Evaluation Study Final Report

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Executive Summary

This report aims to assess the effectiveness of Wayne State University's Graduate Programs Recruitment and Retention Program (GPRR) in achieving its goals and objectives. The GPRR's primary goal is to enroll at least 300 graduate students per academic year, and the program has set a strategic objective to increase the overall enrollment of graduate programs by 10% by 2023. However, the current enrollment in the College of Education's graduate programs is 210 students per academic year, which falls short of the target enrollment by 90 students. Therefore, the project aims to address this gap by implementing strategies to increase the recruitment and retention of graduate students not only in the College of Education but also in other graduate programs.

Meeting GPRR's enrollment goals is important for a number of reasons. The first issue is that low enrollment and retention rates can adversely affect the university's reputation, funding, and ability to attract top talent. The decline in enrollment rates can result in a decrease in revenue which results in fewer resources available to support academic programs, research, and student services, which in turn may result in a decrease in competitiveness and national university rankings.

Furthermore, low retention rates can negatively affect the university's reputation, discourage potential students from enrolling in graduate programs. As a result, it may also pose a financial challenge for the university, as it may need to invest in additional recruitment efforts to fill the resulting enrollment gaps. A comprehensive evaluation of the program and implementing strategies for increasing recruitment and retention can assist the university in improving its reputation, attracting top talent, and ultimately achieving its strategic objective of increasing graduate

enrollment and retention. A report detailing the findings of the evaluation study and proposed solutions will serve as a roadmap for future program development and continuous improvement.

Evaluation plan components

Case Study A: Logic Model

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Mid-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
• Budget for marketing and recruitment efforts • Dedicated recruitment team • Current grad student volunteers willing to serve as mentors • Staff • Funding for graduate assistant stipends • Budget for recruitment outreach efforts • Project/event coordinators • WSU campus physical spaces • Access to university departments and organizations • Training specialists	• Promote COE graduate programs to other universities, community organizations, and professional organizations through targeted marketing and outreach strategies • Provide mentoring support to prospective grad school students to facilitate the transition • Design workshops and resources to help students develop skills needed for success in their program and future career • Recruit and select qualified graduate students for assistantship positions • Develop and implement a comprehensive recruitment strategy including targeted outreach efforts and marketing materials • Plan and organize an graduate open house event including	• Increase the number of inquiries about the COE graduate program from prospective students through recruitment events • Graduate student mentorship program • 2 workshops per semester • Successful recruitment and placement of qualified graduate assistants in positions in at least 6 graduate programs	• Increase in the number of completed applications from prospective students for COE grad programs to 250 • Increase connection to campus and increase social support • Increase student motivation to improve academic performance • Increase opportunities for student assistants to gain on-the-job real-world experience • Attract and enroll high-quality	• Increase in the number of completed applications from prospective students for COE grad programs to 300 applicants • Expand mentoring programs to new programs and colleges • Increase confidence in in academic abilities • Improved academic and professional outcomes for graduate assistants, including increased	• Increase COE's grad program reputation, as evidenced by higher rankings and recognition in national and international surveys • Increase graduation rates • Increase higher rates of student employment in their field of study • Increase university's reputation through the success of its grad students and programs • Increase student satisfaction with academic support

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Mid-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
	scheduling, logistics, and advertising • Develop training sessions for faculty/advisors focused on supporting graduate students, providing mentorship, and addressing student needs	• 2 successful execution of on-campus and off-campus recruitment events • Annual Open house with 400+ participants (prospective graduate students, current students, faculty members, and staff members) and 40+ programs represented • Training workshop provided twice a year	prospective students • Improve ability of faculty/advisors to effectively advice and support graduate students	employment prospects • Improved diversity and quality of applicant pool	

Figure 1.

