Graduate Studies
ACHIEVEMENTS 2013

This report of the 2013 position of Graduate Studies at Alcorn State University expands on previous reports of success. Graduate Studies at Alcorn continues to provide exceptional services and student support for degree programs to realize its mission and vision. As this report goes to press, graduate studies is on the brink of further evaluating and expanding services, operations, programs, and resources. These challenges will undoubtedly impact the future growth of advanced study and outcomes of graduate programs. Growth has been charted in proportion of graduate programs in the various academic units during the 2013 to give a snapshot of the direction programs are headed during these challenging economic times. This report also captures a comprehensive look at the effectiveness of achieving outcomes for program improvement and future targets.

I. **HIGHLIGHTS IN TEACHING**

II. **HIGHLIGHTS IN RESEARCH (and Grants – submitted or funded.)**

HBCU Grant
- **Annual Performance Report**
  Alcorn State University received a favorable evaluation from the U.S. Department of Education on its annual submission of the graduate performance report which funds three low enrollment programs, Biological Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science, and Nursing. These programs were refunded for 2013-2014 and will use the $474,500 to support program initiatives in the following areas.

  I. Provide greater access and increase enrollment in degree programs through distance learning and increase the number of graduate faculty

  II. Provide financial assistance to needy students

  III. Improve infrastructure through the renovation of existing space and the purchase of modern teaching equipment

  IV. Improve library and learning resources through the acquisition of books, journals, and online research database subscriptions

  V. Establish a development program to increase contributions to graduate programs

III. HIGHLIGHTS IN SERVICE AND OUTREACH

During the academic calendar year (2013) the Office of Graduate Studies assigned twenty-three graduate assistants to the following departments.

- ➢ Advanced Technologies
- ➢ Athletics
- ➢ Counseling and Testing
- ➢ Education and Psychology
- ➢ Fine Arts
- ➢ J. D. Boyd Library
- ➢ Office of Educational Equity and Inclusion
- ➢ Office of Graduate Studies
- ➢ President's Office
- ➢ Registrar's Office
- ➢ Social Sciences
- ➢ Student Services

Admissions and Recruiting

The Office of Graduate Studies is the gateway to supporting graduate level degree programs and it is with this mission that sustained recruiting and admission efforts are focused on the eleven program offerings. During 2013 an e-recruitment campaign was launched with local school districts, community agencies, and ASU juniors and seniors to assist in sustaining high and low enrollment programs. Even with applications up, Graduate Studies recognized that prospective students are not enrolling as predictably as in the recent past due to the economy. Activities such as recruitment fairs, comprehensive information on the webpage, use of student ambassadors, and offers of financial assistance to underrepresented and high quality students helped to support efforts of sustainability of enrollment. Strategies were also developed to get as many prospective students through the admission funnel process. During 2013 enrollment year, a massive effort was launched to assist the Computer and Information Science Degree Program to increase their enrollment. Through collaborative efforts of sharing lists of prospective students, the chair of this department was able to successfully

recruit and admit 90% of the prospective students.

Student Services

- • **Graduate Student Center**
  A technology center was designed to assist graduate students in giving them access using the Internet to complete forms and other processes related to conducting business at the graduate level. This student support center has proven to be vital in giving needed technology assistance to students.

IV. **SPECIAL NOTEWORTHY HIGHLIGHTS (e.g., accreditations, signature events, projects, school commencement programs, etc.).**

Commencement 2013

During the academic calendar year (2013), one hundred sixty-one graduate students graduated in the following academic units.

Advanced Technologies	25
Agriculture	5
Biology	6
Biotechnology	3
Business Administration	10
Education	
• MAT	27
• Elementary	12
• Secondary Education	36
• Specialist	4
Nursing	33

eBusiness Solutions and Technologies

In an effort to be design an eBusiness Hub, Graduate Studies has advanced its technology to communicate and transact business. Our overall goal is to develop a cohesive, collaborative approach to eBusiness to provide a range of online services. The framework to guide these changes for was to upgrade existing technologies such as outdated computers and laptops, install and use SKYPE at every

workstation to communicate with colleagues and transact business in a wireless communications environment, extend other electronic technologies for information delivery.

Each new item of technology is integrated with other, existing technologies, to fit with a strategic plan for information technology within the university.

First, the data-warehouse in using Reports on Demand was expanded to include additional fields of information for generating comprehensive demographic reports.

• Next, productive relationships were established and continued with technology vendors and organizations that operate on the pulse of the most current technologies used in the academy environment.

•Then, specific electronic manuals were developed to drive the e-processing process for data management, information sharing, and admission decision-making and general communications to constituents.

• Processes were identified to streamline into electronic formats to improve services for students as well as reporting.

