



# Dean Dialogue: How Can Graduate Deans and CGS Provide Leadership for Professional Doctorates?

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*Key Points from*  
**CGS Task Force Report on the  
Professional Doctorate**  
*Chaired by Carol Lynch and Clark Hulse*  
*Published in 2007*

**This task force was formed in 2005 to consider the role and impact of professional doctorates on graduate schools or programs and the role of Graduate Deans in their management**



## Task Force - Areas of Consensus

- The Ph.D. and the professional doctorate are different, though there is less agreement on what that difference is.
- There is emerging agreement (via IPEDS and NCES) on different subsets within the broad category of professional doctorates.
- Professional doctorates need definition as a category, including further discussion of core characteristics and reasonable ranges of variation.



## Task Force - Areas of Consensus

- There is a need for explicit criteria for accreditation and review of professional doctorates, including national standards to give direction to professional associations.
- Disciplinary accreditation and review must be paired with strong institutional review to ensure that programs meet the standards, resources and mission of a specific institution.
- Standards of excellence cannot be mechanically defined, e.g., though numbers of credit hours.



## Task Force - Areas of Consensus

- Work done for one degree should not be applicable towards a second degree.



## *Non-productive behaviors or practices*

- **Accrediting associations should not tell institutions that to be accredited, they must grant a doctorate of ???.**
- **Their role is to set standards for degrees and it is the institutions role to determine whether those standards meet its own standards and goals and whether it wishes to offer such a degree.**



## *Non-productive behaviors or practices*

- **Professional departments and programs should not propose programs that they cannot defend first and foremost on the basis of quality and contribution to society**



## *Non-productive behaviors or practices*

- **Departments, graduate deans, universities and accrediting associations should all challenge and reject “necessity” arguments .**
- **Students will go elsewhere where they have it.**
- **Because the accrediting assn said we have to.**
- **No full institutional review because those Ph.D.s just won’t understand.....**



## Non-productive behaviors or practices

- Graduate colleges should not use a one-size-fits-all standard that simply asks why a professional doctorate is not just like a Ph.D.



## Productive behaviors

All Parties should develop and implement standards for programs and specific programs based on fundamental questions

**What need does this program serve?**

**Does it advance the well-being of society (and not just the holders of the degree) ?**



## Productive behaviors

**Will it lead to the transformation of practice?**

**Does it represent an equivalent excellence to what we expect from Ph.D. programs?**

**Do our professional doctoral programs meet the same high level of scrutiny that we set for of Ph.D. programs?**



## On-line and Hybrid Degrees

Professional doctoral programs are particularly adaptable to full or partial online delivery. The clientele for the professional doctorate often consists of practicing professionals in a discipline who are seeking to move up in their field.

Often, these individuals are place-bound or time bound or both.



## On-line and Hybrid Degrees

- Frequently, these are working professionals and required clinical experiences may occur at off campus sites and under the supervision of non-traditional faculty. This may present additional challenges and issues.



## Licensing and Combined Degrees

- Because in many cases the Ph.D. does not lead to licensing, there is concern in a number of these disciplines that if the clinical or professional doctorate is recognized as equivalent to the Ph.D. there may be a decrease in the number of students who are trained and competent in research and that progress in the discipline may suffer.



## Licensing and Combined Degrees

- This had led to some programs (example, audiology) in which the two degree programs are offered as a dual or coordinated degree program which begins with the clinical doctorate and an abbreviated research activity, followed by a research based Ph.D. A number of these programs are being piloted.