Case Study B: Indicators, Sources, and Methods of Data Collection

	Outcome Statement	Data Indicator	Source of Data	Method of Data Collection
Short-Term	15% increase in the number of prospective student inquiries for the College of Education graduate programs by 24-25 AY.	COE program inquiries	- Recruitment events - COE department	- Event questionnaire - Department questionnaire
	25% increased student awareness of DOSO's Get Involved campus activities by 24-25 AY.	Student awareness	Get Involved student participants	Get Involved student Questionnaire
	Increase attendance at Student Success Workshop by 15% by 24-25 AY.	- Student motivation - Workshop participation	- Student Workshop participants - Academic Success Center	- Extant data review - Student questionnaire
	Increase the number of graduate student assistant opportunities by 20% in 1 AY.	Student assistant positions	- HR records - Student applicants	- Extant data review - Position availability questionnaire
	Attract and enroll high-quality prospective students	Academic achievement	Banner	Extant data review
	Increase the faculty participation rate in professional development seminars by 15% by 24-25 AY	Participation rate	Office of Faculty Development and Faculty Success	Extant data review
Mid-Term	Increase the number of graduate programs and colleges providing mentoring program services by 30% by 25-26 AY.	College/Program participation	Graduate school program records	Extant data review
	Increase student engagement of DOSO's Get Involved campus activities by 30% within 25-26 AY.	Get Involved engagement rate	Get Involved student participants	Get Involved student Questionnaire
	Increase enrollment rates to College of Education graduate programs by 20% Whitin 25-26 AY.	Enrollment rate	Banner System	Extant data review
Long-Term	15% increase in student connection with campus community by 2027 AY.	Sense of belonging/connection to campus community	Get Involved student participants	Get Involved Student questionnaire
	Achieve a minimum degree completion rate of 70% each AY.	Degree completion rate	Banner data systems	Extant data review
	Increase higher rates of student employment in their field of study	Alumni employment rate	Alumni	Alumni questionnaire
	Increase student satisfaction rating of academic support services to a minimum average of 85% each AY.	Student satisfaction rating	Academic support services	Academic support questionnaire
	Increase a sustained 25% increase in student employment within a year of graduation by 2027 AY.	Student alumni employment	Student alumni	Post graduation employment questionnaire

Achieve a minimum degree completion rate of 70% each AY.	Degree completion rate	Banner System	Extant data review
Increase student satisfaction rating of academic support services to a minimum average of 85% each AY.	Student satisfaction rating	Academic support services	Academic support questionnaire

Case Study C: Data Tables, Analyses, and Visualizations

Inquiry	Result
1. What is the average group project score for all undergrad students?	80.6
2. What is the average group project score differences between F2F and online undergrad students?	0.125
3. What is the average data collection plan score for all undergrad students?	86.16666667
4. What is the average data collection plan score differences between FT and PT work schedule undergrad students?	3.5
5. What is the average data collection plan score for all grad students who selected data Collection Plan as their first or second most important outcome?	91.25
6. What is the average data collection plan score for all grad students who did not select data collection plan as their first or second most important outcome?	86.97619048

What is the average group project score for all undergrad students?

Level	Method	Score
Undergrad	Group project	75
Undergrad	Group project	76
Undergrad	Group project	82
Undergrad	Group project	78
Undergrad	Group project	90
Undergrad	Group project	78
Undergrad	Group project	77
Undergrad	Group project	84
Undergrad	Group project	80
Undergrad	Group project	86
Undergrad	Group project	**80.6**

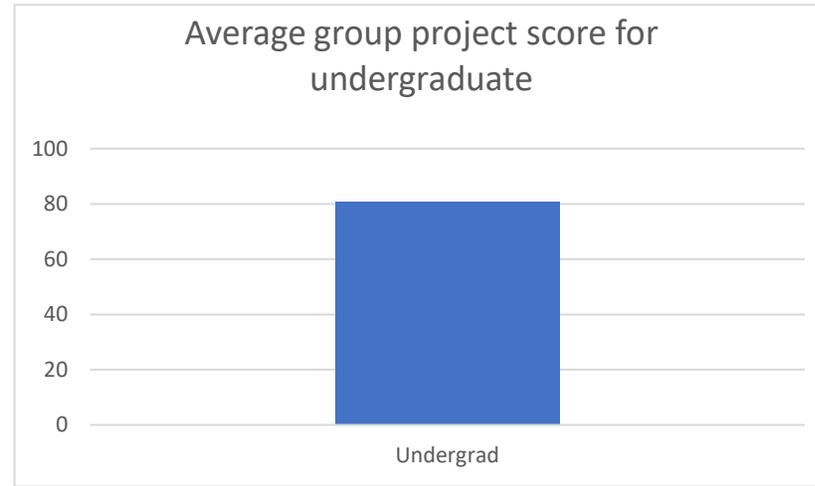Average group project score for undergraduate

Fig.1. Raw data and visualization related to inquiry #1.

What is the average group project score differences between F2F and online undergrad students?

Level	Modality	Score	Level	Modality	Score	Difference in average
Undergrad	F2F	88	Undergrad	Online	92	
Undergrad	F2F	75	Undergrad	Online	74	
Undergrad	F2F	82	Undergrad	Online	76	
Undergrad	F2F	78	Undergrad	Online	78	
Undergrad	F2F	85	Undergrad	Online	90	
Undergrad	F2F	88	Undergrad	Online	90	
Undergrad	F2F	80	Undergrad	Online	77	
Undergrad	F2F	86	Undergrad	Online	84	
Average F2F		82.75	Average Online		82.625	0.125

Fig 2. Raw data related to inquiry #2.