• In every new project, rigorous governance was provided for eBusiness initiatives through the use of project management techniques in collaboration with the Center for Information Technology.

• Automated email reminders. Remind participants via email to submit their recommendations, reviews and feedback, instead of having to physically track people down.

Paperless Environment

This year Graduate Studies said goodbye to 90% of its manual operations and streamlined processing of information in an efficient manner as a result of converting to a paperless environment. The outcome was to improve access, time management and enhance file transfer between Graduate Studies and graduate academic units.

Graduate Studies has achieved 90% of its goal to conduct business using a paperless environment concept. Many of the manual and paper submissions inner-office and externally are now transacted by electronic transactions. The following is a map of the Graduate eBusiness environment.

- Admission Applications – 99% electronic
- Admission Decisions Transmitted to Admission Committees – 100%
- Admission Decisions Received from Admission Committees-99%
- Required Graduate Forms-99% electronic
- Communications to Students and Faculty-100% electronic
- Conversion of Admission files to BDMS (Banner Document Management System)-100%
- Conversion of Current Graduation files to BDMS)-100%
- Announcements, News, Special Activities, Reports-100%
- Website-100% functional and 95% interactive
- Centralized online access 100%. Provide instant web-based access to reviews and all required forms— eliminating the need to make countless paper copies

Documents remaining to convert to electronic format for access:

- Archived Graduation files – projected completion date Summer 2014
- Archived Inactive student files – projected completion date fall 2014
- Paper Application for Candidacy – eliminate and combine in Self-Service Application for Degree

- Paper Application for Degree-projected Self-Service completion date May 2014
- Remission of Fee – projected timeline fall 2014

Banner Document Management System

Implementation of a software solution for imaging, storing, and managing critical documents was implemented in February 2013 to convert manual records to digital format. Cataloguing of records and information has improved efficiency for accessing student records and administrative documents in a timely manner. A commercial shredder was purchased to accommodate the heavy load of shredding manual documents once they have been scanned, indexed, and verified. All documents are backed-up in the Clouds daily.

SMART Conference Room

To support the concept of e-technology solutions in designing an effective and efficient environment, the Graduate Conference Room was converted to a SMART environment. An interactive SmartBoard was installed along with upgraded communication equipment and software. This equipment is used for various telecommunications projects and trainings.

Technology Solutions and Upgrades

The development of an expanded, online Student Portal was initiated. This concept involved the design of an online gateway to give students a number or combination of applications or functions once the new Alcorn website is launched. Specifically, students have access to their personal portal and will be able to access degree progress, academic profile, advisement page, resources, and University eBusiness s products.

Professional Development

The graduate staff continues to engage in professional enhancement by identifying a myriad of trainings. Each staff has attended at least four trainings, webinars, seminars, cross-trainings which exceed the required attendance sessions. Cross-training of graduate studies staff has been ongoing to ensure there is no interruption in transacting business of the Office of Graduate Studies and providing timely services to students. Cross-training

sessions are conducted weekly in the Graduate Studies SMART Conference Room. This gives the staff many opportunities to utilize SMART technologies that are housed for telecommunications purposes.

Archive Room!

The Office of Graduate Studies is pleased to announce renovation of space to accommodate an archive room to house more than 450 theses and projects. Thanks to the Carpentry staff of Facilities Management, the designated space has been given a facelift with the beautifully designed storage unit. This storage space is for the original research documents published by students in academic units required to write a thesis or project as part of graduation requirements. Graduate Assistants have been instrumental in organizing this space and cataloging documents. The Archive Room serves as the main repository for theses and projects for Graduate Studies. Collections consist of manuscripts in biology, biotechnology, computer and information science, education, and nursing.

V. **Demographics**
   Enrollment (by majors)

   Graduate enrollment increased in the following programs from spring to fall in 2013.
   - Agronomy **(+1)**
   - Applied Sciences: Homeland Security Management **(+5)**
   - Applied Sciences: Radiological Health Science **(+5)**
   - Applied Sciences: Technology Management **(+2)**
   - Clinical Mental Health Counseling **(+5)**
   - Computer and Information Science **(+7)**
   - Early Childhood **(+2)**
   - Master of Business Administration **(+14)**
   - Mathematics**(+3)**
   - MAT: Secondary Education **(+3)**
   - Non-Degree **(5)**
   - Post Master Family Nurse Practitioner **(+5)**

- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner **(+1)**
- School Counseling **(+4)**

Rank Order of Top Five Programs Showing Growth

1. Master of Business Administration **(+14)**
2. Computer and Information Science **(+7)**
3. Homeland Security Management **(+5)**
4. Radiological Health Science **(+5)**
5. Post Master Family Nurse Practitioner **(+5)**

Clinical Mental Health Counseling was a new program as of fall 2013.

