

Lidia Kos, PhD

Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies
Professor of Biomedical Sciences
University of California, Riverside

March 13, 2025

Search Committee
Dean of the Graduate School Search
Florida State University

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the position of Dean of the Graduate School at Florida State University (FSU). FSU's continued rise as a leading public research university, with its deliberate investment in doctoral education as a cornerstone of its national profile, makes this a particularly compelling moment to step into this role. Having spent a substantial portion of my career in Florida, including senior leadership positions at Florida International University (FIU), I am deeply familiar with the State University System and the policy environment shaping research growth, doctoral productivity, and institutional performance across the state. I would welcome the opportunity to bring that foundation, together with my current experience leading graduate education at a major research university, to support FSU's continued momentum.

Throughout my career, I have held a core conviction: a thriving graduate enterprise is what makes a research university truly excellent. In my current role as Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of California, Riverside (UCR), a Carnegie R1 institution and member of the Association of American Universities, I work closely with the Chancellor, Provost, deans, and faculty to strengthen doctoral training, improve degree completion, and connect graduate education to the institution's broader research agenda. I oversee policies, funding initiatives, and academic frameworks supporting more than fifty graduate programs and thousands of master's and doctoral students, with particular attention to data-informed program review, structured mentoring, and progress-tracking systems that help programs identify obstacles and implement practices that improve outcomes without compromising academic rigor.

Since arriving at UCR, I have made operational modernization and student success central priorities. On the administrative side, I led the consolidation of six separate data platforms into a unified student management system that brings together admissions and funding information, giving staff and academic units a coherent, real-time picture of each student's trajectory. I am currently overseeing development of a new advising module within Slate to further streamline how students and advisors monitor degree milestones. These investments reflect my view that operational efficiency is a direct enabler of student achievement, not simply a management

concern. I have also worked to expand professional development in ways that address real gaps in doctoral preparation. This includes launching the GradScholar initiative, which provides structured methodological training in quantitative, qualitative, and digital humanities approaches, and most recently, securing a grant from the Hispanic Serving Research Universities organization to develop targeted support for postdoctoral scholars in engineering and the physical sciences, equipping them with the tools and strategies needed to compete effectively for faculty positions.

A related priority has been building durable external funding for graduate education. I work closely with faculty on major training-grant proposals, including GAANN programs and pipeline initiatives connecting UCR with the California State University system and community colleges, to broaden the doctoral talent pool while building research capacity. In parallel, I have partnered with Development and Alumni Engagement to secure philanthropic support for graduate fellowships and dissertation research, reinforcing my view that graduate schools are well-positioned to connect donor interests, faculty priorities, and student opportunity in ways that benefit the entire academic enterprise.

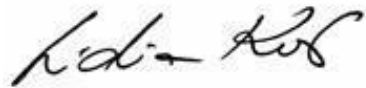
Earlier in my career, I spent more than two decades at FIU, where I served as Associate Vice President for Research and Associate Dean of the Graduate School. In those roles, I expanded interdisciplinary graduate programs, developed externally funded training initiatives, and built student support systems responsive to both institutional research priorities and statewide workforce needs, including securing a \$400,000 philanthropic gift to support master's students. These experiences shaped my collaborative leadership approach and deepened my conviction that a graduate school's impact is realized through genuine partnership with the colleges, faculty, and campus units it serves.

Looking ahead, I see enormous potential for the Graduate School to serve as a driving force in FSU's research trajectory and national standing. I would focus on deepening the connections between doctoral and postdoctoral training and FSU's emerging research priorities, growing the portfolio of competitive fellowships and external training grants, and cultivating recruitment pipelines that bring outstanding students to Tallahassee from across Florida and beyond. Equally important is ensuring that students are supported as whole people, through mentorship, career preparation, and institutional policies attentive to well-being, so that the Graduate School operates as a genuine intellectual community rather than simply an administrative office.

I lead through collaboration, transparency, and a firm commitment to shared governance. Graduate schools occupy a distinctive institutional position, bridging academic policy, research development, and student support, and their effectiveness depends on the ability to unite faculty, deans, and staff around shared goals while building processes that serve students well from first enrollment through career launch. FSU's evident seriousness about its graduate enterprise, and the strategic placement of the Graduate School within the student academic success division, make this opportunity especially compelling to me. I would welcome the chance to work alongside faculty, students, and university leadership to help FSU fully realize those ambitions.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to discussing how my experience and vision align with FSU's goals for graduate education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lidia Kos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "L".

Lidia Kos, PhD