A Message from the Dean

H. Dele Davies, MD, MS, MHCM
Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Dean, Graduate Studies

The past year has been an excellent and productive one for our graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty and staff. Our students and fellows continue to be productive in their research, with several publishing in numerous high-quality, peer-reviewed journals, successfully competing for external awards and serving on various university, regional and national committees.

Several new initiatives were introduced by our Office of Graduate Studies to continue to enhance the quality of the programs we offer and to ensure our graduates and postdoctoral fellows have the best possible training to compete for excellent jobs and positions after they leave us.

The increasing demand by employers in both academic and nonacademic settings for graduates with training in a variety of skill sets beyond success in the laboratory or research field has led to our introducing greater opportunities for these transferable skills to be taught to our students.

While the totality of the accomplishments cannot be fully compiled, this report represents a summary of our excellent programs and accomplishments of our staff, students and faculty during the 2013 – 2014 academic year. I hope you enjoy reading about the exciting activities that have taken place in Graduate Studies.
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Leadership

H. Dele Davies, MD, MS, MHCM
Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Dean, Graduate Studies

James B. Turpen, PhD
Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Executive Associate Dean, Graduate Studies

Jialin Zheng, MD
Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Associate Dean, International Programs, Graduate Studies

Iqbal Ahmad, PhD
Associate Dean, Graduate Studies
Director, Postdoctoral Education & Research

Pamela K. Carmines, PhD
Assistant Dean, Engagement & Assessment, Graduate Studies

Terri A. Vadovski
Director, Graduate Studies
Graduate Council Members and Staff

**Graduate Council Members**
The Graduate Council is comprised of graduate program directors and members of the Graduate Studies staff. The Council, in conjunction with the Dean, is responsible for Graduate College activities at UNMC.

Chandran Achutan, PhD, Environmental Health, Occupational Health & Toxicology
Lorena Baccaglini, PhD, DDS, Epidemiology
Ann Berger, PhD, APRN, Nursing — University of Nebraska Executive Graduate Council Representative
Keshore Bidasee, PhD, Pharmacology and Experimental Neuroscience
Laura D. Bilek, PhD, PT, Medical Sciences Interdepartmental Area
Steve Caplan, PhD, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Pamela K. Carmines, PhD, Cellular & Integrative Physiology — University of Nebraska Executive Graduate Council Representative
H. Dele Davies, MD, MS, MHCM, Office of Graduate Studies
Karen A. Gould, PhD, Genetics, Cell Biology & Anatomy
Duy Min Ha, Graduate Student Association President
Gleb Haynatzki, PhD, DSc, Biostatistics
Jim McClay, MD, Biomedical Informatics
Daniel Monaghan, PhD, Biomedical Research Training Program
David Oupicky, PhD, Pharmaceutical Sciences
Alice M. Schumaker, PhD, Public Health
Rakesh K. Singh, PhD, Pathology & Microbiology
Shelley D. Smith, PhD, MD/PhD Program
Joyce Solheim, PhD, Cancer Research
Ghada Soliman, MD, PhD, Health Promotion & Disease Prevention Research
James P. Stimpson, PhD, Health Services Research, Administration, & Policy
Heather Talbott, Graduate Student Association President
James B. Turpen, PhD, Office of Graduate Studies
Shinobu Watanabe-Galloway, PhD, Epidemiology
Fernando A. Wilson, PhD, Health Services Research, Administration, & Policy

**Graduate Studies Office Staff**
Cody Phillips, Associate
Vanessa Wilcox, Admissions Associate
**Mission**

The mission of the Graduate Studies programs is to provide, promote and enhance the highest quality graduate education in health sciences at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.
### Degree Granting Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>PhD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry &amp; Molecular Biology</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biomedical Informatics</td>
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<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biostatistics</td>
<td></td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Research</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular &amp; Integrative Physiology</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Health, Occupational Health &amp; Toxicology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Genetics, Cell Biology &amp; Anatomy</td>
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<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Promotion &amp; Disease Prevention Research</td>
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<td>Health Services Research, Administration &amp; Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathology &amp; Microbiology</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
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<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacology &amp; Experimental Neuroscience</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Specialized Admission Programs

