

Why this Focus on the Graduate Student Experience?

(Spoiler Alert: An Idea Whose Time Has Come)

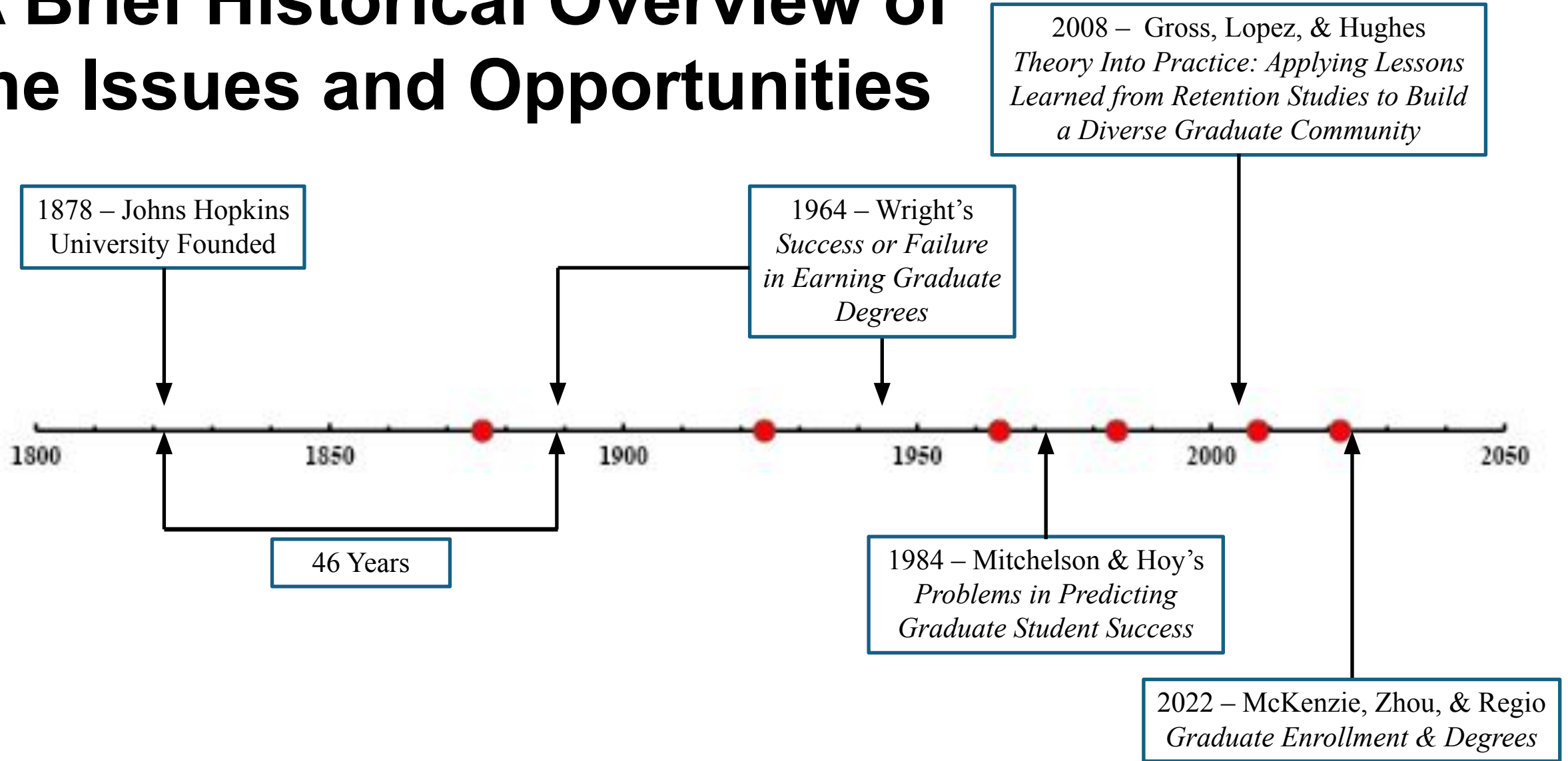
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The Graduate Student Experience Conference
March 26, 2024

Overview

- Brief History (Data-Focused)
- Current Context
- Why Us and Why Now?

