

# Proposal to Create a Graduate School at Salisbury University

Updated Fall 2023

## Introduction

Salisbury University (SU) proposes the creation of a Graduate School (GS). The new School would not require new academic programs, but rather, would be an elevation of the title of existing administrative functions and ‘branding’ of enhanced graduate program development. There was support for creation of the School in late 2019. However, this process was interrupted in Spring 2020 by the pandemic. As part of her State of the University address in Spring of 2023, President Carolyn Lepre encouraged our campus to “revisit the proposal for creating a new School of Graduate Studies and Research.”

Additional support for a centralized graduate school model is stated by the Council of Graduate Schools in its publication, *The Organization and Administration of Graduate Education -A Guide for University Leaders*, “Universities also need to carefully consider other benefits offered by a central graduate school, which if run well, can improve the institution’s reputation, enhance its programs and visibility, and increase its enrollments.”

The bylaws of the Board of Regents for the University System of MD (Section III - 7.05 – *Policy on the Creation/Development by University System of Maryland Institutions of Schools or Colleges*) require the proposing institution submit a narrative addressing the following areas for Creation of the new Graduate School:

1. Decision-making Process Involved
2. Rationale for Creation of the New School
3. Mission for Proposed School
4. Proposed Administrative Structure and Resources Needed
5. Faculty resources in place.

Each of these requirements is addressed below including proposed outcomes within the rational section.

## Decision-making Process Involved

Over the course of several years, the process leading to this updated proposal has been open and deliberative. The idea originated with the development of the SU 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, was developed by faculty comprising the Graduate Council, and was presented at open forums, Faculty Senate and to the Executive Staff. *Appendix I* provides a detailed account of actions since 2013.

## Rationale for Creation of the Graduate School

Salisbury University is recognized for excellence as a regional comprehensive university. An important component of our excellence is graduate education. By creating a Graduate School, Salisbury University will achieve the following **outcomes**:

### **(1)A Graduate School will help bolster our efforts to grow graduate enrollment.**

The growth in graduate enrollment is part of a key strategic initiative for SU and adds a much-needed additional revenue growth option. Creation of the GS will help facilitate this growth by

branding graduate education as an essential component of our regional comprehensive university mission. This will improve our ability to develop and improve comprehensive marketing strategies for our graduate programs. Graduate enrollment growth was highlighted by President Lepre as part of her State of the University address in Spring of 2023. The President challenged our campus to grow back to 8,500 students, “with a target of graduate students making up 12% of the University’s student population by 2028.”

**(2) A Graduate School will align Salisbury University with our peers and enhance rankings.**

It is important for Salisbury University to maintain and bolster reputational excellence. External perception of Salisbury University as a high-quality academic institution is enhanced by creating the GS, which helps our rankings.

Additionally, forming the GS will align SU with many of our peer institutions, aspirational peers and other University System of Maryland schools. *Appendix II* provides information from 20 of these institutions. Currently, 13 of them have either a school or college dedicated to graduate programs.

**(3) A Graduate School will bolster graduate program presence and identity while providing a greater sense of belonging to graduate students.**

As a regional comprehensive university, SU is known for excellence in undergraduate education, along with offering important professional programs and several traditional graduate programs. While the academic home for each graduate program should continue to be located within corresponding academic departments, schools and the college, adding a specific administrative identity for graduate education further enhances excellence for SU graduate programs and provides a definitive sense of connection and recognition.

Our undergraduate students find their “home” in majors, organizations, or other affinity groups. And benefit from built-in support systems. While the Graduate Student Council is an effective advocacy group for graduate students at SU, there can be loss of identity for graduate students. Outside of their specific programs, where do graduate students belong? The Graduate School will give them an immediate place to find a sense of belonging. From there, additional support systems and partners can be forged to re-enforce these efforts and align with the needs of this distinct community of learners.

**(4) A Graduate School will elevate accountability and equitable standards for graduate education.**

The GS will provide a more institution-wide and interdisciplinary perspective to graduate education at SU, leading to a stronger culture supporting graduate research and scholarship. By establishing a strong framework and support system for the leaders and staff working in graduate programs, the GS will lead the development of additional quality controls and good practices. The GS will provide consistency throughout graduate program application, admissions, and administrative processes while helping to ensure consistent and effective program assessment and management.

Assessment and continuously improved outcomes are paramount for successful graduate programs. Strong, deliberative and effective graduate program assessment will be led by the GS in partnership with the home academic departments and schools/college.

**(5) A Graduate School will strengthen our ability to address workforce needs.**

The addition of a GS will allow SU to more intentionally help meet the workforce needs of our region and State by introducing alternative credentials, badges, and other opportunities for all potential graduate students, including non-traditional and adult learners. The graduate programs at SU provide exceptional degree programs and additional credentials that allows many people to progress within their field and throughout the workforce. This is particularly important in professional programs such as teaching, social work and nursing. The School will allow us to help provide additional focus on resources for strategic recruiting of locals requiring personal attention. The GS will help focus additional efforts on monitoring and addressing workforce needs while also developing enhanced partners within SU and externally for career placement activities.