- Asia Pacific Rim Development Program
- Biomedical Research Training Program
The 2013 – 2014 academic year saw continuous growth in our Graduate Studies programs with a 5.4% increase in the total number of students, and a total fall enrollment of over 500 individuals. Most of the increase was due to the introduction of a new Master’s program in Clinical Anatomy in the Department of Genetics, Cell Biology & Anatomy and a new PhD program in Biomedical Informatics. The year also saw a record number of graduating PhD students.
Graduate Studies Enrollment

FACT:
Total fall enrollment equaled 502 students.

Increase in PhD Graduates

FACT:
We reached a record high of 52 graduating PhD students.
Graduate Student Enrollment by Individual Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>MS 2013</th>
<th>MS 2014</th>
<th>PhD 2013</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cellular &amp; Integrative Physiology</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Preparedness</td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Health, Occupational Health &amp; Toxicology</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
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<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Promotion &amp; Disease Prevention Research</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Services Research, Administration &amp; Policy</td>
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<td>–</td>
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<td>Nursing</td>
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<td>–</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathology &amp; Microbiology</td>
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<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
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<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacology &amp; Experimental Neuroscience</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FACT:**
In the past year, we appointed 32 new graduate faculty.
Number of Postdoctoral Scholars

While the number of postdoctoral fellows and research associates declined slightly during the 2013 – 2014 academic year, they enjoyed excellent programmatic support. In addition to the training and productivity in mentors’ laboratories and research fields, the Office of Postdoctoral Studies offered numerous career development opportunities including seminar series on teaching, grant writing, networking, responsible conduct in research, Sci-val funding search, UNMC’s designation as a Department of Defense University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) and steps to successful presentations.

Number of Postdoctoral Scholars by Residence

FACT:
International students represent the majority of postdoctoral scholars.
Degree-Seeking UNMC Chinese Scholarship Program

The UNMC Asia Pacific Rim Development Program (APRDP) celebrated 10 years of institutional collaboration with Chinese institutions including the:

- China Scholarship Council (CSC)
- Graduate University of Chinese Academy of Sciences
- Shandong University
- Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine
- Tongji University
- Xi’an Jiaotong University Health Science Center

Leaders from many of these partnering Chinese universities visited Nebraska to commemorate a decade of transnational achievements with UNMC. University of Nebraska Interim President, James Linder, MD, along with UNMC’s Chancellor, Jeffrey Gold, MD, congratulated APRDP for meeting global engagement goals.

FACT:
UNMC has one of the longest running programs to train Chinese biomedical graduate students in the U.S.

- 71 PhD students sponsored by the CSC have been trained by UNMC since 2008.
- 14 CSC students graduated in 2014.
- Among the CSC students are 9 MD/PhD physician scientist graduate training program candidates.

Chinese Scholarship Program Enrollees by Year

FACT:
Overall international student enrollment for the University of Nebraska has reached its eighth straight record high, with China being one of the most common origins.
Ongoing Growth of Applications for Graduate Fellowship Awards

UNMC offers several two-year fellowships to graduate students selected during an annual competition. The demand for these awards has been increasing annually for the past several years.

Number of Graduate Fellowships Awarded in 2013 – 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Total Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biochemistry &amp; Molecular Biology</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer Research</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular &amp; Integrative Physiology</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Health, Occupational Health &amp; Toxicology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Genetics, Cell Biology &amp; Anatomy</td>
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<td>Health Services Research, Administration &amp; Policy</td>
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<td>Pathology &amp; Microbiology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacology &amp; Experimental Neuroscience</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FACT:**
For 2014, the total dollar value of UNMC Graduate Fellowships awarded was $1,377,823.
This year, the Office of Graduate Studies saw the introduction of several new initiatives. In addition to inaugural matriculation and convocation ceremonies, 2013 – 2014 also heralded the beginning of new programs designed to improve student experiences.
Inaugural Events
New emphasis on creating a stronger sense of community and identity for students

2013 Matriculation Ceremony
The matriculation ceremony provides a common starting point for new students. At the inaugural event in August 2013, students were introduced to UNMC in a formal ceremony and began to bond with one another and to identify important new and key contacts and support groups that would be important in ensuring their time in academia was successful.

