

Summary of Student Perspectives Series Meeting, March 1, 2018

Trustees in Attendance: Thomas A. Cole, David Coolidge, Michael J. Klingensmith, Paula Wolff

Students in Attendance: Erica Watkins Ryan (Booth'18 and Graduate Liaison), Kirk Swanson (IME'21), Goda Thangada (Classics'19), Emily Webster (History'23), Hannah Worrall (MS Statistics'18), Christina Uzzo (College'18 and Undergraduate Liaison)

The topic of the March 1, 2018 meeting was **graduate careers and professional development**. In advance of the meeting, Graduate Liaison Erica Watkins Ryan prepared a memorandum for the Trustees that included information on the current job market for doctoral and master's students and selected survey data. These materials informed the discussion (see Appendix).

Following introductions, Ms. Watkins Ryan provided an overview of the discussion topic and background on why it was of interest to UChicago graduate students. She emphasized the importance of faculty support for graduate (especially doctoral) students' exploration of non-academic careers, even if they lack the expertise to provide concrete advice. By way of example, Yale and MIT have taken steps toward establishing guidelines for faculty on how to effectively work with students considering careers outside of the academy; a similar approach could be considered by the graduate life advisory group that will be led by Executive Vice Provost David Nirenberg in the months ahead.

Much of the ensuing discussion focused on UChicagoGRAD and how students take advantage of the various resources this office provides. Since its inception in 2015, UChicagoGRAD has expanded its resources and staff, which now includes 18 professional staff, 4 support staff and 2 graduate interns. In partnership with the graduate Divisions and Schools and the office of the Director for Institutional Analysis, UChicagoGRAD is tracking graduate student career outcomes along with graduate student touchpoints with the office. Students are introduced to UChicagoGRAD during new student orientation programs (which vary in length and content across Schools and Divisional departments) and subsequently via Divisional newsletters and *Grad Guide Weekly* (which is produced by UChicagoGRAD and has wide readership across the University). The students expressed appreciation for UChicagoGRAD, noting that it is especially great for students who are confident enough to use it early and often but also observing that some students wait until they are ready to be on the job market, which is often too late. They supported the idea of requiring students to meet regularly with a UChicagoGRAD career advisor (which is the approach taken by the College and Career Advancement for undergraduates).

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¹ UChicagoGRAD Development and Diversity initiatives are also informed by a graduate student <u>Diversity</u> <u>Advisory Board</u> (DAB).

The Trustees and students also spent time discussing the importance of connecting the work of UChicagoGRAD to the Divisions and Schools, and even to individual departments. The Deans were identified as a group that could play an important facilitation role in this regard. While Molecular Engineering and Statistics offer peer-to-peer advising and mentoring, the students agreed that there was a general need for more faculty allies and advisers within programs who could met regularly with students and support career exploration and professional development initiatives, thereby complementing the work of UChicagoGRAD. A particularly successful example can be found in the History department, which through an <u>initiative</u> of the Mellon Foundation and the American Historical Association has appointed a Mellon Career Development Officer to assist doctoral students with their career planning.

It was also suggested that the various external advisory councils of the graduate Divisions and Schools could be a helpful resource to students considering non-academic careers. Could networking and other opportunities to connect students with council members be facilitated by the Deans' offices in conjunction with their annual meetings?

Another aspect of graduate student career preparation that was discussed was the opportunity to engage in scholarly activities outside of one's discipline and/or degree program. The students noted that it is generally quite easy to cross-register and that some programs (e.g., Molecular Engineering) are very flexible, so taking courses in other Schools and Divisions is relatively easy. The greater challenge is knowing which offerings to take advantage of, which comes down to an advising issue. Could UChicagoGRAD help develop prospective curricular tracks?

Participating in internships, career "treks" and other exposures to different industries and fields is also a viable way to explore non-academic careers. Students in labs may be less able to take advantage of these opportunities given the nature of their research schedules, but if UChicagoGRAD continues to find ways to bring non-academic employers to campus (if not literally to the lab) these students can glean some benefits nevertheless.