A Brief Historical Overview of the Issues and Opportunities





CGS Analysis Strengths & Limitations

•Strengths

- Comprehensive
- Established
- Disaggregated data

•Limitations

- Not based on student unit-record-level data
- Inability to track across institutions over time
- Does not get at career implications
- Only half (approximately) of all graduate programs in the U.S.
- Less than transparent and complete picture

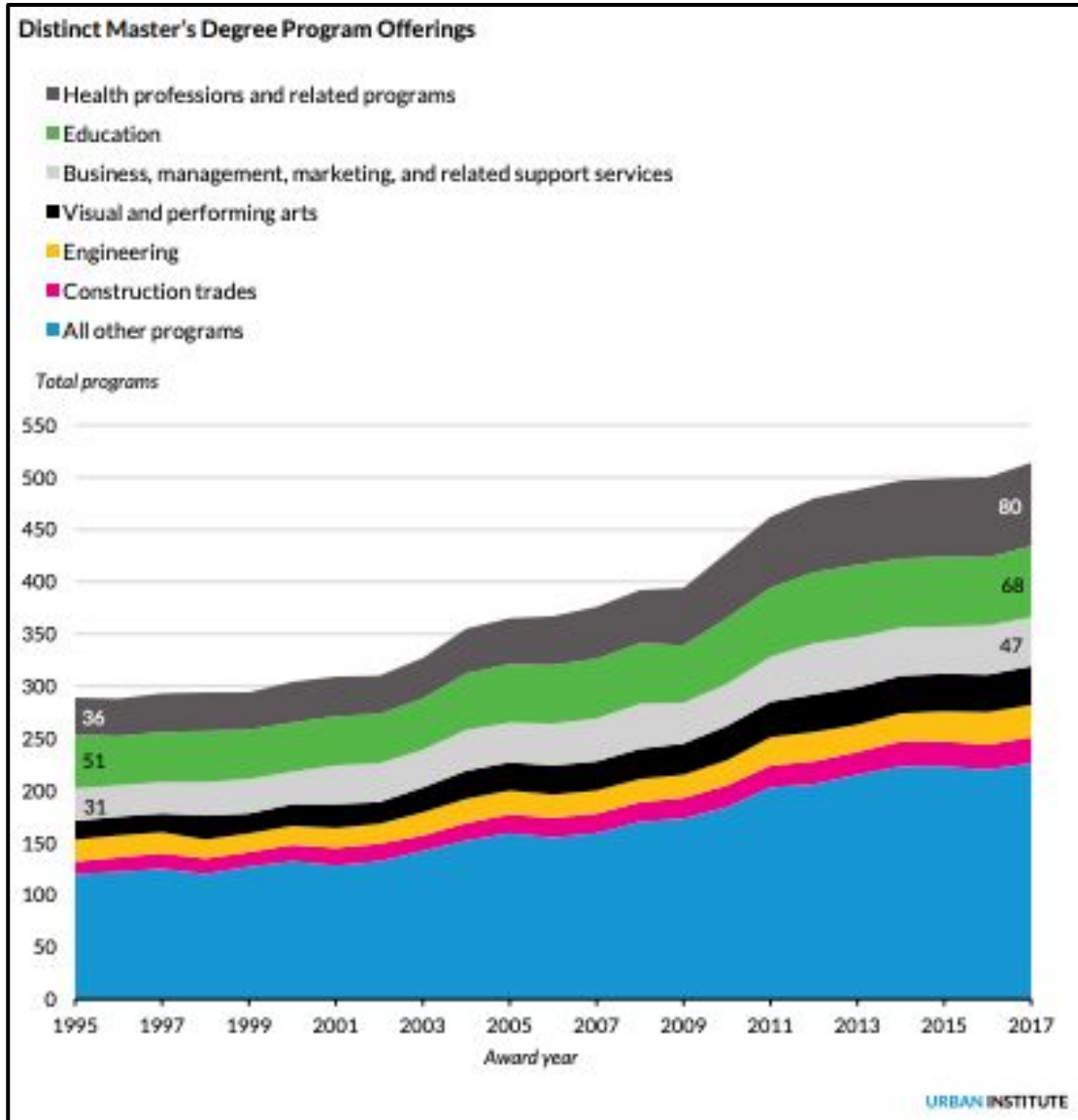
Top-Growing Fields

Here are the 10 fields with the largest increases in the number of colleges offering master's programs in them.