2014 Spring Convocation Ceremony
The formal honors convocation ceremony celebrates the significant accomplishments of each graduating student while at UNMC, as well as introducing where the graduates will be going as they move into their postgraduate or other careers. The inaugural event in May 2014 heralded the start of many new traditions including the reciting of the graduate oath written by the Graduate Student Association in which all students pledged, among other things, to uphold high ethical standards in their future careers.

The following awards also were presented:

- **Praesto Award (newly created honor):**
  Recognizes the most outstanding or exceptional graduate for the academic year
  Presented to: Erin G. Rosenbaugh, PhD

- **Thomas Jefferson Ingenuity Award:**
  Recognizes a graduate student for ingenuity in doctoral research
  Presented to: Sai Srinivas Panapakkam Giridharan, PhD

- **The Graduate Student Association’s Distinguished Graduate Mentor Award:**
  Recognizes a faculty member for exemplary support in the development of graduate students
  Presented to: Karen Gould, PhD

**COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY:**
During the commencement ceremony, five MS degrees and 20 PhD degrees were conferred.
Logistics and Support for the Learning Environment

New options to facilitate application for external funding and to improve the environment in which graduate students learn

External Funding
To encourage and incentivize students to apply for external fellowship grants, Graduate Studies introduced resources on our enhanced website regarding grant opportunities and resources to help students when writing grants for external funding. Students can visit unmc.edu/gradstudies/funding for information on:

- National Research Service Awards
- Graduate Student Support
- Dissertation Support

Graduate Student Grievance Resolution Procedure
Graduate Studies worked closely with the Student Senate and Faculty Senate to develop a new Graduate Student Grievance Resolution Procedure. Although a process was already in place for academic appeals, the new process provides a mechanism for students to resolve non-academic matters involving faculty. The Graduate Student Association leaders worked hand-in-hand with faculty and staff on the creation of this procedure. In addition, a Web page detailing the procedure and providing a means for submitting grievances was created.

Title IX Training
Every graduate faculty member participated in Title IX training and discussions. In addition, Title IX training was built into the orientation process for new graduate students. Topics included:

- Ways in which UNMC creates a safe campus culture
- The creation of a mobile app and online system for reporting misconduct, including anonymous reporting
- The counseling and resources available for dealing with acts of sexual misconduct
Opportunities in Career Planning
New support services created to ensure students succeed in their career goals

Career Counseling
For graduate students who feel the traditional postdoctoral path to academia is not right for them, Graduate Studies added a new section to our website that deals with current career counseling and transferable skills educational opportunities at UNMC. Students are also able to make appointments to get counseling about career opportunities. These new services allow us to help each graduate carve a professional path that best suits his or her passions, talents and interests.

Postdoctoral Seminars and Learning Activities
The Office of Postdoctoral Education teamed up with UNeMed, the University of Nebraska Intellectual Commercialization unit, to present an alternative career seminar series on careers in patent law and intellectual properties.

Postdoctoral Education also teamed up with Melody Montgomery, UNMC’s Editorial Grant Specialist, to provide a workshop on writing an effective specific aim page, one of the most critical parts of a successful grant. The office also established a partnership with Metropolitan Community College to offer a teaching apprenticeship to UNMC postdoctoral scholars. A pilot run will begin in January 2015 when scholars will be mentored in teaching undergraduates in the evening biology classes.

Seguidor
Seguidor, UNMC’s new student information system for graduate students, was officially launched in 2014. It is being rolled out in stages.

The secure website allows students to forego certain paperwork, chart their progress toward their degree and set action alerts for academic-related deadlines. The system is a huge convenience for students, mentors and advisors, as well as the Graduate Studies Office.

Individual Development Plan (IDP)
Completion of an IDP was mandated in 2014 to help students with career planning, representing an additional step in helping ensure our students remain on track in achieving their career goals.