What is the average data collection plan score for all undergrad students?

Level	Method	Score
Undergrad	Data collection plan	92
Undergrad	Data collection plan	88
Undergrad	Data collection plan	74
Undergrad	Data collection plan	90
Undergrad	Data collection plan	85
Undergrad	Data collection plan	88
Undergrad	Data collection plan	86.16666667

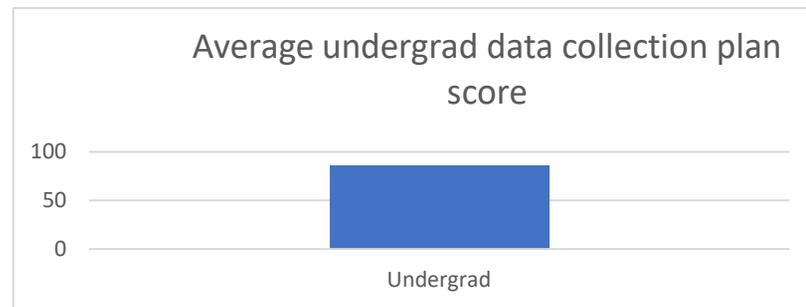Average undergrad data collection plan score

Fig 3. Raw data and visualization related to inquiry #3.

What is the average data collection plan score differences between FT and PT work schedule undergrad students?

Level	Method	Work Schedule	Score	Level	Method	Work Schedule	Score	Difference in average
Undergrad	Data collection plan	Full time	92	Undergrad	Data collection plan	Part time	88	
Undergrad	Data collection plan	Full time	85	Undergrad	Data collection plan	Part time	74	
				Undergrad	Data collection plan	Part time	90	
				Undergrad	Data collection plan	Part time	88	
Average		Average	88.5			Average	85	3.5

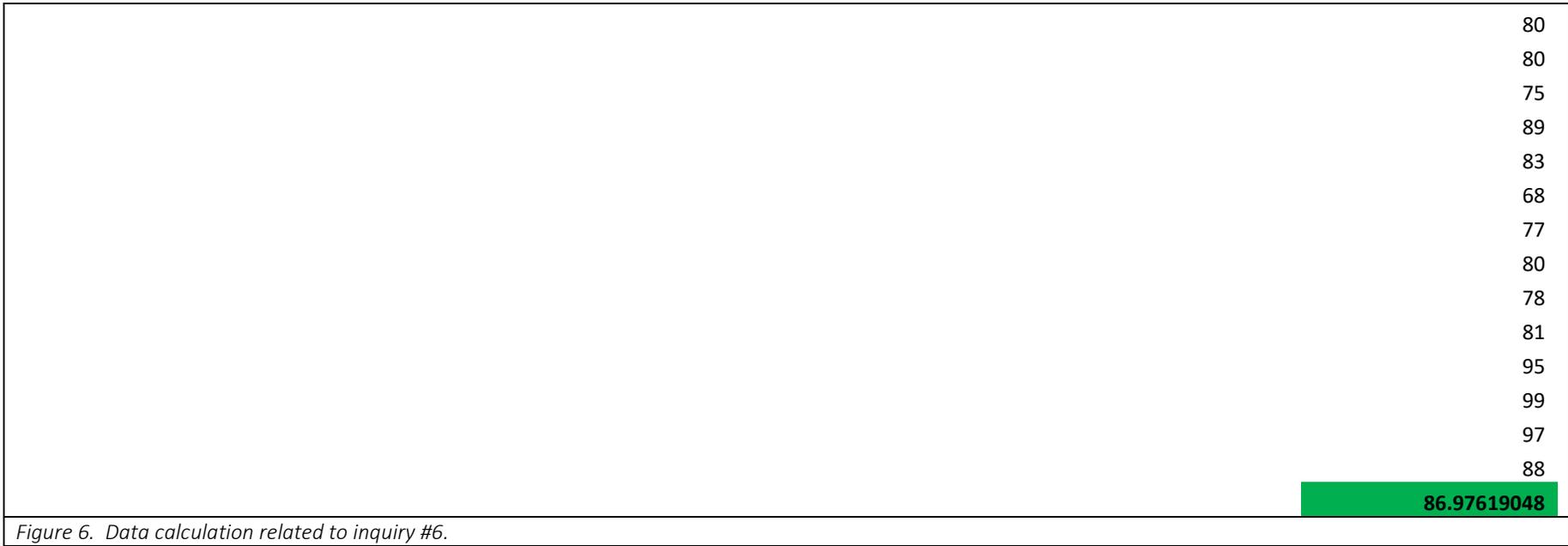*Figure 4. Data calculations related to inquiry #4.*

What is the average data collection plan score for all grad students who selected data Collection Plan as their first or second most important outcome?