**(6) A Graduate School will present new opportunities.**

Creation of a graduate school will demonstrate commitment to our to external stakeholders and present additional friend-raising and fundraising opportunities. The School expands on the already respected SU brand and provides an additional avenue for donors to contribute to SU. Additionally, the potential for growing doctoral education and advancing our Carnegie Classification status will be reinforced by having a Graduate School. As a recognized separate administrative unit, the GS will establish an external advisory board that can help grow fundraising opportunities and support strategic planning efforts.

**Proposed Mission Statement for the Graduate School**

The Graduate School provides administrative oversight and leadership for high-quality graduate programs that prepare and advance students for productive careers as professionals. Graduate study at Salisbury University provides baccalaureate and masters degree holders from the U.S. and abroad with opportunities for high-quality advanced professional and personal enrichment. The graduate curriculum is designed to assist students in attaining greater mastery of their fields of specialization, improving skills in pursuing independent study, and increasing professional knowledge and ability through the study of new findings in areas of special interest. The School is the administrative home of the graduate faculty who devote mentoring and teaching excellence to graduate students.

**Proposed Administrative Structure and Necessary Resources**

A Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and two support staff are in place within the Office of Graduate Studies at SU. There is a strong partnership with Undergraduate Admissions, including collaboration on our newly acquired CRM/application tools in Slate. To begin the School, additional support from Graduate Assistants and realigned staff job duties may be necessary. As the GS grows, additional staff support may be required to further focus and elevate graduate student enrollment management, graduate student records management and graduate support services under the leadership of a Graduate School.

Reasonable budget realignments are necessary for successfully creating a GS. Currently, approximately \$50K is spent annually on marketing and recruiting by the Office of Graduate Studies. An additional \$25K annually can be redirected internally for graduate marketing and

recruiting. There is a strong partnership with the MarComm office in place, providing specific resources for graduate marketing. A strong GS model will help solidify the opportunities to market more effectively.

While re-branding (website, printed materials, banners, etc.) for the School would require an estimated additional \$20-25K, these are viewed as one-time expenses that can be absorbed internally, as well.

### **Faculty Resources**

As this proposal does not create any new existing academic programs, all faculty resources are currently in place to meet expected student demand. Currently, there are 300+ members of Graduate Faculty. Many of these faculty are in departments and schools that currently have graduate programs. However, there are also many graduate faculty outside of these areas. In some cases, there is interest in pursuing opportunities to expand graduate offerings into to new programs and modalities. As some graduate programs (especially Doctoral programs) mature and demand grows, faculty numbers may need to grow, and additional future needs will be addressed accordingly.

## **Appendix I - Summary of Decision-making Process**

### *Fall 2013 Semester – Initial Development*

As part of the Salisbury University 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, there were numerous discussions about exploring the creation of a School of Graduate Studies. This idea was included in the plan.

### *Fall 2016 – Graduate Council Actively Engages*

The SU Graduate Council (GC) began discussions to actively consider creation of the School and a sub-committee is appointed to conduct a thorough review of options and SWOT analyses.

### *Spring 2017 – Graduate Council Sub-Committee Completes Analysis and Report*

At the April meeting of Graduate Council, the sub-committee report was accepted and GC votes unanimously to send forward to report to Faculty Senate.

### *Spring 2017 – Faculty Senate Approves Further Exploration and Proposal Development*

During the May meeting of the Faculty Senate, there was unanimous approval to move forward with development of full proposal to be submitted to Faculty Senate for future consideration.

### *Fall 2017 – Proposal Developed*

A proposal was drafted by the Chair of the Graduate Council, Dean of Graduate Studies and Research and the Associate Provost for further consideration by the campus.

### *Fall 2017-Spring 2018 – Campus Discussion*

The proposal was submitted to the Faculty Senate and a campus-wide open forum was held to fully discuss the creation of the GS. There was wide-spread support for the School. However, with the pending change in Presidency, the process was put on hold.

### *Spring/Fall 2019 – Process RE-initiated - Graduate Council and Faculty Senate*

The proposal was updated and supported unanimously by the Graduate Council. On March 26, 2019 the Faculty Senate passed the following motion:

*Although the Senate is not ready to endorse a Graduate School at this time, we are sympathetic to the needs of graduate programs within the university and are requesting that the administration investigate alternatives for meeting those needs.*

*That the Faculty Senate acknowledge receipt of the Graduate Council's report concerning the feasibility of creating a School of Graduate Studies at Salisbury University.*

*Further, the Faculty Senate encourages the SU administration to explore ways to provide support for the identified needs for graduate programs including, but not limited to, marketing, recruitment, admissions, registration, and increased enrollment in current and future graduate programs.*

At a minimum, there was a consensus that Graduate Programs at Salisbury University needed enhanced support.