How to persuade faculty of the importance of encouraging and facilitating their students' exploration of diverse career options was the focus of the last few minutes of the meeting. Making this issue a topic for discussion at the Council of the University Senate was suggested, while acknowledging that obtaining faculty buy-in through efforts within departments (i.e., Deans encouraging faculty advisors) may be ultimately more effective than a top-down approach. It was also noted that the mission of the University – generating exemplary scholarship, cutting-edge research and preparing the next generation of scholars – is the faculty's priority. However, that priority should not result in individual faculty "writing off" their students when they cannot find an academic job or when they express interest in non-academic careers.

It was agreed that the ideas and suggestions that emerged during this discussion would be shared with UChicagoGRAD leadership and Executive Vice Provost David Nirenberg.

APPENDIX



February 21, 2018

TO: Thomas A. Cole and Trustees Participating in the Student Perspectives Series

FROM: Erica Watkins Ryan (Booth'18), Goda Thangada (Classics'19), Hannah Worrall (MS

Statistics'18), Kirk Swanson (IME'21), Emily Webster (History'23)

RE: Preparatory Materials for March 1st Student Perspective Series Meeting on Career

Summary:

A survey was sent to graduate students of the University of Chicago in January to identify a topic of discussion for the Winter Student Perspective Series meeting. Students were asked to describe up to three topics relating to their lives as students that they would like to see improved. See Exhibit 1 for a description of the top issues that surfaced. Career preparation was identified as an area of both satisfaction and an opportunity for improvement, specifically by students outside of the professional schools. We divide the topic of career into two parts, Non-Academic and Academic careers. We then delve into four key topics for discussion that arose from the survey and subsequent group discussions with graduate students. We seek to explore each issue, highlight resources available through the university to address the issue (Exhibit 3), investigate the practices of peer institutions, and propose next steps for discussion.

Agenda:

- Introductions (5 mins)
- The Role of the Board (5 mins)
- Summary of the Issues & Questions for Discussion (40 mins)
- Next Steps and Wrap-Up (10 mins)

Job Market for PhDs:

The primary role of graduate programs is to train the next generation of researchers and scholars. UChicago excels at producing academics who obtain tenure at prestigious peer institutions. Although most PhDs begin their graduate studies intent on an academic career, many opt to leave academia either because of the unstable job market or because they consider other industries a better fit. The academic job market is competitive; between 32% and 46% of PhDs across all disciplines have no employment commitment after graduation (Exhibit 2). Many students must seek employment outside of academia and are becoming increasingly aware that their academic training may be valuable in other contexts.

Non-Academic Careers:

Topic 1: Faculty support of a non-academic career varies by advisor. Some students feel supported by their advisors and some feel abandoned. (See Exhibit 4 for more detail).

Each advisor/student relationship is unique, leading to varied reactions and consequences once a student decides to purse a non-academic career. If an advisor does not support a non-academic career decision, it may become difficult for a student to balance his/her advisor relationship, obtain a job, or even, graduate. While UChicagoGRAD has made strides to involve faculty in both academic and non-academic job market conversations and events, there is an opportunity to institute policy at the University level that requires outside input on academic progress.

• Question for Discussion: What strategies could be applied to increase faculty support for non-academic careers and potentially influence and implement shifts to advising policy?

Topic 2: UChicagoGRAD is a great first source for students interested in careers outside of academia, but students often seek more specific help. There is a disparity in the types of non-academic career guidance offered at the Divisional/Departmental level, often driven by differences in outside funding (See Exhibit 5 for more detail).

UChicagoGRAD is a great resource for graduate students, but it naturally designs programs that serve students across divisions. Students often seek specialized help in translating their specific skill set and identifying jobs that align with their skills. The degree of professional development assistance varies across departments and divisions. Some divisions, such as the Biological Sciences Division, and departments, such as History, have outside funding from the NIH and The Mellon Foundation and have built robust career resources. Meanwhile, other divisions have less robust and specific support and therefore, students are less aware of how to market their skills and how to find career prospects.

• Question for Discussion: What is the best way for students, the administration (including at the divisional level), and, potentially, the Board to influence investments in divisional/departmental support to ensure that students across all programs have access to field-specific career guidance?

Topic 3: Students seek more access to alumni and employers. (See Exhibit 6 for more detail).

