoral programs identified, defined, and presented measures of quality indicators; described their capacity to recruit excellent students, to provide them with courses, advising and mentoring, and full financial support, and to place them in suitable positions. They also proposed appropriate total enrollments and new enrollments targets for reaching them. This information flowed from faculty, through programs, departments, and colleges, to the Graduate School and the Provost’s Office. Eighty-three program reports, accompanied by thirteen college reports, were submitted.

II. Setting Enrollment Targets

Provisional enrollment targets were generated from the data, information, and proposals provided by programs and colleges in Excellence, Part I, and, especially, Part II. We looked carefully at measures of quality and productivity and at available resources, taking our cues from the program reports and being mindful of inherent differences among disciplines.

Individual meetings then were held for each college or school, attended by the Dean and Associate Dean of the college or school, the Dean and Assistant Dean of the Graduate School, and two Associate Provosts representing the Provost’s Office. This group discussed each doctoral program individually with regard to quality indicators, available resources, and other relevant factors, paying particular attention to the special circumstances of new programs and programs in units or colleges undergoing reorganization. The group also reviewed program and
college proposals for enrollment targets and, collaboratively, arrived at a consensus regarding targets for each program. Once discussed in the colleges, they were adjusted as necessary. The Graduate School communicated those decisions individually to programs, with explanations, in December 2009.

In order to ensure fairness, equity, flexibility, rigor, and impact, a few basic principles were observed:

• Two general parameters govern a program’s enrollment targets: quality indicators and adequate resources, or (a) a program’s excellence and its success in training, mentoring, and appropriately placing doctoral students, together with (b) a program’s capacity to recruit, train, and mentor top students and to support them financially in accordance with the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

• Programs that propose to grow on the basis of projected improvements in quality indicators or increases in resources (faculty numbers and/or internal or external funding) should defer growth until the improvements or enhancements materialize. Growth, if appropriate, can then be revisited.

• If changes in a program’s quality indicators, resources, or other circumstances warrant an upward or downward adjustment in enrollment targets, the program, college, and the Graduate School will work collaboratively to determine the adjustment.

III. Projection for Campus Enrollment

The recommended reduction in campus annual new enrollment for Fall 2010 totals ~100 students. This total includes programs increasing, decreasing, or remaining constant in size. A reduction of ~100 students represents a 13% decrease in average annual new enrollment from ~ 800 to ~700 students. Maintaining an average annual new enrollment figure of ~700 doctoral students, other variables remaining constant, should result in a steady state ~10% reduction in the total campus doctoral population in 2013, potentially freeing up more mentoring and funding resources for each student. At this mid-point in the ten-year Strategic Plan, overall enrollment can be revisited. During this period, as noted above, individual program targets may be adjusted collaboratively as circumstances warrant.

In order to provide the graduate community with a campus picture of enrollment targets, we’ve attached two spreadsheets, one representing total enrollment targets, the other annual new enrollment targets.

Thank you.