The Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate: Helping MSU Graduate Education Set the Pace

Since the summer of 2003, five units at MSU—Division of Science and Math Education, Department of Teacher Education, Department of English, Department of History, and Neurosciences Program—have been involved in the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate (CID). The CID is a five-year selective research program designed to help American universities evaluate the quality and purpose of their doctoral programs. Michigan State University’s involvement in the CID signals a renewed commitment by it and other national universities to innovation and development in doctoral education in the face of important global challenges.

Origins of the CID

The CID represents a national cooperative effort among research universities to redress the state of doctoral studies in the U.S. academy. First proposed in 2001, the CID is one of several high-profile responses by the Carnegie Foundation to a series of studies and reports over the last decade that suggest that doctoral training has not kept pace with the two-fold challenge of a rapidly changing world society, on the one hand, and a dynamic, competitive, and often confusing profession, on the other. Based in Menlo Park, CA, the CID is designed to put like disciplines and programs in dialogue with each other. More chances for dialogue increase the possibility for innovative policies in a volatile and exciting profession.

George Walker and Chris Golde, Senior Scholars at the Carnegie Foundation and facilitators of the CID, found in a series of studies “that Ph.D.’s are often ill-prepared to function effectively in the settings where they find themselves working, whether within the academy or outside it.” And they forecast that “in many disciplines the intellectual and research character of professional work will continue to experience dramatic change. The time is ripe to propose and experiment with enriched forms of doctoral education.”

For the CID, these questions represent a thorough-going reevaluation of the foundations of doctoral education. While each discipline at MSU faces its own set of administrative and academic concerns, together they share a commitment to defining questions of purpose and opportunity in the context of graduate study. What the CID does is to provide participants with a communication platform that encourages them to conceptualize their educational missions in broader institutional environments, beyond the familiar confines of the home department. The CID’s goal is to help doctoral education keep pace with evolving, highly competitive academic, public, and commercial environments. Enhanced opportunities for intra- and inter-departmental communication around the wide range of issues affecting graduate student training is central to the CID’s mission and one of the keys to a healthy competitive atmosphere among schools and other enterprises.

MSU and the CID

After a lengthy application process, five departments from MSU were accepted into the CID in 2003. The Departments of History and English, called “allies” in the CID structure, and Neuroscience, Math Education, and Teacher Education, called “partners,” form the core of MSU’s participation. By the summer of 2003, participants were gathering in Menlo Park to take on a comprehensive agenda. Among the convention’s goals were the following: sharing ideas about what works well and plans for the future; speculating on various refinements that might take place in departments; re-affirming commitment to the mission of the CID; beginning development of future collaborative research, grant proposals, and other forms of networking. For its part, the CID intended to “turn a scholarly eye to the discipline- and department-based deliberations and changes, and understand the unique character of each discipline and department.” (See the “Initial Report of the Summer 2003 Convenings” - http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/CID/CID_Convening_Synthesis_Report03.pdf)

The CID is successful to the extent that allies and partners learn to identify their specific needs and goals as they engage other programs and departments from leading universities in the U.S. CID begins from a disciplinary perspective. This bottom-up structure affirms what departments and disciplines already do well but also challenges them to open themselves to other programs in the ongoing effort to develop and improve. The CID shies away from processes that would attempt to foist predetermined policies on allies and partners, dictating what changes ought to take place. Without a proactive, creative contribution by participating disciplines, the CID cannot flourish.

1 For more information, see the CID website: http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/CID/resources.htm. For a comprehensive bibliography of recent studies, see “Overview of Doctoral Education Studies and Reports: 1990 – present.”

Fall 2004, The Graduate School • 11
The CID membership list boasts the names of some of the best public and private universities in the country; besides MSU, the list includes University of Michigan, University of Chicago, Ohio State University, University of Wisconsin, University of Colorado, and others. The CID solicits those disciplines and departments that already have high-profile programs, sets them in dialogue with one another, and publishes its results for a broader dissemination and application among all universities.

