Ph.D. Innovation Initiative

I.   Background

The Johns Hopkins University was founded for the express purpose of expanding knowledge and harnessing that knowledge for the benefit of humanity. Its first president, Daniel Coit Gilman, attracted stellar faculty and gave them the freedom to pursue groundbreaking research. He recruited the brightest students and offered them fellowships to pursue an education that emphasized original work and scholarly publication. Because of Gilman, Johns Hopkins became the model upon which American research universities were based.

Ph.D. education has been the heart and soul of Johns Hopkins since its founding, and even today it is the single degree that unifies the university. Gilman's model has served the university well for over a century. In recent years, however, Ph.D. education—at Johns Hopkins and elsewhere—has come under increasing scrutiny. The time to degree is growing longer; fewer students are moving into academic jobs; many of society's most pressing problems require solutions that span academic disciplines. For these and other reasons, it is appropriate for the university to reexamine and reinvigorate Ph.D. education. We need to be sure we are preparing students for the challenges they—and the world—will face in the years ahead.

To begin this process, last October approximately 100 faculty, deans, program directors, and graduate students from across the university gathered for a *Symposium on the Future of Ph.D. Education*, organized by the Doctor of Philosophy Board*. Participants heard a keynote address by Derek Bok, president emeritus of Harvard, on the "Paradoxical State of Graduate Education," a plenary lecture by Chris Golde, associate vice provost at Stanford, on "Five Pressing Challenges for Doctoral Education," and a historical overview by provost Lloyd Minor on "Gilman's Legacy: Ph.D. Education and the Making of the Modern University." They and other faculty from Berkeley, Columbia, Harvard, Michigan, Washington, and Johns Hopkins discussed topics ranging from interdisciplinary learning to globalization to work-life balance.

Following the symposium, the graduate deans for Ph.D. education, the members of the Doctor of Philosophy Board, and a number of graduate program directors and students examined multiple aspects of the Ph.D. student experience at Johns Hopkins: beginning with entry and integration, continuing on to research and professional development, and then to completion and exit. This discussion generated a number of ideas for reshaping Ph.D. education, including improving mentoring skills for faculty and students, better equipping students for their roles as teachers, broadening definitions of success beyond the academic environment, strengthening services for career development and placement, and creating new funding models, possibly to include short-term interdisciplinary fellowships.

It is now time to transform the best ideas into action.

II.   Ph.D. Innovation Initiative

Overview

The Ph.D. Symposium generated energy and enthusiasm around the subject of Ph.D. education. To capture that excitement, with the goal of not only invigorating Ph.D. education, but also of putting Johns Hopkins at the forefront of innovation in Ph.D. education, the Doctor of Philosophy Board is launching a *Ph.D. Innovation Initiative*. For each of the next two years, the university will invest approximately $1M/year in support of bold new ideas in Ph.D. education. The funds will be awarded on a competitive basis to proposals solicited from across the Johns Hopkins community.

- Goal: This request for proposals (RFP) is seeking to identify and fund projects that will lay the groundwork for transforming Ph.D. education at Johns Hopkins and elsewhere.

- Who may submit proposals: Proposals may be submitted by individual faculty, groups of faculty, Ph.D. students with their faculty mentors, individual Ph.D. programs, as well as collaborations among various Ph.D. programs.

- Subject areas: Proposals may be submitted in any subject area in which Johns Hopkins offers the Ph.D.

- Budget and project period: The total project period may not exceed two years. The funds requested may not exceed $200,000 during the award period. Matching funds or other in-kind contributions, including faculty release time, are encouraged.

- Funds available: The president and provost have committed approximately $1,000,000 to the first year of this initiative. It is anticipated that there will be a second call for proposals in approximately one year.

- Proposal submission deadline: November 30, 2012.

- Earliest anticipated start date for award: January 1, 2013.

Types of Proposals

The Ph.D. Innovation Initiative is seeking new ideas to advance doctoral education and training through the next century. The purpose of this RFP is to gather bold, creative, culture-changing ideas for transforming Ph.D. education at Johns Hopkins. A wide range of proposals and projects may be responsive to this RFP.