A comparison was conducted to analyze enrollment by majors in 2012 vs. 2013 and the following are results based on this analysis.

Spring 201201 vs. Spring 201301

Growth was evidenced in the following majors in the Spring 201301 term versus Spring 201201:

- ❖ Agricultural Economics(+5)
- ❖ Agricultural Education(+1)
- ❖ Animal Science(+4)
- ❖ Applied Sciences: Computer Systems and Networks Technology(+1)
- ❖ Biology(+2)
- ❖ Biotechnology(+2)
- ❖ Early Childhood(+3)
- ❖ English(+3)
- ❖ Health and Physical Education(+5)
- ❖ Nurse Educator Consensus Model(+5)
- ❖ Special Education(+3)
- ❖ Specialist in Elementary Education(+34)
- ❖ Workforce Education Leadership(+1)

Considering this data, the following are the top five programs demonstrating growth(4+).

1. Specialist in Elementary Education(+34)
2. Agricultural Economics(+5)
3. Health and Physical Education(+5)
4. Nurse Educator Consensus Model(+5)
5. Animal Science(+4)

Fall 201204 vs. Fall 201304

Growth was evidenced in the following majors in the Fall 201304 term versus Fall 201204:

- ➢ Agronomy (+2)
- ➢ Agricultural Education (+2)
- ➢ Applied Sciences: Homeland Security Management(+3)
- ➢ Applied Sciences: Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technology(+1)
- ➢ Applied Sciences: Radiological Health Science(+7)
- ➢ Applied Sciences: Technology Management(+2)
- ➢ Biotechnology(+1)
- ➢ Computer and Information Science(+4)
- ➢ Early Childhood (+4)
- ➢ Mathematics (+3)
- ➢ MAT: Secondary Education(+3)
- ➢ Post Master Family Nurse Practitioner(+5)
- ➢ Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner(+1)
- ➢ Special Education(+5)
- ➢ Specialist in Elementary Education(+10)

Considering this data, the following are the top six programs demonstrating growth(4+).

1. Specialist in Elementary Education(+10)
2. Applied Sciences: Radiological Health Science(+7)
3. Special Education(+5)
4. Post Master Family Nurse Practitioner(+5)
5. Early Childhood(+4)
6. Computer and Information(+4)

Graduate Enrollment Based on Degrees and Concentrations				
Degree/Concentration	Spr 2013	Spr 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2012
Master of Science in Agriculture				
Agricultural Economics	**15**	10	**10**	16
Agronomy	**16**	18	**17**	15
Animal Science	**9**	5	**7**	7
Master of Science in Elementary Education				
Early Childhood	**5**	2	**7**	3
Elementary Education	**43**	75	**28**	57
Reading	**6**	6	**2**	4
Master of Science in Secondary Education				
Agricultural Education	**2**	1	**2**	0
Athletic Administration	**4**	4	**0**	6
Biology Education	**0**	1	**0**	0
Chemistry	**0**	0	**0**	0
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	**0**		**5**	
English	**7**	4	**2**	6
Health & Physical Edu.	**6**	1	**5**	5
Mathematics	**0**	0	**3**	0
School Counseling	**116**	173	**120**	142
Science	**1**	1	**0**	0
Social Science	**0**	0	**0**	0
Special Education	**13**	10	**5**	0
Master of Arts in Teaching				
Elementary Education	**40**	49	**24**	45
Secondary Education	**24**	33	**27**	24
Master of Science				
Applied Sciences				
Computer Systems and Networks Technology	**6**		**5**	5
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technology	**3**		**3**	2
Geospatial Engineering Technology	**0**		**0**	0
Homeland Security Management	**1**		**6**	3
Radiological Health Science	**4**		**9**	2
Technology Management	**0**		**2**	0
Biology	**21**	19	**19**	20
Biotechnology	**15**	11	**13**	12
Computer and Information Science	**12**	14	**19**	15
Workforce Education Leadership	**145**	144	**135**	144
Master of Science in Nursing				
Family Nurse Practitioner	**43**	45	**40**	45

Graduate Enrollment Based on Degrees and Concentrations				
Degree/Concentration	Spr 2013	Spr 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2012
Post Master Family Nurse Practitioner	**0**	0	**5**	0
Geriatric Nurse Practitioner	**0**	0	**0**	0
Post Master Geriatric Nurse Practitioner	**0**	0	**0**	0
Nurse Educator Consensus Model	**23**	18	**18**	21
Post Master Nurse Educator	**0**	0	**0**	0
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	**0**	0	**1**	0
Post Master Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner	**0**	0	**0**	0
Master of Business Administration				
Master of Business Administration	**43**	48	**57**	52
Specialist in Elementary Education				
Elementary Education	**53**	19	**60**	50
Non-Degree				
Non-Degree	**6**	10	**11**	7