A common result of such a method is that scholars come away with a clearer idea of what policy changes might benefit their home programs, even when those programs are already recognized for excellence. MSU’s Dr. Robert Floden (Teacher Education) asks, for example, if the Department of Teacher Education already has a strong national reputation, “why change?” Floden cites four areas where the CID can assist Teacher Ed: in the details of comprehensive examinations, the streamlining of the admissions process, surveying recent graduates, and curriculum development in the doctoral program. The CID gives Floden and his colleagues the opportunity to formally engage other administrators on these and other institutional policies. The hope is that through on-going dialogue, administrators can develop their graduate programs to meet the institutional and social demands of the 21st century.

THE MATTER OF STEWARDSHIP

The CID represents a happily agonistic space where scholars and administrators willingly struggle over the future of higher education. Which is to say that participants decide, to some degree, what they want future scholars and administrators in their fields to look like. Part of the CID’s goal is to lay the intellectual and institutional groundwork that enables young Ph.D.’s to step into the academic fold with a clear sense of how they can best contribute to a national and international educational mission. This begins to get at the matter of stewardship.

Of stewardship, Golde and Walker write: “we believe the answer [to the question of purpose] is to educate and prepare those to whom we can entrust the vigor, quality, and integrity of the field.” “Such a leader,” they continue, “has developed the habits of mind and ability to do three things well: creatively generate new knowledge, critically conserve valuable and useful ideas, and responsibly transform those understandings through writing, teaching, and application.”

Stewardship, according to Golde and Walker, is comprised of three elements: generation, conservation, and transformation. Approaching the Ph.D. as essentially “a research degree,” they question whether Ph.D. programs often “deliberately consider what experiences teach students to become excellent researchers.” If being an excellent researcher means possessing the skills to “assess, critique, and defend knowledge claims,” Golde and Walker suggest that a more intentional approach in developing these skills will be necessary to produce the kind of steward-scholar they envisage.

The second element, conservation, names that activity in which scholars learn to separate the wheat from the chaff in the history of their discipline—what knowledge to keep, what to reject; how, in Golde and Walker’s words, to maintain “the continuity, stability, and vitality of the field.” Additionally, conservation requires that scholars understand the place and role of their discipline vis-à-vis all of the other disciplines in the university.

The third element, transformation, implies that scholars know how to teach “in the broadest sense of the word,” that is effectively communicate to a wide range of audiences the value of their knowledge. This, in turn, implies that scholars are familiar with those contexts in which their knowledge takes on value. Finally, transformation means that scholars know “how to communicate across traditional disciplinary boundaries.”

George Walker has this to say about the role of the steward in the CID mission: “The steward was never the owner of the home. The steward was the chief servant. Some thought that idea was too subaltern. However, we’re not saying that someone is beneath someone else but that everyone is called by someone else too subaltern. However, we’re not saying that someone is beneath someone else but that everyone is called by something higher—the discipline itself. Once you begin thinking about the whole process, it really becomes about changing attitudes. The graduate students of the morning are the faculty members of the afternoon. And faculty will inevitably be affected through interaction with graduate students. It’s this very type of discussion that we wanted to provoke.”

George Walker, Senior Scholar
Carnegie Foundation

2 See “Preparing Stewards of the Discipline” at the CID website.
graduate students. This is one of the great hopes of the CID. They sum up the institutional outcome of successful stewardship with the acronym PART:

A high quality doctoral program is characterized by being **Purposeful** (clearly directed at well understood outcomes), **Assessed** (built-in strategies for learning about how well the program is doing), the result of **Reflection**, and **Transparent** to the various groups involved in the endeavor.3

Faculty and administrators connected to the CID project express nothing but optimism about its future. Everyone this reporter spoke with about the CID expressed the utmost confidence that it would generate positive policy results for the departments and disciplines involved. And by all accounts, the CID represents a timely opportunity to engage the worlds in which we live and doctoral education’s role in those worlds.