Proposals may seek to enhance or advance scholarship, or develop new educational resources and strategies, or build on and reinforce best practices in Ph.D. education in light of the changing nature of scholarship in the modern world. Potential topics include strengthening disciplinarity and/or interdisciplinarity, setting goals and measuring outcomes, forging new pathways to successful careers, removing barriers to completion,

lessening the time to degree, providing better mentoring of students and advisors, and broadening participation through diversity and inclusion. Proposals may also be inspired by issues raised at the Ph.D. Symposium, or by the questions, collected below, that are being addressed as part of the university's decennial reaccreditation process. A few pertinent references are collected at the end of this document.

Grant winners will commit to sharing lessons learned with other Ph.D. programs at a special symposium. They will also commit to sustaining successful innovations, to the best of their abilities, after the grant period. The overall goal is to spark real and lasting innovation in Ph.D. education across Johns Hopkins.

Timeline

September 20, 2012: RFP released to Johns Hopkins community

October, 2012: Open forum with the Doctor of Philosophy Board

> Location: East Baltimore campus

> Time: TBD

October, 2012: Open forum with the Doctor of Philosophy Board

> Location: Homewood Campus

> Time: TBD

November 30, 2012: Proposals due

February 1, 2013: Funding decisions announced

February 1, 2013: Earliest anticipated start date or funded projects

III.   Application Preparation and Submission Information

Content

Proposals should be prepared single-spaced with 1-inch margins (minimum font size 11 point), and should conform to the following format:

1.   Title and Abstract (limit 1/2 page)

2.   Project Description (limit 4 pages)

The project description should include the following: a statement of the problem being addressed; a description of the project and its goals; an analysis of its significance and potential impact; a summary of preliminary or pilot work underway (if any); a plan for

implementation; a list of anticipated outcomes; and a plan for sustainability beyond the timeframe of the project.

3.   Project Plan and Timeline (limit 1 page)

4.   Evaluation and Assessment Plan (limit 1 page)

It is important that the proposal contain an assessment plan. At a minimum, the program needs to track the changes in student outcomes that occur as a result of the proposed innovations.

5.   References

6.   Budget (limit 1 page)

The budget should list the cost of activities and supplies required by the project. Include a brief budget justification.

While not required, respondents are also encouraged to seek additional funding or other in-kind contributions (faculty release time, staff resources, etc.) from the sponsoring programs(s) or division(s). If applicable, please include in the budget any matching funds, in-kind contributions or other resources that will be devoted to the project.

7.   Appendices
   A.   Short biosketches of key participants, emphasizing relevant expertise.
   B.   Optional letters of support from relevant program(s), department(s) or dean(s).

Submission Procedure

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format as email attachments to PII@jhu.edu.

Deadline for submission: 5:00 PM, November 30, 2012.

IV.   Application Review Information

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of faculty drawn from across the university and appointed by the Doctor of Philosophy Board. Funding decisions will be made by the Doctor of Philosophy Board and the Office of the Provost.

Review criteria include:

- Potential for significant impact on Ph.D. education. How will the proposed project transform Ph.D. education at Johns Hopkins and elsewhere?

- Quality and clarity of the assessment plan. What are the measurable goals and outcomes?

- Sustainability of the proposed reforms or innovations. How will the innovations be sustained beyond the end of the grant period?

- Portability of results to other Ph.D. programs. Are the ideas being proposed relevant to other Ph.D. programs? If so, how might they be applied?

- Support from the relevant Ph.D. programs(s). How broad is faculty support for the proposed project?

- Feasibility with resources requested. Is the scope appropriate and the budget cost effective?.

V.   Funding Restrictions

Funding may be requested to support all activities justified in the budget. This may include, but is not limited to salary support and benefits for faculty, staff or students participating in the project, purchase of materials and supplies, development or acquisition of computational resources, etc. No indirect costs may be charged to these grants.

Funding may be requested for a period of up to two years. Total funds requested from the Initiative may not exceed $200,000. Funding for the second year will be contingent on demonstration of appropriate progress toward the project's goals.