Level	Most Important Outcome	Score	Level	2nd Most Important Outcome	Score	Total Average Score
Grad	data collection plan	96	Grad	Data collection plan	91	96
			Grad	Data collection plan	88	91
			Grad	Data collection plan	90	88
						90
	Average	96		Average	89.66666667	91.25

Figure 5. Data calculations related to inquiry #5.

What is the average data collection plan score for all grad students who did not select data collection plan as their first or second most important outcome?

Level	Most Important Outcome	Score	Level	2nd Most Important Outcome	Score	Total Average Score
Grad	Equitable evaluation design	91	Grad	Equitable evaluation design	96	91
Grad	Equitable evaluation design	96	Grad	Integrated view	96	96
Grad	Equitable evaluation design	99	Grad	Integrated view	99	99
Grad	Equitable evaluation design	100	Grad	Integrated view	100	100
Grad	Equitable evaluation design	92	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	92	92
Grad	Equitable evaluation design	87	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	87	87
Grad	Integrated view	80	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	80	80
Grad	Integrated view	80	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	80	80
Grad	Integrated view	75	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	75	75
Grad	Integrated view	89	Grad	Strategic alignment	89	89
Grad	Logic model design	88	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	83	88
Grad	Logic model design	83	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	68	83
Grad	Logic model design	68	Grad	Purposes and types of evaluation	77	68
Grad	Logic model design	77	Grad	Equitable evaluation design	80	77
Grad	Purposes and types of evaluations	80	Grad	Integrated view	78	80
Grad	Purposes and types of evaluations	78	Grad	Model collaboration	81	78
Grad	Purposes and types of evaluations	81	Grad	Equitable evaluation design	95	81
Grad	Strategic alignment	90	Grad	Equitable evaluation design	99	90
Grad	Strategic alignment	95	Grad	Logic model design	97	95
Grad	Strategic alignment	99	Grad	Logic model design	88	99
Grad	Strategic alignment	97				97
Grad	Strategic alignment	88				88
						96
	Average	86.95454545		Average	87	96
						99
						100
						92
						87

	80
	80
	75
	89
	83
	68
	77
	80
	78
	81
	95
	99
	97
	88
	86.97619048

Figure 6. Data calculation related to inquiry #6.

What do all students consider their top 3 learning conditions?

Collaborative learning	**9**
Active learning	**9**
Supportive learning environment	**16**
Time management	5

Figure 7. Qualitative Analysis of Column G "Best Learning Conditions" – top themes

Does this differ for grad and undergrad students?

Level	Categories		Categories	Categories	Categories
Undergrad	Collaborative learning		Active learning	Supportive learning environment	Time management
Undergrad	Collaborative learning		Active learning	Supportive learning environment	Time management
Undergrad	Collaborative learning			Supportive learning environment	Time management
Undergrad	Collaborative learning			Supportive learning environment	
				Supportive learning environment	
				Supportive learning environment	
				Supportive learning environment	

frequency	4	2	7	3

Grad	Categories	Categories	Categories	Categories
	Collaborative learning	Active learning	Supportive learning environment	Time management
	Collaborative learning	Active learning	Supportive learning environment	Time management
	Collaborative learning	Active learning	Supportive learning environment	
	Collaborative learning	Active learning	Supportive learning environment	
	Collaborative learning	Active learning	Supportive learning environment	
		Active learning	Supportive learning environment	
		Active learning	Supportive learning environment	
			Supportive learning environment	
			Supportive learning environment	

frequency	5	7	9	2

Somewhat differs. Undergrad top 3 conditions: Supportive learning environment, collaborative learning, and time management where as for graduates, the top 3 conditions are supportive learning environment, active learning, and collaborative learning.

Figure 8. Qualitative Analysis of Column G "Best Learning Conditions" – Grad vs undergrad theme comparison.

Does this differ for F2F and online students?

Modality	Categories		Modality	Categories	
F2F	Collaborative learning		Online	Collaborative learning	Somewhat changes. F2F top three: Collaborative learning, supportive learning environment and time management. Online top three: collaborative, active learning, and supportive learning environment.
F2F	Time management		Online	Supportive learning environment	
F2F	Active learning		Online	Active learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Active learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Supportive learning environment	
F2F	Time management		Online	Supportive learning environment	
F2F	Collaborative learning		Online	Active learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Supportive learning environment	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Supportive learning environment	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Active learning	
F2F	Collaborative learning		Online	Active learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Collaborative learning	
F2F	Time management		Online	Collaborative learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Active learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Time management	
F2F	Collaborative learning		Online	Time management	
F2F	Collaborative learning		Online	Collaborative learning	
F2F	Supportive learning environment		Online	Active learning	

F2F		Frequency	Online		Frequency
	Supportive learning environment			Supportive learning environment	
	Active learning				
	Collaborative Learning	5		Collaborative Learning	4
	Active Learning	2		Active Learning	7
	Supportive Learning environment	10		Supportive Learning environment	6
	Time management	3		Time management	2

Figure 9. Qualitative Analysis of Column G "Best Learning Conditions" – F2F vs Online theme comparison.