Students acknowledge that UChicagoGRAD has done significant work facilitating access to alumni and employers. In addition to a graduate-specific career fair, the undergraduate career fair is open to graduate students. UChicagoGRAD rolled out Wisr, an opt-in, interactive alumni database this year. However, students seek varied interactions with alumni and further diversity in employers. The desire for more access to employers and alumni is coupled by a lack of awareness by many students of the resources available to them.

• Questions for Discussion: How can the University increase access to alumni and employers, and how could the Board be helpful in these efforts? What is the role of the University in not only bringing more employers to campus, but also convincing new employers of the value of a graduate degree?

Academic Careers

Topic 4: It commonly takes two to four years post-graduation for Humanities and Social Sciences graduates to secure a tenure track position. To bridge the gap, recent graduates need institutional affiliation through internal lectureships or post-docs. (See Exhibit 7 for more detail).

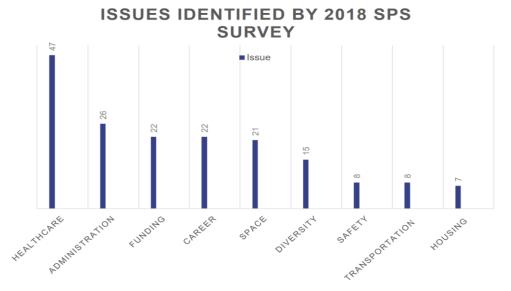
After graduation, students pursuing academia can look for three types of jobs: 1) Tenure-track 2) 1-2 year visiting position 3) A postdoc. Postdocs in the humanities are scarcer than in the sciences. The typical career path for a humanities student is to take 1 or 2 visiting positions before securing a tenure track job, but these visiting positions are also becoming very competitive. Many qualified candidates do not immediately secure a job and seek institutional affiliation to bridge the gap.

• Questions for Discussion: What advice does the Board have as to how graduate students could work with faculty and the administration to increase the number of postdoctoral positions in the Humanities and Social Sciences?

Appendix:

Exhibit 1: Issues Identified by the 2018 SPS Survey

Issue identified, number of responses per issue out of 183



- · Healthcare is primarily cost of health insurance and ease of use of health services
- · Administration is primarily communication with and transparency of administration
- Funding is primarily focused on funding needs of Humanities students in their 5th year
- · Space is defined as lack of physical space to meet with students in offices, work independently, and meet socially
- · Diversity is focused on diversity of faculty, including gender and racial/ethnic diversity
- · Transportation is primarily shuttle transportation needs of graduate students to their housing, specifically at night

Exhibit 2: Doctoral Recipient Job Landscape (Across the U.S.)

Percentage of Doctoral Recipients Without Employment Commitments, 2014

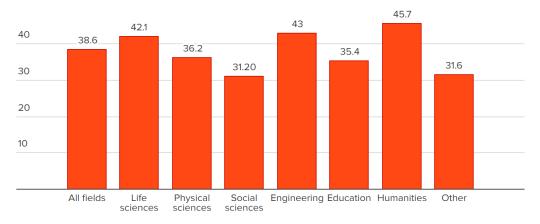




Exhibit 3: UChicago Career Resources Landscape (Not Exhaustive)

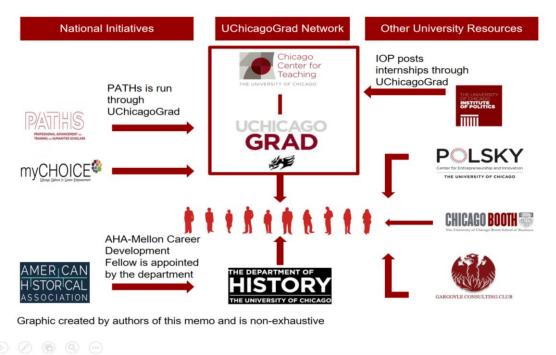


Exhibit 4:

Faculty support of a non-academic career varies by advisor. Some students feel supported by their advisors		
	while others feel abandoned.	
The	Each advisor/student relationship is unique, leading to varied reactions and consequences once a	
Problem	student decides to purse a non-academic career. If an advisor does not support a non-academic	
	career decision, it may become difficult for a student to balance the advisor relationship, obtain a	
	job, or even graduate. While UChicagoGRAD has made strides to involve faculty in both academic	
	and non-academic job market conversations and events, there is an opportunity to institute policy at	
	the University level that requires outside input on academic progress.	
Anecdotal	 "Advisors, having spent the entirety of the career in academia, are ill-equipped to 	
Evidence	encourage trainees to leave the laboratory setting. Moreover, they were trained in an	
	environment vastly different from the current market that graduate students find	
	themselves in today"	
	 "Professional academics (tenured professors) have a limited understanding of the non- 	
	academic job market, and often do not prepare their students for the possibility that they	
	will have to seek non-academic positions later in life."	
	• "If you have a good advisor, then that's what influences your experience. Your advisor	
	controls your life. It's a marriage."	
	"Every day he brings it up and tells me I'm making a big mistake."	
UChicago	UChicagoGRAD:	
Resources	 Career development grants that include faculty leaders (MyCHOICE in BSD/Sciences and 	
	PATHS in HUM/DIV/SSD)	
	 Engagement with faculty speakers/moderators for professional development events, 	
	primarily through academic job market prep and GRADUCon, the annual career	
	conference	
	 Regularly connect with faculty through UChicagoGRAD's fellowship support resources 	
	and through a number of personal relationships that staff have established over the years	

	GradTalk resources on how to speak to an advisor and stand up for oneself
	Student Ombudsperson & Family Resource Center
	Aid students through difficult conversations
What Peer	Yale
Institutions	The Yale Graduate Council is drafting a set of advising guidelines in collaboration with the
are Doing	faculty senate and administration.
	Cornell
	Graduate and Professional Student Assembly for faculty advisors created a "Best Practices"
	for Faculty Advisors" (View link)
	MIT
	Graduate Council drafted a 'Best Practices in Graduate Student Advising' in collaboration
	with administration. (<u>View link</u>)
Proposal	There is an opportunity for the University to institute a policy that requires graduate
	students to meet with a committee periodically (more than simply proposal and defense) to
	ensure that students are making academic progress toward graduation and that multiple
	individuals influence a student's graduation timeline. One aspect of the committee
	conversation can be regarding career, so that there exist multiple perspectives in the room.
	Opportunity to implement a required meeting with a UChicagoGRAD advisor at least once
	by a student's third year.
	UChicago can draft a similar set of specific and actionable advising guidelines as those
	enacted at Yale, Cornell, and MIT. Guidelines are not binding, but can prompt discussion
	and influence university culture.

Exhibit 5

UchicagoGRAD is a great first source for students interested in careers outside of academia, but students		
often see	k more specific help. There is a disparity in the degree of Division/Department non-academic	
	career guidance, often driven by differences in outside funding	
The	UChicagoGRAD is a great resource for graduate students, but it naturally designs programs that	
Problem	serve students across divisions. Students often seek specialized help in translating their specific	
	skill set and identifying jobs that align with their skills. The degree of professional development	
	assistance varies across departments and divisions. Some divisions, such as the Biological Sciences	
	Division, and departments, such as History have outside funding from the NIH and The Mellon	
	Foundation and have built robust career resources. Meanwhile, other divisions and departments	
	have less specific support.	
Anecdotal	 "I need help on how to prepare for the job market that is focused on my specific 	
Evidence	discipline."	
	 "Networking opportunities are often school or department dependent; the number of 	
	networking opportunities is not of the same magnitude."	
UChicago	UChicagoGRAD:	
Resources	 Special category of advising appointment for career exploration, which may involve a 	
	coaching process and self-assessment tools. A career exploration workshop is launching in	
	Spring quarter, which meets once a week for 5 weeks.	
	 GradTalk helps students identify transferable skills, learn how to market existing skills, 	
	and learn soft skills like communication and public speaking.	
	 UChicagoGRAD is leading a professional skills workshop over spring break that delves 	
	into leadership and teamwork.	
	• Specific UChicagoGRAD advisors for Humanities/SSA PhDs, STEM PhDs, etc.	

History Department:

• The History Department has a Mellon Career Development Officer that is sponsored by the American Historical Association and paid for by the Mellon Foundation. This individual has a History PhD and worked in industry. She connects students with other PhDs that have left the academic realm and is uniquely suited to translate the skills of students to employers.

