Response to Graduate Education Task Force
Department of Marketing

We would like to thank the Graduate Education Task Force for the opportunity to respond to the evaluation of the Ph.D. program in Marketing. While the Task Force summary is consistent with the report we submitted, we believe that the rating of our program as being merely “Good” is inconsistent with the facts:

1. Our admissions are highly selective (about 15% of applicants are admitted). While we were not provided comparable data for the entire campus, we believe that this figure is more selective than the overall campus average.

2. For the last several five-year periods (02-05 to 04-07), the average GPA and GRE scores of students entering the Marketing Ph.D. program was higher than the campus-wide averages.

3. Our average percent completion (1996-2000 admits) is 55% compared to a campus-wide average of 56%. Here, our rating is slightly better than the campus-wide average.

4. Our median time to completion (2003-2008) is 5 years, which is among the ten best on campus. This figure is also better than the campus-wide average (5.9 years) for the comparable time period.

5. Over the 1998-2008 time period, we placed 100% of our students in teaching positions at the college-university level (initial placements). Of these, 85% were tenure track appointments. Both of these statistics are much higher than the campus averages (42% and 26% respectively).

6. We acknowledge that our program falls below the University average in the proportion of Presidential Fellowships that are approved (40% versus 62% for entire campus) and accepted (10% versus 38% for the entire campus). In part, this reflects the fact that students admitted to our program typically receive multiple admission offers, often from competing Marketing doctoral programs with more financial resources than the University of Iowa.

7. We also acknowledge that diversity remains a challenge for the Marketing doctoral program. Although we have a good split between males and females, the applicant pool in recent years has been dominated by students from China and Korea. This reflects two facts. First, we place considerable emphasis on quantitative skills in the admissions decision. Second, we face strong competition from other Marketing doctoral programs for minority candidates.

The Graduate Task Force should note that the Marketing doctoral program is quite small (10 – 12 students). This size reflects two considerations. First, the previous Dean of the Tippie College (Professor Gary Fethke) asked departments in the Tippie College to reduce the size of programs to conserve resources allocated to doctoral programs. Second, as a faculty, we have taken the conscious decision to limit enrollments so that doctoral students have faculty members who can devote considerable time to mentoring research.

The advantage of this approach is the quality of students graduating from the program. Between 2001 and 2008, three of our graduates won national recognition for their dissertation proposals. These awards include a winner in the 2002 MSI (Marketing Science Institute) Alden G. Clayton Dissertation Proposal Competition, a winner in the 2005 SCP-Sheth Dissertation Proposal Competition and an honorable mention in the 2006 SCP-Sheth Dissertation Proposal Competition. These are prestigious awards in which our students compete with students from high quality doctoral programs across the United States.

As doctoral students and early career academics, our graduates are also very productive scholars. The cohort of 11 that graduated between 2001 and 2008 has published more than 50 articles in peer-reviewed academic journals. Adjusting for the time since graduation, our graduates publish an average about 0.85 peer reviewed journal articles per person per year. Of these 52 publications, a total of 13 have appeared (or will appear) in top-tier journals in marketing, management, and psychology.

The Ph.D. program in Marketing is of unquestionably “High Quality” based on the internal metrics provided by the Graduate College, the success of our graduates in the academic placement market and the productivity of our graduates in producing scholarship at the highest levels of the profession.