Field of study	No. of colleges with master's program, 2012-13	No. of colleges with master's program, 2019-20	Increase
Research and experimental psychology, other	73	240	167
Architectural and building sciences/technology	42	171	129
Econometrics and quantitative economics	200	327	127
Health and wellness, general	49	170	121
Management sciences and quantitative methods, other	6	120	114
Data modeling/warehousing and database administration	50	164	114
Research methodology and quantitative methods	131	226	95
Research and development management	133	224	91
Business statistics	9	99	90
Public relations, advertising, and applied communication	419	507	88

Growth of Masters Programs

- Higher Ed Added More Than 9,000 Master's-Degree Programs in Less Than a Decade



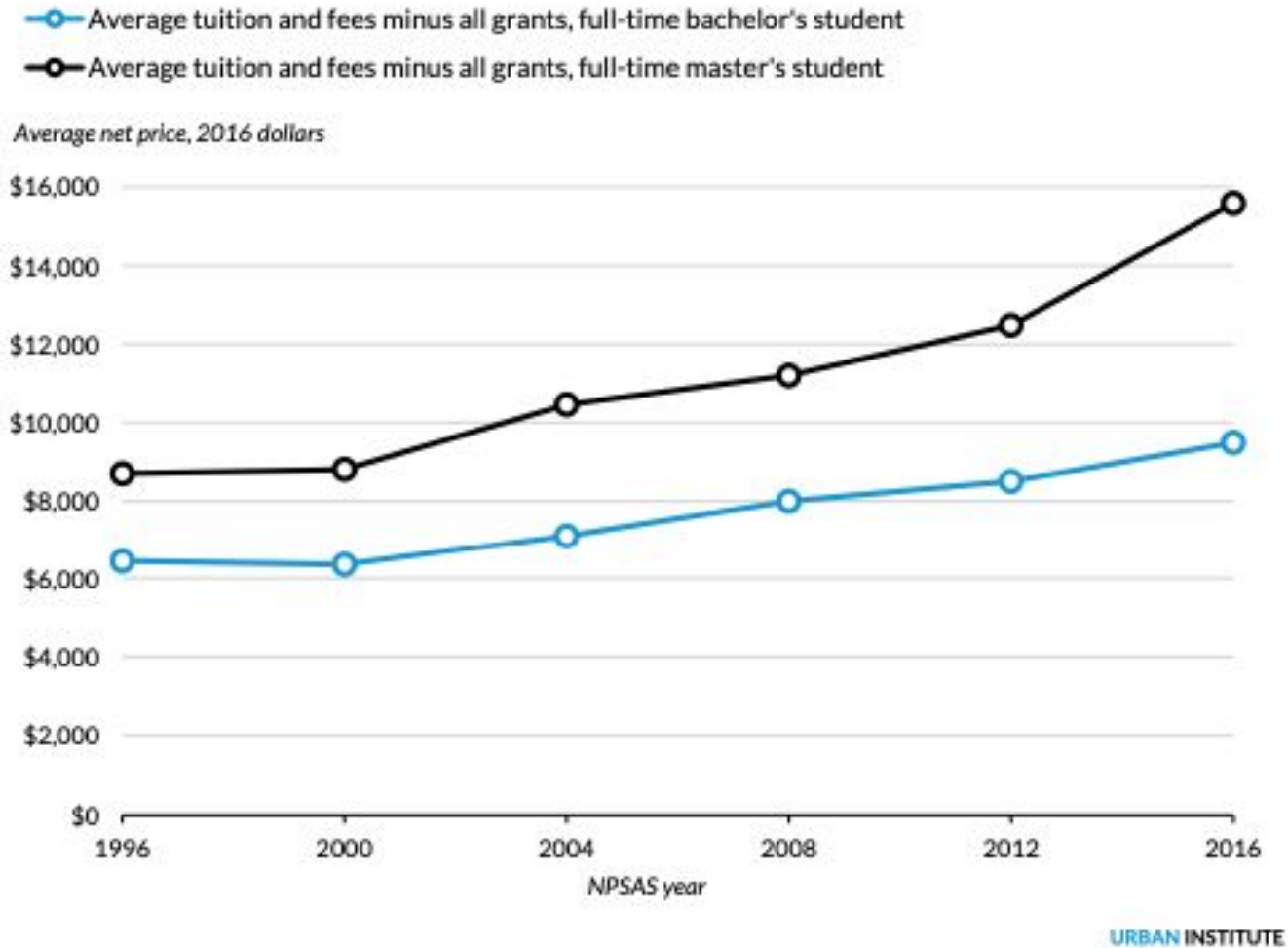
Growth of Masters Programs

- From 1995 to 2017, the number of distinct master's fields that have granted at least 100 degrees nationally per year has risen from 289 to 514

FIGURE 5

Average Net Price of Full-Time Master's and Bachelor's Degree Students

Adjusted for inflation to the most recent survey year



Growth of Masters Programs

- When adjusted for inflation, average net price for tuition and fees—the amount students pay to the institution minus all grants increased 79 percent for full-time master's students from 1996 to 2016
- This compares with a 47 percent increase for full-time bachelor's students during the same period.