Biological Science Division (broadly all Sciences) MyCHOICE:

 NIH funded resource for students in the BSD with programming that includes workshops led by invited professionals, practice job talks, resume/CV workshops and access to employment opportunities across business, education, and the public sector.

Statistics Department:

- Weekly emails are sent out with job listings, but nearly all of them are academic positions. Almost none of the listed jobs are for Master's students.
- Once or twice a year there is an 'alumni talk' where a statistics department alumnus talks to students about his/her job.
- There is no departmental support for Master's students on marketing themselves, finding jobs, obtaining interviews, or passing interviews.

Institute for Molecular Engineering:

- Currently, there is very little official career support or guidance offered at the IME, it primarily flows through Briana Konnick at UChicagoGRAD, who is a great resource. However, given the wide range of disciplines within the IME, it is difficult for students to understand what jobs they are suited for outside of academia.
- The IME Director and Dean of Students are currently encouraging students on the IME's leadership council to help with career advancement by working to invite speakers from industry to campus, but the lack of a clear vision or plan for this idea has resulted in very little progress since the beginning of the 2017-18 academic year.

What Peer Institutions are Doing

Harvard:

 Many departments and/or schools offer their own career services and alumni engagement services which are separate from those offered by the general university. Schools that have their own career office include School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, T. H. Chan School of Public Health, School of Design, Graduate School of Education, Kennedy School of Government.

Northwestern:

• They have a department-level career and alumni relations effort that is separate from that of the general university. For example, Northwestern's McCormick School of Engineering has its own alumni relations and career development office. McCormick's Engineering Career Development program offers a variety of resources to assist students with: creating a job search strategy, seeking an internship, seeking a full-time position, and monitoring progress throughout employment.

Proposal

- Create a formal connection between an appointed departmental professional development advisor and UChicagoGRAD. The faculty placement or professional development adviser within each department will serve as a point of contact both for students and UChicagoGRAD and also is charged with tracking alumni outcomes.
- Increase knowledge sharing across divisions/departments and UChicagoGRAD through collaboration on events/workshops hosted within divisions/departments (e.g. incorporate an oral communications module in coursework).

	Students seek more robust access to alumni and employers.
The Problem	Students acknowledge that UChicagoGRAD has done significant work facilitating access to alumni and employers. In addition to a graduate-specific career fair, the undergraduate career fair is open to graduate students. UChicagoGRAD rolled out Wisr, an opt-in, interactive alumni database this year. However, students seek varied interactions with alumni and further diversity in employers. The desire for more access to employers and alumni is coupled by a lack of awareness by many students on the resources available to them.
Anecdotal Evidence	 "The UChicagoGRAD office is truly amazing." "I would like to see panel discussion on career trajectories with alumni from the graduate program within the same Department/Division." "I am not aware of any easy way to reach out to alumni." "Career fairs are dominated by local Chicago companies, trading companies and consulting companies. I want to see more companies from more industries." "I really want to work at a Data Science firm out west, but they don't come here."
UChicago Resources	 UChicagoGRAD: Graduate students have a Graduate Student Career Fair and also had access this Fall to the Undergraduate Career Fair. 50 employers attended the Graduate Career Fair and 161 employers attended the Undergraduate Career Fair. Opportunity to increase presence of tech companies and retail/manufacturing companies. UChicagoGRAD has a job postings board on its website where students can filter by keyword, industry, geographic location, etc. Recent launch of UChicago Wisr, a platform that connect students with UChicago alumni who have jobs they find interesting. Every alum in the system has already volunteered to give career advice. Twenty-four student representatives of the fifty departments or MA programs responded to a survey sent by Graduate Council on department specific career offerings. Fifty-four percent of respondents were not aware of a professional skills advisor or an alumni placement tracker in their department.
What Peer Institutions are Doing	 The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, which contains Harvard's masters and PhD granting departments, has its own alumni network separate from that of the general university. It is called the Graduate School Alumni Association (GSAA). It is governed by a council of 42 graduate school alumni that are distinguished in their careers. The Council meets at Harvard twice a year to represent and advance the interests of the students. Each year, events such as Alumni Day, career panels, and workshops are organized in Cambridge and local events are sponsored around the world. Many of Harvard's departments offer their own career services and alumni engagement services which are separate from those offered by the general university. Career Fairs are divided into nine fairs and include, Campus Interview Fair open to employers interviewing undergraduate and graduate students on campus, Biotechnology Fair, Data Analytics & Technology Fair, Media, Marketing & Merchandising Expo, Non-Profit & Global Heath Fair, Engineering Career Fair Collaborative, Startup Career Fair, Lifesciences & Health Expo and Social Impact Expo. (Visit site)