Data Management Code

|	
Category	**Effective learning strategies**
Sub category Code:	**Active learning** *Using materials as soon as possible* *Diagramming/visualizing concepts* *Practicing concepts multiple times*
Sub category Code:	**Collaborative Learning** *Group work and discussions* *peer feedback*
Sub category Code:	**Supportive Learning Environment** Positive learning environment Making mistakes Clear course materials and instructions Organized course materials Quiet working spaces Having regular contact with the instructor
Sub category Code:	**Time Management** *Taking time to absorb materials* *Time to do work and think it through*

Figure 10. Data management code for qualitative analysis.
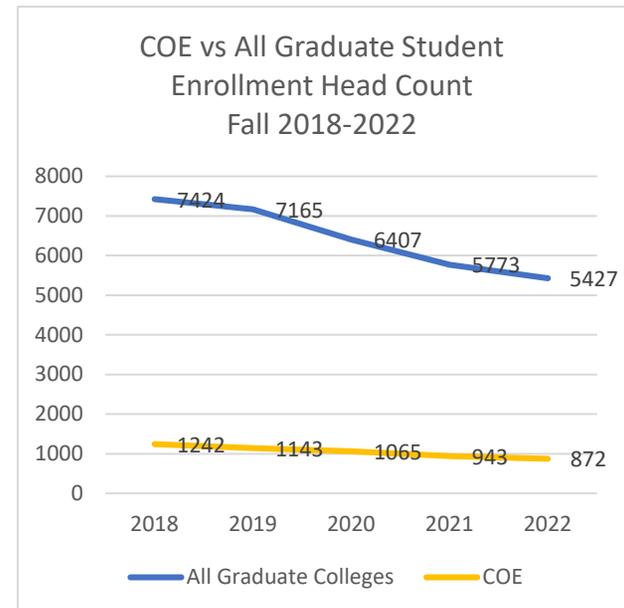
Summary of Results

Enrollment Trends

A visual inspection of the graph depicting the enrollment trend in the College of Education's graduate programs from 2018 to 2022 reveals a lower than expected enrollment.

Specifically, the current enrollment of COE graduate students of 210 students per academic year falls short of the desired target of 300 students by 90 students. This difference represents a significant enrollment deficit of 30% relative to the desired outcome.

COE Graduate Enrollment Volume 2018-2022

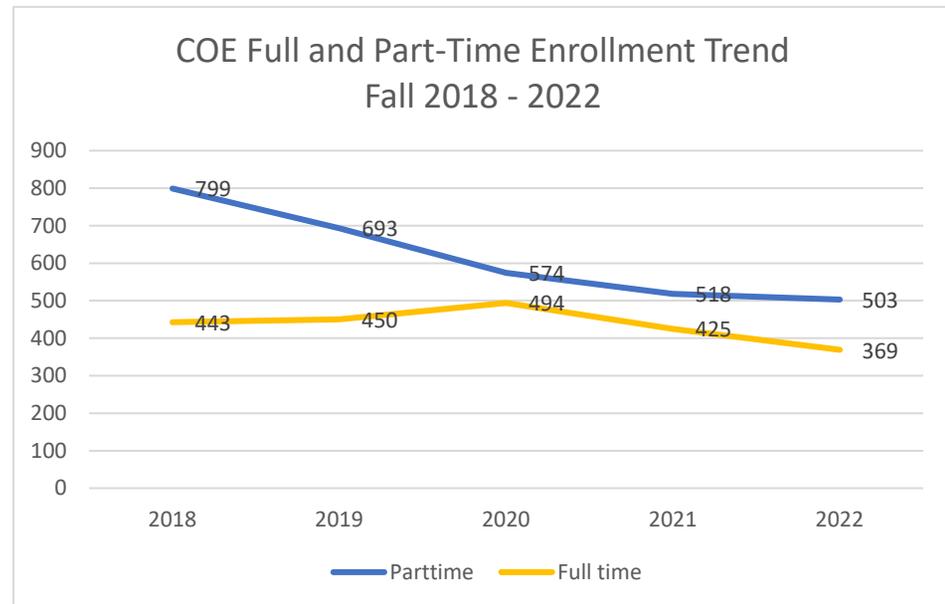| Year	Enrollment
2018	315
2019	280
2020	250
2021	254
2022	210
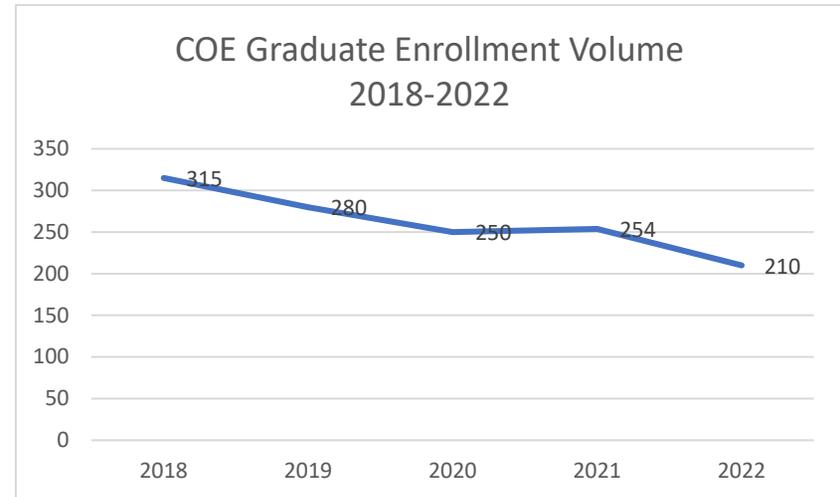
The findings from the data analysis indicate that the declining trend in enrollment is not limited to the College of Education alone, but is also evident in the overall enrollment of graduate programs. This observation is supported by the graph presented, which displays a decreasing trend in graduate program enrollment over the past five academic years.