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DEGREES OF CHANGE:

How New Kinds of Professional Doctorates are Changing Higher Education Institutions

June 2013

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ABSTRACT

Over the past fifteen years, new types of "professional practice" doctorates in fields ranging from nursing to bioethics have increased exponentially, from near zero to over 500 programs in at least a dozen fields in the U.S. today. This growth raises many policy questions. For example, do doctorate holders serve their clients and organizations more effectively? How do new credential requirements affect access to these professions? How are they shaping institutional missions, pressures, and resource allocation? Using national data and case studies, this paper examines the forces driving the growth of new types of professional practice doctorates and their impacts on higher education institutions, especially those that had not previously offered doctorates.

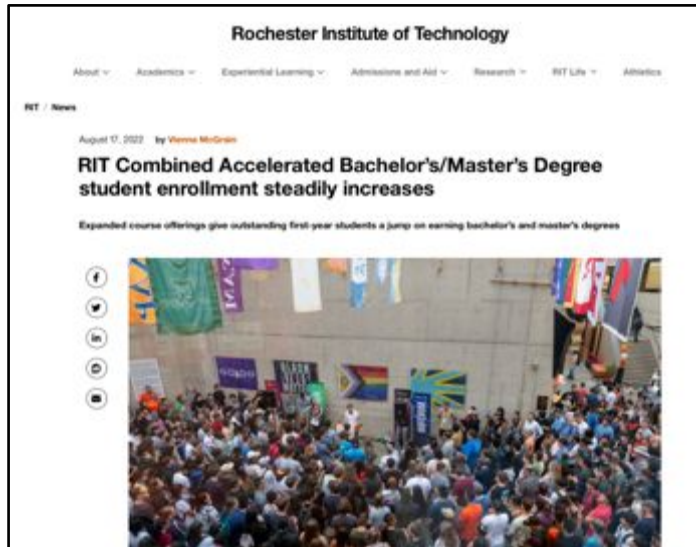
Keywords: US Higher Education, Professional Degrees, Doctoral Education, Labor Market, Institutional Change

Over the past fifteen years, new types of "professional practice" doctorates (here abbreviated as "PPDs") have emerged in a number of professions that had never had doctoral degrees before, not only in the U.S. but in Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and elsewhere. New PPD degrees have been created in at least a dozen fields ranging from physical therapy (DPT) and nursing (DNP) to information management (Doctor of Professional Studies, or DPS) and bioethics (DBioethics). In several cases, these doctorates are now or will shortly be required to enter professional practice; in other fields, even though not (or not yet) required, these doctorates have become the normative degree. In the U.S., PPD programs in newly doctoral fields have skyrocketed from near zero to a total of over 500 programs today, with over 10,000 degrees awarded just in 2012; many more programs are in the planning stage.

Professional practice doctorates, sometimes called clinical doctorates, generally are shorter than PhDs and do not require original research, but they typically include a clinical component; beyond this, there is little agreement on what they are or should be (Council of Graduate Schools, 2007).¹ As discussed below, many of these new professional practice doctoral programs are being offered at institutions that a decade ago had no doctoral studies. As a result, these institutions are necessarily facing significant challenges as, or if, they transition into doctoral education.

Growth in Professional Doctorate Programs

- Rapid increase in degrees of this variant
- From 0 to 500 in less than a decade-and-a-half



Growth in Combined Baccalaureate / Masters Programs

The Issues

- No Longitudinal System / Method (Ever)
- No Ability to Conduct Comprehensive Studies to Shape and Inform Practice
- Limited Transparency in the System
- Rapid growth without ability to reflect / deeply analyze
- Traditional doctoral degree-skewed lens

Why the Gardner Institute Cares?

- Our name
- Our mission
- The blurring distinction between undergraduate and graduate education
- Like dual enrollment, it would be irresponsible to turn a blind eye

Why Focus on the Graduate Student Experience?

- Because it is an idea whose time has come
- If not now, when?
- If not us, then who?

Contact

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