Learning Goals and Assessment Highlights
2016-2017

I. Name of Department - Graduate Admissions and Program Evaluations (GAPE)

II. Departmental Staff Information (Number of FTE, Graduate Assistants, Student Workers, Interns, Volunteers):

GAPE has 14 full-time employees (1 Director, 1 Assistant Director, 1 Senior Data Specialist, 3 Data Specialists, 1 Lead Evaluator, and 7 Evaluators). The office also employs a .5 Administrative Assistant and three student workers.

III. Departmental Mission Statement:

The Office of Graduate Admissions & Program Evaluations (GAPE) performs the administrative and evaluative functions to maintain and implement the policies and procedures related to admissions, advancement to candidacy, graduation, and university level program requirements for all graduate students. The GAPE Office strives to ensure the quality of graduate and credential programs by meeting efficiency goals in processing academic requests, to act as an advisory resource to graduate program personnel and students, to advocate for faculty and student programmatic needs in the area of admissions, student scholarship and graduation, to ensure the university is in compliance with all federal, state, and CSU policies related to admissions and graduation, to disseminate the guidelines for policy related to graduate admission eligibility requirements, to promote graduate student retention and graduation, and to assist in the development of collaborative graduate department activities.

IV. Departmental Learning Outcomes:

1. Support new students in ensuring successful enrollment, retention, and graduation. Provide graduation workshops to increase the level of knowledge about university and department requirements for a successful graduation (Addresses Applied Knowledge).

2. Support students in obtaining knowledge about their program requirements at the department and university level. Increase students’ knowledge of pertinent filing deadlines and notifications in MySJSU to ensure a timely graduation (Addresses Applied Knowledge and Intellectual Skills).

3. Make full use of various communication mediums to maintain, practice, and communicate CSU eligibility requirements for prospective graduate applicants and students (Addresses Applied Knowledge and Intellectual Skills).

4. Support the efforts of graduate departments and advisors in the shared task of sustaining an efficient and successful admissions and graduation cycle for all graduate students (Addresses Applied Knowledge and Intellectual Skills).

   a. Which outcome(s) was (were) assessed this year? Outcomes #1, #2, #3, and #4 were assessed.
   b. When will the other outcomes be assessed? We plan to assess all outcomes next year again.

V. Key Assessment Findings, & Action Plans:

1. Department Learning Outcome #1 & #2- Increase level of knowledge through Graduation Workshop –

   GAPE hosted two on-campus graduation workshops in Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 for graduate students. During the workshops we conducted pre and post-tests to directly assess knowledge regarding policy, procedures, and deadlines. The pre and post-tests included seven multiple choice knowledge questions. The level of knowledge increase was addressed by comparing the number of incorrect answers aggregated in the form of a percentage-
decrease from pre-test results and post-test results. For Fall 2016, we had 108 respondents for the pre-test and 107 for the post-test. The pre-test yielded 228 incorrect answers. The post-test yield was 75 incorrect answers, which is an overall 67% decrease in incorrect answers on the post-test. For Spring 2017, we had 70 respondents for the pre-test and 67 for the post-test. The pre-test yielded 151 incorrect answers. The post-test yield was 29 incorrect answers or an 81% decrease in incorrect answers on the post-test. Overall, on-campus graduation workshops help increase knowledge of graduation policies and deadlines to ensure successful and timely graduation. They should be continued to assist student success.

2. **Department Learning Outcome #1 & #2- Increase level of knowledge broadly** - This year our goal was to expand participation in graduation workshops more broadly, as prior workshops were heavily attended by Engineering students. Our evaluators personally contacted the department graduate advisors they work with, and asked them to encourage their students to attend. The attempt was to draw more non-Engineering students to the graduation workshop. Although well received, this did not draw more non-Engineering students to the workshops. Again this year, a large percentage of students (66% in Fall 2016 and 67% in Spring 2017) attended from the College of Engineering. The great turnout by Engineering students may be due to expansive advertising of this event (flyers posted on all bulletin boards), as well as, Engineering having the only graduate designed student services advisor to advise about attendance. In addition, international students (66% Fall 2016 & 61% Spring 2017) were more likely to attend the sessions and are overly represented within the College of Engineering. Therefore, more strategic outreach to underrepresented colleges is needed.

