

Executive Summary

Doctoral Research University (DRU) Departmental Conversations Held January 25, 2008

- Thirty-one of 32 department responses were received, representing a 97% response rate.
- Departments' "non-negotiables"
 - Meaningful student-faculty relationships/student centeredness (68%/n=21)
 - Campus collegiality (58%/n=18)
 - Focus on and value of teaching (52%/n=16)
 - Balance between teaching and scholarship (42%/n=13)
 - Strong undergraduate programs/undergraduate focus/undergraduate students (35%/n=11)
- For the majority of departments, doctoral research university (DRU) means more doctoral/graduate programs and/or their own doctoral/graduate program (61%/n=19). This change was viewed both positively and less positively. While some departments saw DRU as an opportunity to develop graduate programs, several others felt pressure

to establish graduate programs where the departmental focus (and faculty interest) has traditionally been on excellence in undergraduate education.

- Thirty-five percent (n=11) of respondents believe that the DRU designation will lead to the development of a stronger research infrastructure on campus (both in funding and services).
- Almost a third of departments (29%/n=9) reported that with the new designation comes increased departmental expectations for faculty research productivity. Again, this change was viewed both positively and less positively.
- In terms of the impact of the DRU designation on the future career of faculty, 35% (n=11) of departments reported that it means more emphasis on and expectation for research and grant-writing. Several departments noted that in light of these increased expectations, the University needs to provide strong and effective research support services.
- Another reported impact of the DRU designation on the future career of faculty was the potential for change in the promotion and tenure

guidelines and how those changes may affect faculty currently working toward tenure (29%/n=9).

- Overwhelmingly, (97%/n=30) departments responded that the DRU status created concern in that we currently do not have enough resources and would be expected in the future to produce more research without adequate resources or research infrastructure support.
- Slightly less than half of the departments are concerned about the effect of the new status on promotion and tenure guidelines and what constitutes appropriate research (45%/n=14).
- Thirty-five percent (n=11) of departments are concerned that the new designation will mean a shift away from teaching to the need to do more research and seek external support.
- Another 35% (n=11) were concerned that in achieving DRU status, we would compromise the quality of our undergraduate programs and education.
- Approximately a quarter of departments (26%/n=8) are concerned that the designation will lead to the creation of a two-tiered system

comprised of first and second class citizens. Corresponding with this concern was the perception that resources would be shifted away from teaching departments/faculty to research departments/faculty.

- When envisioning the future, departments anticipated more equitable distribution of resources and more resources in general (68%/n=21), including higher faculty compensation.
- Departments also anticipated more graduate and doctoral programs (74%/n=23).
- Corresponding to this anticipated increase in resources and graduate programs, 65% (n=20) of departments expect more faculty lines and more graduate assistants in the next 5 to 10 years.
- In summary, the discussions highlighted two main viewpoints regarding DRU status:
 - those departments that see this designation as a negative and fear it will compromise the University's ability to be a comprehensive institution recognized for its excellence in undergraduate education,
 - and those departments that see this designation as a positive and aspire to continue to move toward a true research university

informed and enriched by a greater emphasis on graduate programs and scholarship.

- Under additional questions for consideration, over a quarter of departments (27%/n=8) questioned why we are concerned about changing to DRU when the University System Office does not recognize this change. They also questioned whether the University System is willing to give Georgia Southern more funds based on this designation.