COE vs All Graduate Student Enrollment Head Count Fall 2018-2022

| Year	All Graduate Colleges	COE
2018	7424	1242
2019	7165	1143
2020	6407	1065
2021	5773	943
2022	5427	872

Data Collection & Analysis

A mixed-methods research design was utilized in this study to investigate the enrollment trends in the graduate programs of the College of Education. The quantitative component of the study involved the collection and analysis of data from the university's Banner student management system, which provided information on the number of students enrolled in the programs over a four-year period from 2018 to 2022.

The results revealed a declining trend in part-time student enrollment in the College of Education over the four-year period, dropping from 799 students in 2018 to 503 students in 2022. In contrast, the full-time student enrollment pattern fluctuated over the years, with an initial enrollment of 443 in 2018 and a steady increase to 450 in 2019, reaching its peak in 2020 at 494. However, the full-time enrollment showed a sudden decrease to 425 in 2021 and the lowest enrollment in 2022 with 369 students.

COE Full and Part-Time Enrollment Trend
Fall 2018 - 2022

Parttime: 2018: 799, 2019: 693, 2020: 574, 2021: 518, 2022: 503
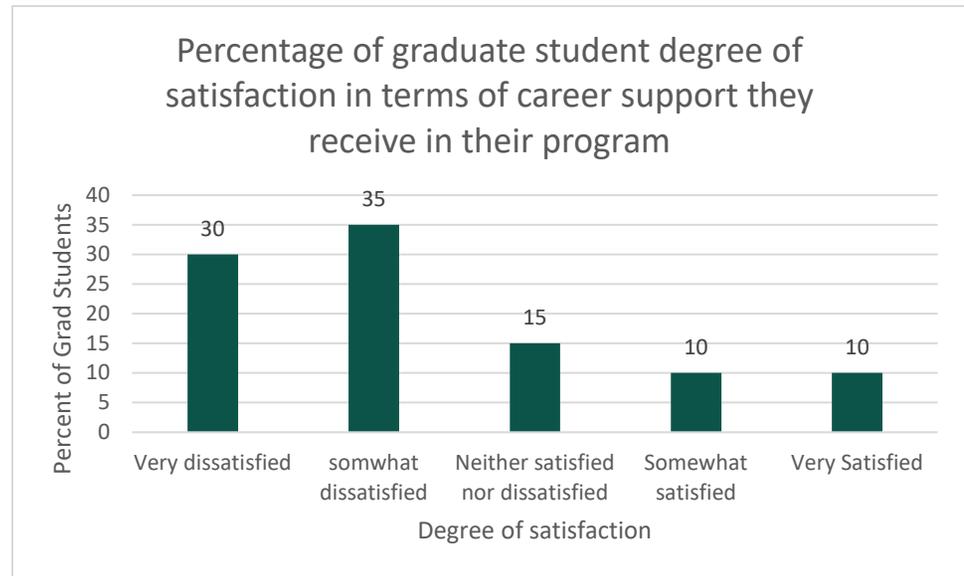Full time: 2018: 443, 2019: 450, 2020: 494, 2021: 425, 2022: 369