3. **Department Learning Outcome #3- Make full use of various communication mediums to advertise events** - This year we added a question to the pre-test, “How did you hear about this workshop?” Our goal was to determine the best medium of communication for the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How heard about GAPE graduation workshop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flyer/Poster in Dept</td>
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<tr>
<td>MySJSU Message from GAPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email from Department Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAPE Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Students mostly (62%) heard about the graduation workshop from the MySJSU message sent by GAPE. It is critical, therefore, for GAPE to continue messaging students about the event. Secondly, twenty-eight percent of students heard about the workshop by receiving an email from their department advisor. Next, 18% of students heard about the event through department poster/flyers. Therefore, we will continue advertising the event with our department advisors, flyer/posters, and hosting the flyer on our website. While no one indicated social media was how they heard about the event, 2925 people were reached on Facebook with one student liking the page. Twitter had 2904 impressions and 30 engagements. This indicates that students may view on social media but the posts may not drive people to the event. Engaging photos may be used next year to elicit more interest.

4. **Department Learning Outcome #3 - Make full use of various communication mediums to increase knowledge**

Last year we piloted an online graduation workshop for a small online cohort. For 2016-2017 we expanded these sessions. Fall 2016 we collaborated with the School of Information to offer an online graduation workshop via Collaborate for online and Special Session off-campus graduate students. Our office messaged students about the event one month prior for a Save the Date, and then one week prior to the event with the
event details. School of Information set up an online session in Collaborate in which GAPE presented a live online workshop and fielded questions from students. We had approximately 50 students attend the Fall 2016 session, more than half of which were School of Information students. Other students were mostly from the College of Engineering, which has several off-campus programs. Students were asked to answer questions during the session to determine knowledge of policies and practices. Approximately 90% or more answered each question correctly after the information was presented. The questions were not specifically designed to test before and after knowledge as much as to ensure the information was clearly presented to students – promoting increased knowledge.

For Spring 2017, School of Information was in transition with staff support, so we hosted our own online graduation workshop via WebEx. This platform greatly changed our dynamic, in that most of the attendees were from the College of Engineering or Public Health as opposed to the School of Information. We also had less students attend (20) than in Fall. The session was a similar format: online presentation with a time for questions and answers. At the end of this session we set up an online survey requesting feedback about the workshop. Only three people filled out the survey – but the responses were positive. Many students also “chatted” that the workshop was very helpful. Unfortunately, we were unable to ask knowledge based questions during this session.

5. **Department Learning Outcome #4- Support Efforts of Graduate Department Advisors** - Fall 2016 GAPE offered two Advisor (Re)Orientations to give department graduate advisors updates on policy and practices concerning current students. The sessions covered forms, tips for advising, candidacy, graduation, graduation holds, disqualification, and reinstatement. Offices that presented included GAPE, Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of the Registrar, and International Student Advising. We had 87 attendees for both sessions (40 for the first session, and 47 for the second session). A feedback form, which included seven Likert scale questions and one open-ended question, was offered to all attendees at the end of each session, but was optional. Thirty-nine attendees (45%) completed the feedback form. The feedback form results are below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate (re)Orientation Evaluation</th>
<th>Overall Impact of Graduate (re)Orientation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives met</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information relevant &amp; useful</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help me work effectively</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better equipped</td>
<td>64%</td>
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Overall most attendees thought the session met the stated objectives (82% strongly agreed and 18% agreed) and the information presented was relevant and useful (69% strongly agreed and 31% agreed). Most attendees also agreed that the session would help them work more effectively with their graduate students (69% strongly agreed, 23% agreed, 3% disagreed) and they felt better equipped to handle graduate student advising questions now (64% strongly agreed, 26% agreed, 5% were neutral, and 3% strongly disagreed – 1 N/A). Overall, 27 department advisors (69%) indicated an excellent impact of the session and the other 12 (31%) indicated that the impact was good. One advisor commented, “Even though I've been advising for a couple of decades, this was very helpful and got some of my very specific questions answered. THANK YOU!”
6a. Given current assessment results, what (if any) changes will the department consider making for the future?

