



Council of Graduate Schools

**Statement
on the Final Report of the
Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education
September 26, 2006**

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) commends the Commission for convening a national dialogue on higher education and focusing on the central role higher education must continue to play in the nation's future. Our sustained economic success and national security rest on having the best system of higher education in the world. Graduate education, while not a focus of the Commission's final report, has been a key driver in our nation's prosperity.

CGS specifically supports the Commission's sixth recommendation to ensure the capacity of our universities to achieve global leadership in key strategic areas such as science, engineering, medicine, and other knowledge-intensive professions. While this capacity is critical to maintaining U.S. competitiveness in the 21st century global economy, the resources to do so were not addressed in the Commission's report.

America's leadership in research and innovation has been integral to the nation's economic success and national security, as a number of national reports have recently documented. Leadership in graduate education is the essential ingredient in the country's leadership in research; for this reason, a renewed federal commitment to and investment in graduate education must be a part of any U.S. competitiveness strategy.

We concur with the Commission in urging the federal government to address immigration policies that would provide an expedited pathway for international students to receive an employer-sponsored green card to stay in the U.S. to work after completing their degree. Such policies would complement U.S. graduate schools' efforts to continue attracting the best and brightest students from around the world, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, while simultaneously encouraging more domestic students to pursue graduate degrees in these fields.

The Commission's fourth recommendation addresses the issue of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula and technology to improve learning. U.S. graduate schools are innovating and establishing new programs to meet the challenges of the global economy. Two noteworthy initiatives led by CGS are the Professional Science Master's (PSM) degree and the Ph.D. Completion Project.

We look forward to working with the Commission and other concerned parties on evaluating and implementing the Commission's recommendations.

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of 470 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. CGS member institutions award more than 90% of the doctoral degrees and over 75% of the master's degrees in the U.S. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

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