Jim Gallagher (Teacher Education), for example, who was part of a recent National Science Foundation study on leadership development in math and science education, fears that “future science educators are not being prepared to address…important challenges that educators of science teachers and science teachers themselves face.” “To me,” says Gallagher, “this represents a major deficiency that can be addressed by CID, and because MSU faculty members in the Department of Teacher Education are on the forefront in teaching science…to all students, we are in a position to aid in the advance of doctoral education of new leaders for science education.”

Professor of English, Dr. Judith Stoddart, The Graduate School’s point person for CID programs, says that the CID encourages departments to ask “How can we be much more reflective about what we do” in the kind of training that is offered to graduate students? “Any opportunity to think more creatively about what you do and to give it a national focus is important,” Stoddart says.

3 See “CID Initial Report” at the CID website.

---

**Graduate School Development Activities**

**Barbara Ball-McClure**  
Director of Development  
The Graduate School

The dedication of the John A. Hannah statue in front of the Administration Building took place on September 17th as one of the kick-off events for the MSU Sesquicentennial. Dr. Hannah brought growth to the campus in many ways, including the acquisition of land, constructing new buildings, and a commitment to an international dimension. Now, the Campaign for MSU is focusing on building endowments to support undergraduate scholarships, faculty, programs, and, of course, graduate fellowships.

All of you understand the importance of attracting high caliber graduate students to Michigan State University, and the one important way to do this is with generous fellowships. As The Honorable Dee Cook, one of the members of the MSU Board of Trustees recently said, “Stability for MSU equals endowment”. No matter what happens with outside funding in the future, we can rely on endowments to support students, faculty, and programs years into the future.

For more information about giving to the Campaign for MSU and endowment at Michigan State University, please contact, Barbara Ball-McClure, Director of Development for The Graduate School at 1-800-232-4MSU, ext. 220 or ballmccl@msu.edu, or write me at:

**The Graduate School Development Office**  
110 Linton Hall  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1044
Career Selection and Professional Skill Development
A New Workshop Series

The Graduate School (TGS) at Michigan State University (MSU) has a history of sponsoring workshop programs for its 8,400 graduate and graduate-professional students to enhance their research and teaching experiences both while they are at MSU and as they move into professional positions. Currently, programs offered include: Responsible Conduct of Research, Conflict Resolution, The Teaching Assistant Program, and the Dissertation/Thesis Completion Workshops. While all of these programs are in high demand annually, they are not able to cover the breadth of topics that students require for career and professional development. Because of these needs, TGS is sponsoring a new workshop series on Career Selection and Professional Skill Development.

The goal of this workshop series is to help students develop a better understanding of the skills and decision-making needed to help them meet their career and professional objectives. Throughout this workshop series students will interact with successful, nationally known professionals in academia, industry, state and federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations to gain a greater understanding of what it will take to enable them to meet their respective career and professional objectives. This workshop series is primarily for doctoral students as they transition into seeking professional careers. Each workshop is a full day in length to facilitate discussion among students and workshop panel members, and to provide hands on skill sessions. Morning sessions are organized as panel discussions while students spend afternoons in concurrent breakout sessions getting applied advice on specific issues associated with their professional development.

The first of the four workshops was held on September 25th and was on Building and Maintaining Mentoring Relationships: Building a Network for Professional Development. The program attracted graduate students from 37 departments and addressed topics such as: identifying individual learning styles, meeting diverse student needs, and being a mentor. Drs. John Dirkx, Matt Helm, Ken Poff, Yevonne Smith, Judith Stoddart, and Dozier Thornton helped make the workshop a success.

Please mark your calendars for the following workshops.