1. Last year and this year GAPE added several online graduate programs (Justice Studies, Nursing, and MSW). Thus, we anticipate more online students interested in attending graduation workshops. Therefore, our office plans to continue offering online graduation workshops to support online and off-campus student’s successful graduation. We will need to refine the online graduation workshop to support student needs.
   a. Collaborate to tailor department-specific online graduation workshops (School of Information).
   b. Offer the online workshops after hours to allow for work schedule accommodation.
   c. Invite on-campus students that are not able to attend the on-campus graduation workshops to attend the online graduation workshops. This allows those who work, have a long commute, or simply many responsibilities more flexibility in attending a workshop.

2. While we will continue offering online graduation workshops, we will also need to find ways to assess knowledge building in the sessions without the use of the pre and post-test, and feedback about the usefulness of such sessions. We will look into interactive question and answers during the session, and post a feedback form at the end of the session for more quantitative and qualitative feedback for improvement.

3. This year we will need to find different ways to reach out to non-Engineering students and encourage attendance at the graduation workshop.
   a. Various communication mediums - (online and videos).
   b. Specific department outreach to non-Engineering department advisors and students. In addition, if departments keep track of student retention and graduation plans, then the department and our office would be able to target our communication to these populations. Especially as 82.3% of our graduation workshop attendees plan to graduate in the coming one year.

4. Several students on the graduation workshop post-test gave feedback that we need online videos. Therefore, we will collaborate with the ESTIC department to offer short videos that outline different current student processes discussed in the graduation workshop. Students may reference videos if unable to attend the on-campus and online workshop or as a guide through different steps of the graduation process.

5. While the GAPE Advisor (re)Orientation was successful, Academic and Faculty Success also hosted two advisor sessions for Fall 2016 and Spring 2017. GAPE presented at each of these and duplicated information given at the Advisor (re)Orientation. Moving forward, we will collaborate with Academic and Faculty Success to host advisor sessions.

VI. 2016-2017 Departmental Highlights
The full definition of the Division Learning Goals can be found online, but the six overarching goals are listed below:

Division Learning Goals:

- **CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**: Critical thinking skills refer to the ability to independently and accurately evaluate information, data and ideas from multiple perspectives.
- **EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**: Effective communication embodies the ability to receive information, exchange ideas, present information, and convey messages in ways that are effective and appropriate to the situation and audience.
- **MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCE AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP**: Multicultural competence and active citizenship refer to understanding and appreciating human differences as well as positively contributing to the community.
- **PRACTICAL COMPETENCE/LIFE SKILLS**: These skills refer to the capacity to manage one’s affairs both inside and outside the university.
- **LEADERSHIP AND INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCE**: These skills refer to the ability to mobilize groups around shared interests as well as demonstrate and sustain meaningful relationships.
- **HEALTHY LIVING**: Healthy living refers to making informed decisions and acting on those decisions to enhance personal and community health.
1. We offered two Advisor (re)Orientation sessions in Fall 2016 to support and inform the graduate department advisors on current student issues. The sessions brought together four different offices presenting to assist graduate advisors (Effective Communication & GAPE Learning Goal #5)

2. We created an Admitted Students webpage, which guides admitted domestic and international students with successful enrollment steps. (Practical Competence/Life Skills & GAPE Learning Goal #2)

3. We increased student’s knowledge of pertinent filing deadlines to ensure timely graduation by regularly sending MySJSU reminders about candidacy and graduation filing deadlines, and graduation information for those graduating. These messages were also forwarded to graduate department advisors. We asked advisors to encourage their students to meet the deadlines. The graduation information message also informs students of university requirements at the time of graduation. (Effective Communication & GAPE Learning Goal #1, 2, & 4)

4. We collaborated with ESTIC to design a graduate Steps to Graduation brochure, which outlines the steps to graduate and tips for a successful graduation. This brochure is given to students at graduate orientation and all on-campus graduation workshops. (GAPE Learning Goal #1, 2 & 3)

5. We launched online Graduation Date Change and Duplicate Diploma requests. Students go to our e-market store and submit the request and pay online. Both services allow for convenience for the student (especially helpful to our online students from around the country and world) and efficient processing (requests do not get ‘lost in the mail’ and we are able to process within 2-5 business days from date of request). The Graduate Date Change request convenience and efficiency help ensure timely graduation. (GAPE Learning Goal #2)

VII. 2017-2018 Department Goals:

1. Maintain, practice, and communicate CSU eligibility requirements for prospective graduate applicants by updating our GAPE admissions website.
2. Support students in ensuring successful graduation by expanding options for graduation workshops.
3. Support more students in obtaining knowledge about their program requirements at the department and university level by increasing participation in online and on-campus graduation workshops.
4. In anticipation of going live with our online graduation application, educate students and departments on the new process.
5. Support the efforts of graduate departments in sustaining workable and successful admissions through the new Cal State Apply implementation.