Sample consisted of graduate students and alumni enrolled in various programs. Participants were asked to respond to open-ended questions and Likert-scale items that aimed to assess their sense of belonging, overall satisfaction with the program, and satisfaction with the support they received or are currently receiving in their program.
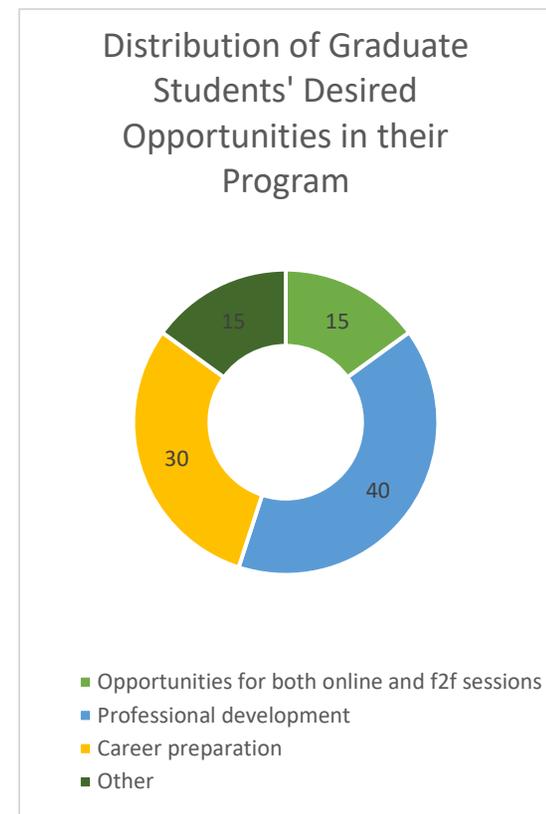
Statistical analysis of the data collected revealed that the majority of participants, approximately 55%, reported not feeling a sense of belonging or connectedness to their graduate program. Specifically, only 5% of participants strongly agreed that they felt a sense of belonging in their program, while 30% somewhat agreed, 35% disagreed, and 25% strongly disagreed.

Percentage of graduate student degree satisfaction in regards to feeling a sense of belonging in their current graduate program
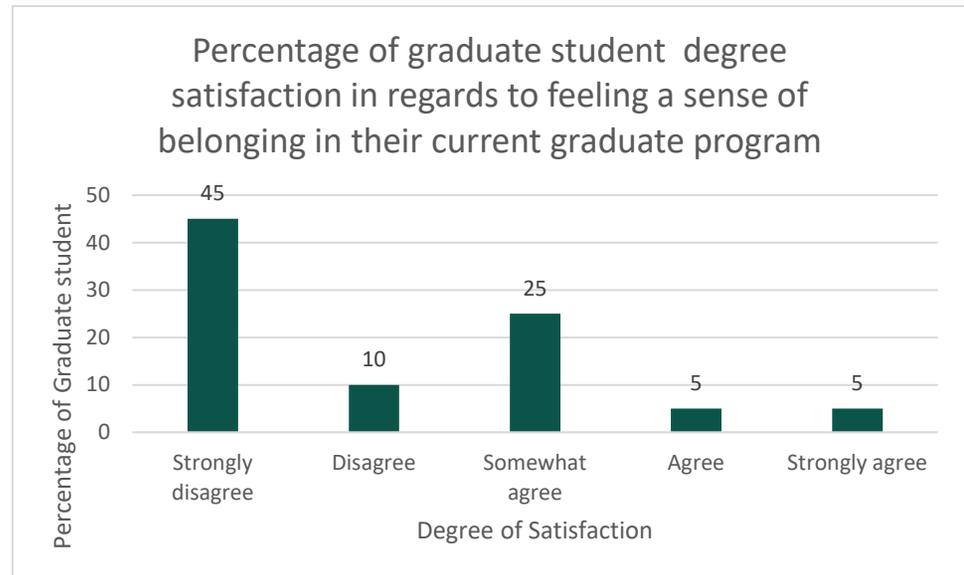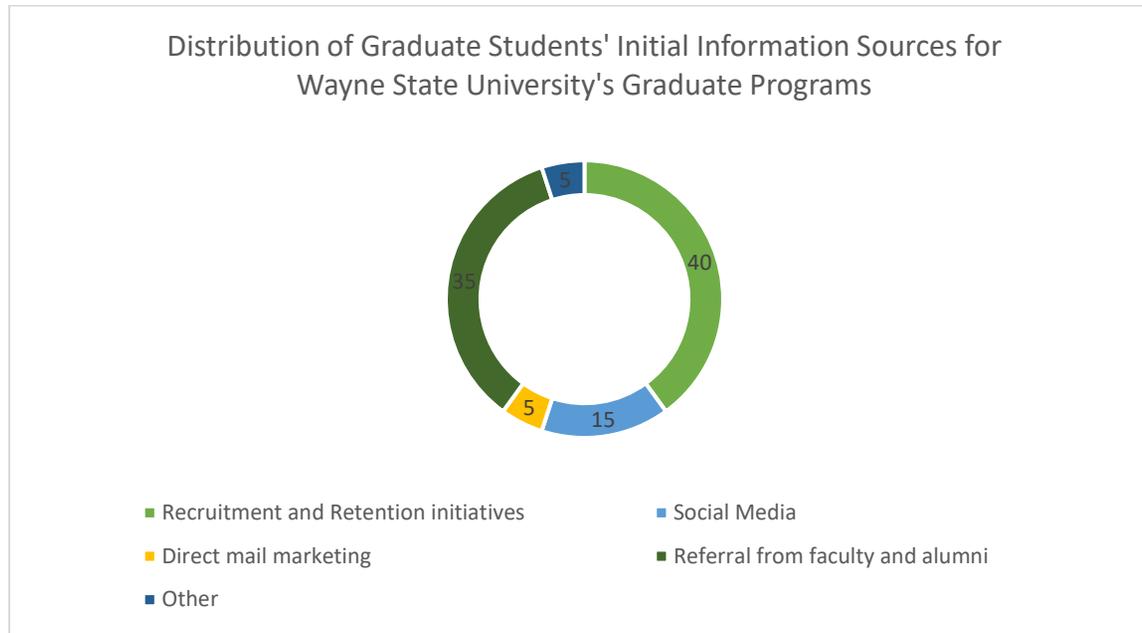
The surveys also aimed to identify the students' perceived deficiencies in the program and the opportunities they sought to find in their program. Quantitative data was collected to investigate graduate students' satisfaction with the career support they received in their program. Analysis of the data revealed that 30% of students reported being very dissatisfied with the support they received, while 35% were somewhat dissatisfied. Additionally, 15% of students reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 10% were somewhat satisfied and 10% were very satisfied with the career support provided by their program. These findings suggest 65% of students were overall dissatisfied by the lack of support they receive in their program.

