

# PhD Plus: Shaping the Future of Graduate Education

## A MINI-SYMPOSIUM AND LAUNCH EVENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

Across the nation leaders in graduate education are calling for measures to open the aperture of career paths for PhDs in all disciplines. On January 19, 2019 the University of Virginia officially launched PhD Plus, a university-wide effort to enhance professional development and career training for doctoral students in all fields.

The launch of PhD Plus provided an opportunity to convene the new coalition of stakeholders that will be necessary to achieve our goals in doctoral education. Namely, the event brought together 300 students, postdocs, faculty, departmental leaders, administrators, alumni, employers, and leaders from a variety of national organizations for a day of dialogue and discussion that will serve to inform and shape the primary focus of our efforts, and similar efforts across the country.

Following opening remarks from Provost Tom Katsouleas, the morning's first plenary session included Suzanne Ortega, President of the Council of Graduate Schools, and Layne Scherer, Program Officer, at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. President Ortega presented on Career Diversity and Student Success, with highlights from the Council's national PhD Career Pathways project, which is collecting essential data on PhD alumni career outcomes and current student career aspirations at 66 universities across the country, including UVA, to help inform efforts aimed at doctoral program improvement. Following President Ortega, Layne Scherer provided remarks on the National Academies' recent landmark report, Graduate STEM Education for the 21st Century, which provides a number of crucial recommendations for developing the nation's future workforce in science and engineering. Each of the day's opening presentations noted the importance of linking national calls to action with culture change at the university and program level.

Following this theme, Emily Miller, Associate Vice President for Policy at the American Association of Universities opened the second plenary session with a presentation on the AAU's PhD Education Initiative, which includes three primary pillars:

1. Institutional Change. Influence the culture and behavior at the department level to provide PhD students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful in careers both within and beyond academia.
2. Data Transparency. Identify institutional policies and practices to make PhD program data—including data about the career pathways and employment trends of their PhD alumni—widely available.
3. Strategies. Highlight and encourage effective university, disciplinary society and federal agency strategies and programs.

Julia Kent, Vice President, Best Practices and Strategic Initiatives at the Council of Graduate Schools then provided more detail on how data from the Career Pathways project can be used to inform program improvement with specific measures such as the degree to which PhDs report a connection between their training and their current job, and how PhDs both within and outside of the academy find value in their doctoral education. The final presentation of the morning sessions was given by Emily Swafford from the American Historical Association who provided a demonstration of Where Historians Work, an innovative online database compiled by the Association that illustrates the diverse career pathways that PhDs in history follow.

Following a networking lunch in the Newcomb Hall Ballroom, attendees were invited to participate in two of five different breakout sessions on topics specific to the development of PhD Plus:

- Bridging the Skills Gap: Dialogue with Employers and Alumni
- Do we need a culture shift in graduate education?
- Diversity of People, Diversity of Careers
- Data use for program improvement: Workshop and Discussion
- A Listening Session on the Science of Mentoring

Each of these sessions leveraged the attendance of a diverse audience representing 27 different institutions and organizations to provide critical feedback and ideas for how PhD Plus could contribute to and benefit from efforts in these areas.

The day's afternoon sessions were capped by a dynamic moderated discussion, led by Provost Katsouleas, with graduate leaders from other institutions that have been implementing programs in PhD education and career preparation. Included on the panel

were: Helen Doyle, Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Stanford University; Mike Tessel, Senior Director of GRAD Career Development and Employer Relations, University of Chicago; and Jennifer West, Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, Pratt School of Engineering at Duke. Helen Doyle shared details on Stanford's Graduate Professional Development Framework, which provides support for PhD students in all disciplines in six broad areas including teaching; leadership and management; career development; personal development; communication; and specialized content knowledge and skills. Mike Tessel shared his experiences within UChicagoGRAD in employer relations work targeted specifically at PhDs, and Jennifer West shared experiences and advice learned from her role in helping to establish and lead the PhD Plus program within Duke's Pratt School of Engineering.

