Duke Graduate School

The First 90 Years: 1926–2016

"More perhaps than anything else here our Graduate School will determine the sort of University we are to have" — William Preston Few, Duke University President, 1924–1940

DUKE THE GRADUATE SCHOOL 90TH ANNIVERSARY

Full timeline, more info on the 90th anniversary:

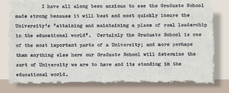
gradschool.duke.edu/90

Milestones

Fall 1926

The Graduate School is founded

Pictured: William Preston Few, Duke's first president, on the importance of The Graduate School to the university.



I have all along been anxious to see the Graduate School made strong because it will best and most quickly insure the University's attaining and maintaining a place of real leadership in the educational world. Certainly the Graduate School is one of the most important parts of a University, and more perhaps than anything else here our Graduate School will determine the sort of University we are to have and its standing in the educational world.

Nov. 1938

Duke joins AAU

Sponsored by UNC-Chapel Hill, Duke is invited to join the Association of American Universities, a seal of approval for Duke's elite status as a research institution.

March 8, 1961

Beginning of the end to segregation

The Board of Trustees announces that Duke's graduate and professional schools will begin admitting students without regard to race. Four Black professional school students matriculated in fall 1961. The Graduate School's first three Black students—James Nathaniel Eaton, Ida Stephens Owens, and Odell Richardson Reuben—enrolled in 1962, a year before Duke's first Black undergraduates.

The Durham Morning Herald

Grad Schools Desegregated

Dr. Hart A. Moore, Dr. Kenneth Brooks Integrate Duke Classes

1987

Increased recruitment of minority students

Duke hires its first minority student recruiter, Jacqueline Looney, and creates The Duke Endowment Fellowship for minority graduate students.

1993

Leading the way

The launch of the Preparing Future Faculty and Responsible Conduct of Research programs makes the school a national leader in co-curricular programs.

1999

Student support services expanded

The Office of Graduate Student Affairs is created to develop support services for graduate students.

2006

First female dean

A fellowship was later established in honor of Jo Rae Wright to support women in science.

2009

New home

The Graduate School moves into its current location on Campus Drive, originally the home of Duke's second president.

2012

First Black dean

Paula D. McClain becomes the first African American to serve as dean for any of Duke's 10 schools.

2014-2016

Professional development expands

New programs help students more fully explore career paths.

Alumni

First doctorates

Zoology students Dean W. Rumbold (left in photo) and Frederick J. Holl received Duke's first Ph.D.s on June 6, 1928.

First female Ph.D.

Rose M. Davis received her doctorate in chemistry on June 5, 1929.

Charles H. Townes

A.M.'37 Physics

Invented the precursor to the laser and won both the Nobel Prize and the Templeton Prize.

Photo courtesy of UC Berkeley

Juanita M. Kreps

A.M.'44, Ph.D.'48 Economics

Was the first woman and first economist to serve as U.S. secretary of commerce.

Evelyn F. Murphy

Ph.D.'65 Economics

Became the first woman to hold constitutional office in the state of Massachusetts, serving as lieutenant governor.

First Black Ph.D.'s

In 1967, James Roland Law (psychology) and Ida Stephens Owens (physiology and biochemistry) became the first African Americans to earn Ph.D.'s from Duke. Law went on to become a James B. Duke Distinguished Professor at Johnson C. Smith University, while Owens established a highly regarded NIH research lab.

Ricardo Lagos

A.M.'56, Ph.D.'66 Economics

Led the coalition opposing dictator Augusto Pinochet and later served as president of Chile.

Sylvia A. Earle

A.M.'56, Ph.D.'66 Botany

Noted oceanographer, explorer, and, in the words of former vice president Al Gore, "the face of marine biology."

Larry T. Mimms

Ph.D.'81 Biochemistry

Developed a significantly faster way of screening for HIV that saved thousands of lives.

Carmichael S. Roberts

Ph.D.'95 Chemistry

Named one of the world's top 100 young entrepreneurs by MIT's *Technology Review*.

Leaders

William H. Glasson
Dean, 1926–1938

Calvin B. Hoover
Dean, 1938–1948

Paul M. Gross
Dean, 1948–1952

Charles S. Sydnor
Dean, 1952–1954

Marcus E. Hobbs
Dean, 1954–1960

Allan M. Cartter
Dean, 1960–1962

Richard L. Predmore
Dean, 1962–1969

John C. McKinney
Dean, 1969–1981

Craufurd D. Goodwin
Dean, 1981–1987

S. Malcolm Gillis
Dean, 1987–1992

Lewis M. Siegel
Dean, 1992–2006

Jo Rae Wright
Dean, 2006–2011

David F. Bell
Interim Dean, 2011–2012

Paula D. McClain
Dean, 2012–Present

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