VI.   Award Administration

Award notices will be issued by the Office of the Provost on or shortly after February 1, 2013. The earliest start date for funded awards is February 1, 2013.

All grant recipients will be required to provide an interim report on progress toward the project's goals halfway through the funding period. Upon completion of the grant period, recipients will be required to submit final reports detailing outcomes, including both successes and failures. This report should include discussion of future opportunities that build on the outcomes of the funded work. Recipients will be asked to present their work at a symposium or other similar pubic event. They also commit to continuing successful innovations beyond the end of the grant period, to the best of their abilities.

VII.   How to Obtain More Information

Potential applicants are encouraged to contact Vice Provost Jonathan Bagger (bagger@jhu.edu) or the Prof. Brenda Rapp (brapp1@jhu.edu), Chair of the Doctor of Philosophy Board, with questions about suitability of potential proposals.

VIII. References

Baker, M. J., Carter, M. P., Larick, D. K., & King, M. F. (2011). *Assessment and review of graduate programs.* Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

Denecke, D. D., Kent, J., & Wiener, W. (2011). *Preparing future faculty to assess student learning.* Washington, DC: Council of Graduate Schools.

Golde, C. M., & Walker, G. E. (Eds.). (2006). *Envisioning the future of doctoral education: Preparing stewards of the discipline.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Walker, G. E., Golde, C. M., Jones, L., Bueschel, A. C., & Hutchings, P. (2008). *The formation of scholars: Rethinking doctoral education for the twenty-first century.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wendler, C., Bridgeman, B., Markle, R., Cline, F., Bell, N., McAllister, P., & Kent, J. (2012). *Pathways through graduate school and into careers.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.

APPENDIX : Guiding Questions

The following questions are guiding the university's reaccreditation process in the area of Ph.D. education. They suggest challenges that proposals to the Ph.D. Innovation Initiative might address.

Academic Excellence

- *What is the role of the Ph.D. in the twenty-first century? Is the degree still relevant? What techniques and methodologies should our students learn?*

- *What are appropriate goals for Ph.D. programs? How can they assess whether or not they are meeting them?*

- *How can programs define excellence? How can they assess the strength of their faculty? Of their students?*

- *Do we have the facilities we need for twenty-first century research and scholarship?*

- *What is the role of the dissertation in a hyperlinked world?*

- *What are the barriers to interdisciplinary activities? How can we help our students acquire appropriate breadth and depth?*

- *What is strong about our programs, and what might be improved? What dangers are lurking, and what opportunities might present themselves?*

- *What additional data should we be tracking?*

- *What is the appropriate enrollment in our Ph.D. programs? Are there too few or too many Ph.D. programs?*

Student Experience

- *How engaging are the gateway experiences offered by our Ph.D. programs?*

- *How accessible is Ph.D. student advising, and how effective is it? Do students receive regular feedback with annual written reports?*

- *What is the rate of progression of students through our Ph.D.? Are attrition rates acceptable? How can we lessen student time to degree?*

- *How adequate or inadequate is the level of funding for students? What new sources of funding need to be developed?*

- *What can we do to improve the Ph.D. student experience outside the classroom?*

Professional Development

- *What are the outcomes on which Ph.D. programs are focused with regard to career preparation? How do they align with students' goals?*

- *How is success defined, and are we satisfied with that definition?*

- *What and how much formal instruction do Ph.D. students receive in teaching? What level of preparation is appropriate?*

- *How diverse are the career opportunities to which our students are exposed? What, how appropriate, and how sufficient are the internship opportunities available?*

- *What is the nature and extent of alumni interaction with Ph.D. students?*

Diversity and Mentoring

- *What can be done to increase participation by under-represented minorities in our programs? How can we increase the number of under-represented minorities in our applicant pool?*

- *How appropriate and effective are mentoring practices for Ph.D. students? What are our metrics for success?*

- *How can we be more strategic in support students in danger of dropping out? How could affinity groups be leveraged in this regard?*