This living, evolving document is to be revisited annually in order to update information, evaluate progress toward career goals, and establish new goals for the coming year.
Outreach and Reconnection Opportunities
New opportunities to establish relationships with future and former UNMC students

McNair Scholars
Several University of Nebraska – Lincoln McNair Scholars visited UNMC to give short presentations about their research. They were also introduced to the wide variety of UNMC Graduate Studies programs.

The McNair Scholars Program is a federal TRIO program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It is designed to prepare undergraduate students for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities.

McNair participants are either first-generation college students with financial need, or members of a group that is traditionally underrepresented in graduate education and have demonstrated strong academic potential.

We anticipate continuation of this program, including interactive events held in Lincoln.

Alumni Chapter
The Graduate Studies Alumni Chapter was formed in the fall of 2013. The focus of our new chapter is to engage UNMC Graduate Studies alumni in keeping in touch with their alma mater, including supporting and mentoring current graduate students.

Being a member of the Alumni Chapter allows graduates to stay informed about campus life, engage with their school or department and fellow classmates, and receive discounts on events and activities.

ALUMNI INFORMATION:
Visit unmc.edu/alumni for more information and to join today.

FACT:
The goal of the McNair Scholars Program is to increase graduate degrees awarded to students from underrepresented segments of society.
Future Plans

The upcoming academic year looks even more exciting than the previous one. The Office of Graduate Studies is working to launch a number of new programs and services designed to help our students with their career goals.
Future Growth Opportunities
Plans to help students with their skills today and tomorrow

Transferable Skills
Graduate Studies is working to develop programs that help students recognize and develop important transferable skills that will prove useful regardless of their chosen career track. Transferable skills include qualities such as:

- Leadership
- Working effectively in teams
- Problem-solving and analytical skills
- Professional flexibility
- Superlative communication skills (including writing, speaking and interpersonal skills)

Additional attention will focus on helping each student identify his or her primary skills and the careers that might best be suited to that skill set.

Seminars/Certificate Program
In concert with the career counseling efforts, Graduate Studies plans to launch a series of regular seminars and workshops on transferable skills for graduate students.

In addition, a new certificate program, “Leadership, Transferable Skills and Outreach,” is under development and will likely be offered in 2015. This program will be available to all UNMC students and faculty, not only graduate students.

Financial Management Tools
Money is often an issue for graduate students, especially if they have undergraduate debt. That is why it is essential to establish good financial habits now that will carry forward into tomorrow. In addition, having a strong understanding of finances may be important in students’ future careers.

Graduate Studies is currently working on a financial management course in conjunction with the College of Business at the University of Nebraska Omaha. There are also plans to provide UNMC students with access to financial tools created by the Council of Graduate Schools.
Program Updates and Guideline Reviews

Plans to ensure we remain on the right path

Umbrella Admission Program

Graduate Studies has been working with Karen Gould, PhD, and Daniel Monaghan, PhD, as well as the basic science chairs, institute directors and College of Medicine Dean Bradley Britigan, MD, to retool the current department-based training programs in the College of Medicine.

The goal is to create an umbrella admission program with common minimum standards through which all PhD graduate students can enter, while adjusting the department-based programs to become more interdisciplinary in nature. This structure will be more consistent with the majority of biomedical training programs in the U.S. and is one that has consistently been favored on surveys of students. It also is a structure that should position UNMC more favorably for NIH T32 training grant awards.

We hope to have this new structure in place by fall of 2016 following completion of input gathering from key stakeholders.

Termination Guidelines

Graduate Studies has been working to establish guidelines regarding the proper termination of a graduate student. The essential elements of these guidelines describe the process that must be followed and ensure that students, mentors and graduate programs receive due process before any action can be taken by Graduate Studies.

Guidelines will be approved by the Graduate Council in fall 2014, with final review by the Graduate Student Association to follow.

Graduate Program Reviews

All UNMC Graduate Studies programs are currently undergoing five-year comprehensive reviews. All program reviews will be completed by the end of the 2015 – 2016 academic year. This schedule will ensure all programs have been reviewed prior to the NCA-HLC accreditation review of UNMC, which is scheduled for 2016 – 2017.