## Speakers and Panelists:

- **Tom Katsouleas**, Provost, University of Virginia
  - **Helen Doyle**: Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Stanford University
  - **Julia Kent**, Vice President, Best Practices and Strategic Initiatives, Council of Graduate Schools
  - **Emily Miller**, Associate Vice President for Policy, American Association of Universities
  - **Suzanne Ortega**, President, Council of Graduate Schools
  - **Layne Scherer**, Program Officer, National Academies of Sciences
  - **Emily Swafford**, Director of Academic and Professional Affairs, American Historical Association
  - **Mike Tessel**: Senior Director of GRAD Career Development and Employer Relations, University of Chicago
  - **Jennifer West**: Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, Pratt School of Engineering at Duke University
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# Agenda

The program will begin at 9:30 AM in the Dome Room of the Rotunda, and will conclude with a reception beginning at 5:30 in Alumni Hall.

## **MORNING SESSIONS: ROTUNDA DOME ROOM**

**8:30 AM:** Registration Open, Outside Rotunda, Lower West Oval Room

**9:00 – 9:30 AM:** Coffee and Networking: Rotunda, Lower West Oval Room

**9:30 – 9:45 AM:** Welcome and Introduction: Tom Katsouleas, Provost, University of Virginia

**9:45 – 10:30 AM: Plenary Session 1: Critical Issues in Graduate Education**

- Suzanne Ortega, President, Council of Graduate Schools
- Layne Scherer, Program Officer, Board on Higher Education and Workforce at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

**10:30 – 10:45 AM:** Refreshment Break: Rotunda, Lower West Oval Room

**10:45 AM – 12:00 PM: Plenary Session 2: What the Data Say: Where PhD Students are Going, and Why:**

- Emily Miller, Associate Vice President for Policy, American Association of Universities
- Julia Kent, Vice President, Best Practices and Strategic Initiatives, Council of Graduate Schools: PhD Career Pathways Project—Rationale and Recent Findings
- Emily Swafford, Director of Academic and National Affairs, American Historical Association: Where Historians Work: History PhD Career Outcomes

## **AFTERNOON SESSIONS: NEWCOMB HALL AND ROTUNDA**

**11:30 AM:** Registration Available, Outside Newcomb Hall Ballroom

**12 NOON: NETWORKING LUNCH: Newcomb Hall Ballroom**

**Afternoon Breakout Discussions**

**1:15– 2:15 PM: Concurrent Breakout Session 1**

- **Bridging the Skills Gap: Dialogue with Employers and Alumni: Newcomb Hall Commonwealth Room.** Moderated By:
  - David Lapinski, Director of Employer Relations University of Virginia Career Center
  - Michael Tessel, Senior Director, GRAD Career Development and Employer Relations, University of Chicago
  - Sonali Majumdar, Associate Director of Graduate Professional Development, University of Virginia
- **Do we need a culture shift in graduate education? Newcomb Hall Kaleidoscope Room.** Moderated By:
  - Amy Pszczolkowski, Assistant Dean for Professional Development, Princeton University
  - Layne Scherer, Program Officer, Board on Higher Education and Workforce at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
- **Diversity of People, Diversity of Careers: Newcomb Hall Gallery.** Moderated By:
  - Archie Holmes, Jr., Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Co-Principal Investigator, Virginia – North Carolina Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Bridge to the Doctorate Program
- **Data use for program improvement: Workshop and Discussion: Rotunda, Multipurpose Room.** Moderated By:
  - Phil Trella, Associate Vice Provost and Director, Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs, University of Virginia
  - Carrie Worcester, Assessment Analyst, Institutional Assessment & Studies, University of Virginia
  - John Painter, Senior Analyst, Institutional Assessment & Studies, University of Virginia
- **A Listening Session on the Science of Mentoring: Contribute to a National Academies Study: Rotunda, Lower West Oval Room.** Moderated By:
  - Maria Lund Dahlberg, Program Officer, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

**2:15 – 2:30:** Transition between breakout sessions

**2:30 – 3:30:** Concurrent Breakout Session 2 (topics and locations repeat)

**3:30 – 4:00:** Refreshment break and transition to panel discussion: Newcomb Hall Main Lounge

**4:00 – 5:15:** Panel Discussion on shaping the future of graduate education: Newcomb Hall South Meeting Room. Moderated by Tom Katsouleas. Panelists:

- Helen Doyle: Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Stanford University
- Mike Tessel: Senior Director of GRAD Career Development and Employer Relations, University of Chicago
- Jennifer West: Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, Pratt School of Engineering at Duke

**5:15 – 5:30:** Transition to Networking Reception in Rotunda Dome Room

### **EVENING RECEPTION: ROTUNDA DOME ROOM**

**5:30 – 7:00:** PhD Plus Launch Celebration and Networking Reception