Guidelines for graduate programs and communicators

- **How to reference an NRC finding.** If you decide to promote an NRC finding, do so in ways that are appropriate to how those rankings are presented (a range) and clearly identify what ranking is being called out. It is appropriate to use the data as *general descriptors* of things that your program is being called out for, such as 100% of doctoral students are funded, research productivity is among the highest among departments of n in the country, etc. It is not appropriate to draw comparisons with other Ohio State doctoral programs or to say that program x was ranked y where y is represented with a simple number.

- **Provide information about other rankings that are meaningful.** Every ranking system has its problems, and most disciplines value some rankings over others. If your program is faring well in other rankings, make that information known.

- **Dig deep into the NRC data.** The NRC has provided access to its entire dataset, which means that each doctoral program can examine individual data points and combinations of data points in ways that are meaningful to each program and the discipline. The NRC’s 4-page report brief is a useful introduction to what the NRC assessment provides.

- **Pay attention to the dimensional rankings.** One of the more useful features of the NRC study is what it calls “dimensional illustrative rankings.” These rankings, which are in addition to the S and R rankings, focus on research activity, student support and outcomes, and diversity of the academic environment.

- **Talk about the student experience.** What can your program add to the information provided by the NRC about the student experience in your program? Perhaps you can provide information on conference and research funding and where students publish and present their research. What information can you provide that gives prospective students a sense of climate? Are there active student groups and regular faculty/student interactions through departmental colloquia, etc.? Does your program regularly host speakers of national and international renown?

- **Provide information about placements.** Job placements are one of the best indicators of doctoral program quality. And, what counts as a high quality placement varies depending upon the discipline, doctoral program, and institution. Prospective students, particularly in this economic climate, are particularly interested in job placements.