Percentage of graduate student degree of satisfaction in terms of career support they receive in their program

Percent of Grad Students

Very dissatisfied	30
somwhat dissatisfied	35
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15
Somewhat satisfied	10
Very Satisfied	10

Degree of satisfaction

Data was collected to determine the opportunities that graduate students were seeking in their current program. After collecting and analyzing the data, it was found that students sought a variety of opportunities, with the top three being identified as follows: 40% of students sought professional development opportunities, 30% sought support in career preparation opportunities, and 15% sought the availability of both online and face-to-face classes for their courses. An additional 15% of students listed other opportunities that they were seeking. These findings suggest that graduate students prioritize professional development and career support opportunities within their programs.

Distribution of Graduate Students' Desired Opportunities in their Program

- Opportunities for both online and f2f sessions
- Professional development
- Career preparation
- Other

Data were also collected to identify various ways in which current graduate students learned about the Graduate School's programs. Based on the responses gathered, the majority of students (40%) were enrolled through recruitment and retention initiatives, while 35% learned about the programs through word-of-mouth from faculty or alumni. Only 15% of students were recruited through social media, while a mere 5% were recruited through direct mail marketing. These findings suggest that recruitment and retention initiatives, as well as word-of-mouth referrals, remain the most effective methods for reaching potential graduate students, while social media and direct mail marketing have limited impact.

Distribution of Graduate Students' Initial Information Sources for Wayne State University's Graduate Programs

- ■ Recruitment and Retention initiatives
- ■ Social Media
- ■ Direct mail marketing
- ■ Referral from faculty and alumni
- ■ Other

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of our data, it can be concluded that the Graduate School's recruitment and retention initiatives have not been effective in increasing enrollment in graduate programs or achieving the enrollment targets outlined in the University's strategic plan. Our analysis revealed a higher level of dissatisfaction among graduate students with their current program, suggesting that the program's inability to meet their needs may be contributing to the declining enrollments.

Recommendations - What's Next?

To address this issue, the Graduate School may consider implementing the following strategies:

- Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the specific needs of graduate students and tailoring recruitment and retention initiatives to address those needs.

- Developing a targeted marketing and outreach plan that includes both traditional and digital channels to reach a wider audience of potential graduate students.

- Improving the quality and accessibility of academic and career support services to better meet the needs of graduate students.

- Increasing collaboration between faculty, administrators, and graduate students to create a more supportive and learning environment.

By implementing these strategies, the Graduate School can better meet the needs of current and potential graduate students and improve enrollment in graduate programs.