*Spring 2020 – Pandemic put a hold on all consideration for creating the School.*

## APPENDIX II – Graduate Administrative Structure Summary

### USM INSTITUTIONS

Bowie State University <a href="http://www.bowiestate.edu">www.bowiestate.edu</a>	Graduate School	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Fellowships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 Master’s Degrees</li> <li>• 3 Doctoral Degrees</li> <li>• 17 Graduate Certificates</li> </ul>
Coppin State University <a href="http://www.coppin.edu">www.coppin.edu</a>	School of Graduate Studies	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Policies</li> <li>• Grad Assistants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 1 Doctoral Program</li> <li>• 8 Graduate Certificates</li> </ul>
Frostburg State University <a href="http://www.frostburg.edu">www.frostburg.edu</a>	Office of Graduate Services	No Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 1 Doctoral Program</li> </ul>
Towson University <a href="http://www.towson.edu">www.towson.edu</a>	Office of Graduate Studies	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 7 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 3 Certificates of Advanced Study</li> <li>• 36 Post-Bac Certificates</li> </ul>
University of Maryland Baltimore County <a href="https://umbc.edu/">https://umbc.edu/</a>	The Graduate School at UMBC	Vice Provost and Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 24 Doctoral</li> <li>• 27 Graduate Certificates</li> </ul>
University of Maryland Eastern Shore <a href="http://www.umes.edu">www.umes.edu</a>	School of Graduate Studies	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Policies</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> <li>• Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 9 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 2 Graduate Certificates</li> </ul>

### PEER INSTITUTIONS

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Graduate Divisions</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Duties</b>	<b>Graduate Programs</b>
Buffalo State College, SUNY <a href="http://www.buffalostate.edu">www.buffalostate.edu</a>	Graduate School	Dean of Graduate School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Grad Assistantships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 11 Post-Bac Certificates</li> </ul>
Framingham State University ( <a href="http://www.framingham.edu">www.framingham.edu</a> )	Office of Graduate Studies	Dean of Graduate Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate Employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31 Master’s Programs</li> <li>• 1 Post-Bac Certificate</li> <li>• 12 Graduate Certificates</li> </ul>

Radford University <a href="http://www.radford.edu">www.radford.edu</a>	College of Graduate Studies and Research	Dean of College of Graduate Studies and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Grad Assistantships</li> <li>• Education Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 15 Certificates</li> <li>• 6 Doctoral Programs</li> </ul>
Rowan University <a href="http://www.rowan.edu">www.rowan.edu</a>	Global Learning and Partnerships (formerly Graduate School)	Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Enrollment Counselor</li> <li>• Education Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 63 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 15 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 2 Post-Bac Certificates</li> <li>• 59 Certificates of Graduate Study</li> <li>• 14 Certificates of Advanced Graduate Study</li> </ul>
	Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences	Senior Associate Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Enrollment Counselor</li> <li>• Education Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 2 Doctoral Programs</li> </ul>
University of North Carolina, Wilmington <a href="http://www.uncw.edu">www.uncw.edu</a>	Graduate School	Associate Provost or Research and Dean, Graduate School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Technology Support</li> <li>• Budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 6 Doctoral Programs</li> </ul>
SUNY Oswego <a href="http://www.oswego.edu">www.oswego.edu</a>	Division of Graduate Studies	Dean of Graduate Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 12 Post-Bac Certificates</li> <li>• 7 Grad Certs</li> </ul>
The College at Brockport, SUNY <a href="http://www.brockport.edu">www.brockport.edu</a>	Graduate School	Dean of The Graduate School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Program Aide</li> <li>• Clemency</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Systems Analyst</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 5 Certificates of Advanced Study</li> <li>• 8 Advanced Certificates</li> <li>• 4 Graduate Certificates</li> </ul>
Western Carolina University <a href="http://www.wcu.edu">www.wcu.edu</a>	Graduate School	Dean of Graduate School and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Student Services</li> <li>• Technology Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 6 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 7 Post-Bac Certificates</li> <li>• 3 Post Master's Certificates</li> </ul>
West Chester University of Pennsylvania <a href="http://www.wcupa.edu">www.wcupa.edu</a>	Graduate Studies	Dean of Graduate Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Records</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> <li>• Program Coordinators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 7 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 47 Graduate Certificates</li> <li>• 1 Letter of Completion</li> <li>• 5 Post Bac Certs</li> </ul>

William Paterson University of New Jersey <a href="http://www.wpunj.edu">www.wpunj.edu</a>	Graduate Studies	Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 65 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 4 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 17 Endorsements</li> </ul>
---	------------------	----------	---	--

### **ASPIRATIONAL PEER INSTITUTIONS**

Appalachian State University <a href="http://www.appstate.edu">www.appstate.edu</a>	School of Graduate Studies	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Recruiting</li> <li>• Student Services</li> <li>• Online Planning</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 2 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 36 Certificates</li> </ul>
College of New Jersey <a href="http://www.tcnj.edu">www.tcnj.edu</a>	Graduate Studies	Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Continuing Education</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 4 Post Master's Certificate</li> </ul>
Old Dominion University <a href="http://www.odu.edu">www.odu.edu</a>	Graduate School	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> <li>• Graduate Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 47 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 3 Specialist Programs</li> </ul>
University of Northern Iowa <a href="http://www.uni.edu">www.uni.edu</a>	Graduate College	Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions</li> <li>• Graduate Assistants</li> <li>• Graduate Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 53 Master's Programs</li> <li>• 11 Doctoral Programs</li> <li>• 51 Certificates</li> </ul>