VIII. Messages from Students:

1. The post-test given at the end of each graduation workshop allowed students the opportunity to provide feedback about the workshop. For Fall 2016, most students (67%) indicated the workshop was informative and they learned helpful information about deadlines and policies. One student stated, “I got a clear picture on steps to graduate”. Still another mentioned she, “Got a good info on what-if scenario & all the deadlines”. Another student indicated “I appreciate the chance to meet my evaluator”, as the evaluator processes the candidacy and graduation paperwork. “An excellent workshop. Should be made mandatory to attend”. For Spring 2016, 66 out of 67 students indicate the workshop was very useful (73%) or somewhat useful (25%). The most useful information for them was the overview of the process, requirements, deadlines, tips for success, and who to contact. This student feedback reinforces the need to continue these graduation workshops.

2. Students visiting our front counter, emailing, or calling any of our staff members are asked to text-n-tell about their interaction with GAPE. Overall students mostly emphasized the “helpfulness”, “good service” that was provided in a timely manner. One student indicated that, “I am not in the habit of filling out these types of things. However I feel compelled to do so because (GAPE staff name) is one of the few really helpful support staff I have met at SJSU. She is always exceptionally positive eager to help and willing to go that extra mile to
make arrangements for students. There is a dearth of such folks at SJSU and that makes the contrast between her and everyone else even more stark.” Another student said of a different employee, “He kept me calm when my department threw me a curve ball. I appreciate all his hard work and efforts.” These responses are from direct contact with our GAPE team and reflect our team takes the mission of helping and caring personally and seeks to embody the spirit of promoting student success.

IX. Did You Know:

1. SJSU has the largest number of graduate students in the CSU system. Also, in 2014-2015 SJSU ranked #1 for hosting the most (3696) International students among Master’s granting institutions (Open Doors Data). Approximately 1860 International graduate students enrolled at SJSU in Fall 2016. Of those, 654 (or 34%) were new students. International students from India make up 81.6% of our population. Following India, is China (9.6%) and Taiwan (2.6%).

2. The GAPE Office serves a large Special Session population. Approximately 28% of our current students are enrolled in Special Session programs. Our office provides the same services to both Regular and Special Session students.

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![Enrolled Graduate Students Chart]

X. Resource Needs:

1. Assessment books.
3. Informal gatherings to talk about ongoing assessments in their own department and best practices.

XI. Campus Partners (Individuals): Please list campus partners (individuals) outside of Student Affairs who should be thanked for contributing to the Division in a SIGNIFICANT way.

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<tr>
<th>Last, First Name</th>
<th>Office/Department</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hurt, Laura</td>
<td>Graduate Engineering &amp; Extended Studies</td>
<td>Student Services Specialist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:laura.hurt@sjsu.edu">laura.hurt@sjsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamad, Afifa</td>
<td>Graduate Engineering &amp; Extended Studies</td>
<td>Program Specialist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:afifa.hamad@sjsu.edu">afifa.hamad@sjsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurpiewska, Anna</td>
<td>Graduate Engineering &amp; Extended Studies</td>
<td>Programs &amp; Operations Specialist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anja.kurpiewska@sjsu.edu">anja.kurpiewska@sjsu.edu</a></td>
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XII. Campus Partners (Offices/Departments): Please list departmental partners outside Student Affairs who should be thanked for contributing to the Division in a SIGNIFICANT way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office/Department/Agency</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Engineering &amp; Extended Studies</td>
<td>Ahmed Hambaba</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ahmed.hambaba@sjsu.edu">ahmed.hambaba@sjsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XIII. Departmental Student Photos: Attached