	 Carnegie Mellon: Career Expo open to undergraduate and graduate students with 269 employers. Companies represented include: Every major tech firm, government agencies, retail/consumer goods, finance/trading, consulting firms and manufacturing. (Visit site)
Proposal	 Investigate developing a Graduate School Alumni Council similar to Harvard's where there is a group of distinguished alumni charged with leading the alumni engagement efforts for graduate students across divisions. Bring more alumni to campus for informal networking and career exploration opportunities. Grow the list of companies attending UChicago's career fairs. Students particularly wish to see these employers: Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Facebook, Apple, IBM, Hulu, SAS, Pandora, Blizzard, Cisco, Dell, Infosys, Lockheed Martin, MongoDB, Uber, Adobe, Uptake, American Eagle, Bank of America, Bloomberg, Boeing, Citadel, Comcast, Deloitte, Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank, GE, Ford, GM, Honda, L'Oreal, NASA, Nike, P&G, PwC, Staples, Hershey Company, Visa, West Monroe Partners, O'Reilly Media, Salesforce, Condé Nast.

Exhibit 7

only takes two to four years post-graduation for Humanities and Social Sciences graduates to
enure track position. To bridge the gap, recent graduates need institutional affiliation through
internal lectureships or post-docs.
After graduation, students pursuing academia can look for three types of jobs: 1) Tenure-track 2) 1-
2 year visiting position 3) A postdoc. Postdocs in the humanities are scarcer than in the sciences. The typical career path for a humanities student is to take 1 or 2 visiting positions before securing a tenure track job, but these visiting positions are also becoming very competitive. Many qualified candidates do not immediately secure a job. Upon graduation, students have limited access to library resources for their research and are no longer eligible for student employment on campus. Miscellaneous opportunities for one-off classes exist, but these typically do not provide a living wage and do not necessarily help develop the student's CV. Although the University has been taking some steps to create full-time positions for recent grads, the full scope of student need can be better understood by systematically tracking job market outcomes.
"[Graduates without jobs] were more or less abandoned, even by committees."
 "I think other schools are more proactive with creating new positions for new grads." "Graduates lose access to all student employment, which means that they cannot hold jobs/internships at places like the UChicago Press, the Smart Museum, or the Logan Center. I would like to see PATHS and/or the Higher Education Administration program develop opportunities for recent graduates to continue to build meaningful career experience."
Department/Core Curriculum
 Lectureships for individual courses, depending on availability Chicago Center for Teaching 16 fellowships for the Humanities and Social Sciences Divisions Note: The Harper-Schmidt fellowship takes several university graduates, but is based on a national search. 5/35 Harper-Schmidt junior fellows are UChicago grads

What Peer	Columbia
Institutions are Doing	 Columbia University lists 30 online databases accessible off-site free of charge to alumni, including JSTOR and the full edition of Project MUSE. UChicago lists 6 subscription databases and 5 free databases.
	Harvard & UC Berkeley
	 Hiring graduated students into postdoctoral positions or lectureships often varies by department. Harvard Classics currently has 3 recent PhDs listed as Lecturers or Postdocs. UC Berkeley English has 1 recent PhD listed as a Postdoc.
	Stanford
	 Stanford's Thinking Matters fellowship has 9 recent Stanford grads in a cohort of 25. These fellows, drawn from the sciences and humanities, are responsible for required first-year undergraduate courses.
	Princeton
	 Princeton has a Dean's Completion Fellowship that converts to a Post Graduate Research Associate (PGRA) position if the candidate defends in the fall semester of the 6th year. The PGRA position ends in August of the same year.
Proposal	 Collect data on job placement rates and time to secure a tenure track position. Consider creating positions for graduated students in accordance with need or providing unpaid institutional affiliation that allows for full library access that includes borrowing privileges and off-site access to online resources, so that graduates can continue to build a research portfolio.