October 30, 2004
Securing Academic Positions at Two- and Four-Year Institutions

Featured Presenters
Dr. Carol Hurlburt (Chair, Science Department, Lansing Community College)
Dr. Karen Klomparens (Dean, TGS, MSU)
Dr. Michael Stob (Dean, Calvin College)
Dr. Bill Wiener (Dean, The Graduate College, Western Michigan University)

What type of academic position would you like to have after completing your degree? Do you want to teach, do research, develop and conduct outreach programs, or a little of each? What kinds of institutions best fit your interests? What are the expectations for applications at different kinds of institutions, and what are the potential career trajectories?

This workshop will focus on academic cultures at a variety of institutions: community colleges, liberal art colleges, colleges with religious affiliations, universities with historically specialized missions, and research extensive universities. What are the expectations at these institutions, from the job interview to the tenure process? Panel members in the morning session will include administrators and faculty members from a variety of institutions who will talk about the process of applying and interviewing for academic positions, expectations for new faculty, and advancement opportunities and the tenure and promotion process.

Afternoon breakout sessions will focus on information related to specific disciplines. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to decipher job ads and to observe mock interviews of faculty candidates for positions in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences at two- and four-year institutions. Interviewers will be faculty from a variety of institutions, who will explain which candidate “got the job,” and why. Following the interviews, participants will have opportunities to interact with the interview panels to discuss the strengths of candidates, what to do and what not to do in various types of interviews, and what to do to make your application more competitive.
**April 9, 2005**

**Translating Academic Success into Careers in Agencies, Industry, and Academia**

**FEATURED PRESENTERS**

- Dr. Bill Holland (attendance pending)
- Ms. Rebecca Humphries (Director, Michigan Department of Natural Resources)
- Dr. Patty Payette (Education Program Coordinator, Provost’s Office, MSU)

**AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSION:**

- Developing Your Curriculum Vitae, Resumes, and Interviewing Skills for Success

You have worked for years to learn the “tricks of the trade” of your discipline and the academy. How will those skills and your education help you negotiate jobs in government, industry or in administrative positions inside the university? What translates well, and what will you have to adapt to new settings? This workshop is designed primarily for doctoral students who are considering traveling beyond the tenure-track or post-doc route. Whether you are beginning your degree or about to complete it, what do you need to know before you send out a CV?

Three panelists in the morning who have negotiated these transitions will tell you what your professors often don’t know and can’t answer. From a range of backgrounds (humanities, social, and natural sciences), they will talk about their career moves, and offer practical advice and strategies on learning a new culture and set of assumptions. Topics will include how to effectively present what you do know, how to identify what you don’t know, how to present yourself in a resume and an interview, and how to adjust to expectations in different settings. The part of the workshop will include small group discussion and dialogue with the panelists.

The afternoon session will include an opportunity for workshop participants to interact with employers from industry and agencies on “tricks of the trade” in developing curriculum vitae, resumes, and building your interviewing skills to get the job you want.

**Summer 2005**

**Where to Look for Nontraditional Federal Jobs and How to Land Them**

**FEATURED PRESENTERS AND WORKSHOP DATE**

To Be Announced

Now that you are about to graduate, what would you like to do with your degree? You don’t want to teach in a university or be a researcher, have you thought about positions in federal agencies? Panel members who have been or are currently employed by such agencies such as the National Science Foundation, Center for Disease Control, Department of Defense, and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will discuss with participants how to find these jobs, expectations required, how the skills you’ve developed completing a graduate degree will prepare you for employment in these agencies, and how employment in federal agencies may make you more competitive for future job opportunities.

**Workshop Registration:**

The Graduate School
gadwrsp@msu.edu

For further information on this workshop series, please contact one of the following:

- Dr. Rique Campa
  The Graduate School
  Faculty-in-Residence
campa@msu.edu

- Dr. Judith Stoddart
  The Graduate School
  Fellowships Coordinator
  stoddart@msu.edu
MISSION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
To serve as an advocate for graduate education to the University and beyond and to enhance the quality of graduate education at MSU in all its diverse dimensions

The Graduate Post
Michigan State University
118 Linton Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824-1044