

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Presentation: Graduate Student Funding/Financial Aid

This presentation is for information only.

UW Graduate Student Funding

Tuition for UW graduate students has increased 150 percent over the last 12 years.

Tuition, Enrollment

- 150 percent increase in resident graduation tuition, 2000-1 to 2012-13¹
- 37.5 percent enrollment increase, 2000-1 to 2011-12 (from 8,827 to 12,135),² with the largest increases in Master's students and STEM fields).

Only 42 percent of all UW graduate students receive financial support.

Financial support for UW graduate students*

UW graduate students receiving financial support in 2011-12	5,117
Teaching Assistants**	1,619
Research Assistants**	2,134
Fellowships	930
Traineeships	434

**This does not include aid processed through UW Student Accounts which includes loans, and small scholarships.*

*** Stipends range from \$1,525 to \$2,279/month depending on department and appointment level (pre-master's/master's/doctoral). The PDRA1 (master's) level is what we often use as an "average" stipend. PDRA1 level is \$1,639 / month.*

The state contributes 90 percent to the University's teaching assistant support – and almost nothing to research assistant support.

State funding supports:

- ~ 90 percent of Teaching Assistant support
- ~ 5 percent of Research Assistant support

Grants – primarily from federal government sources – pay for virtually all graduate student research support at the UW.

¹ Resident graduate tuition was \$5,745 in 2001-2, and will be \$14,337 for Tier 1 resident graduate students in 2012-13. Nonresident tuition rose by 87 percent during that same period, from \$14,283 to \$26,748 for Tier 1.

² Note: This refers to all graduate and professional students at UW's three campuses except for those in these programs: M.D.; J.D.; Pharm. D., and DDS.

External funding (e.g., grants, contracts, National Science Foundation fellowships, National Defense Science and Engineering Fellowships) supports:

- ~95 percent of all Research Assistants,
- 100 percent of Traineeships, and
- ~50 percent of Fellowships.

Other fellowship funds come from endowments or departmental/college internal funds.

Six years ago 47 percent of UW graduate students received financial aid; today, only 42 percent do.

Year	UW graduate students enrolled	UW graduate students receiving financial aid	Percentage of UW graduate students receiving aid
2006	10,539	5,017	47.5
2007	10,573	4,943	46.7
2008	11,114	5,010	45.1
2009	11,581	4,953	42.7
2010	11,911	5,024	41.2
2011	12,135	5,117	42

The number of research assistantships has dropped by 10 percent.

Type of aid UW graduate students receive	UW graduate students receiving aid in 2006	UW graduate students receiving aid in 2011	Percent change
Teaching assistantships	1,476	1,479	+.2
Research assistantships	2,390	2,134	-10.7
Traineeships	467	434	-7.1
Fellowships	487	930	+90.9

State Support for Graduate Students

2008-09	\$1.5 million
2011-12	\$1.1 million*

*% funding decline = 26.7 percent

Even though government-funded fellowships are extremely valuable, they don't meet our growing need for graduate student support.

Even government funding is problematic as it does not cover the complete cost of a graduate student's education. The UW must make up the difference between the fellowships and awards and the cost of tuition and living expenses.

Outside Fellowships and Awards – NSF, NIH and ARCS

UW students have remained competitive in several national fellowships—particularly NSF and NIH Funding. The Seattle chapter of Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) has also provided substantive funding (as “add ons” usually added to a research assistantship or teaching assistantship)

1. The National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship

Program is a prestigious 3-year fellowship awarded to individual students and can be applied at any university across the country.

- o 210 NSF Fellows at UW, 2012-13.
- o UW ranks 5th in the country for new awardees year after year, behind UC Berkeley, MIT, Stanford and Harvard.
- o NSF provides \$30,000 stipend per year for three years to student.
- o NSF provides \$12,000 per year to cover tuition, health insurance and mandatory fees). The total cost of tuition and fees for most doctoral students ranges from \$17k to \$18k for the 2012-13 academic year).
- o The University is required to cover the shortfall (via tuition waivers)

With NIH grants, UW departments and faculty researchers must scrape together money to cover the gap between grants and educational costs for graduate students.

2. National Institutes of Health (NIH)

National Institute of Health grants are prestigious awards; NIH is a major funder of UW biomedical and life sciences. Currently, approximately 460 UW graduate students receive support through NIH-funded projects.

- NIH grants provide only 60 percent of educational costs for graduate student trainees (e.g., tuition and fees), leaving the remaining 40 percent for others to pay. The resulting shortfall (about \$2.1 million per year) must be paid by others – most commonly, by faculty researchers (principal investigators), departments or colleges,

by the graduate students' advisers, or sometimes (somewhat rarely) by the students themselves.

- Principal investigators are increasingly concerned about their ability to cover tuition costs for their trainees, particularly as tuition increases. This has placed considerable stress on some researchers, because graduate students are critical to NIH grant awards - without their training and research assistance, faculty's funded research grants would not progress and funding would not be renewed.
- Some faculty are already foregoing graduate students in favor of taking additional post-doctoral fellows because all post-doc costs can be written into NIH budgets.
- If continued, this trend would be disastrous to graduate training in the life sciences: it could destroy the UW's international leadership in the field and hurt our ability to compete successfully for other external grants and contracts.

3. ARCS

ARCS® Foundation, Inc. — Achievement Rewards for College Scientists — is an organization of women philanthropists who are dedicated to “Advancing Science in America.” The primary purpose of ARCS Foundation is the support of students in the fields of science, engineering and medical research at universities within geographic areas of ARCS Foundation Chapters.

ARCS Facts and Figures

New ARCS awardees to the UW in 2012	32
ARCS fellows at the UW in 2012-13	85
Current and former ARCS fellows Pursuing Ph.D.'s at the UW in 2012-13	250

ARCS fellowship funding at the UW in 2010-11	\$390,000*
ARCS fellowship funding at the UW in 2011-12	\$460,000*

** including ARCS endowment and current-use named ARCS fellowship funding.*

Student indebtedness: Overview

Nearly 40 percent of UW master's students have accumulated \$20,000 or more by the time they complete their degrees.

According to the US Department of Education, graduate and professional students have increasingly gone into debt to pay for their education.³

UW Indebtedness

The UW Graduate School does an exit survey of all graduate and professional students; the survey shows an increase in the percentage of students reporting debt above \$20,000 – and that growth is particularly apparent for master's students.

Doctoral	Level of Indebtedness (in \$1,000s)				
Year	\$0	< \$5	\$5 to \$10	\$10 to \$20	> \$20
2003-04	46.06%	8.10%	9.26%	11.81%	12.27%
2004-05	46.79%	5.94%	11.40%	7.36%	17.10%
2005-06	48.93%	6.99%	7.77%	10.49%	16.31%
2006-07	46.81%	5.61%	7.54%	10.83%	15.67%
2007-08	51.75%	8.29%	6.81%	7.92%	15.47%
2008-09	55.45%	9.11%	5.69%	8.62%	14.15%
2009-10	52.96%	7.94%	7.94%	7.48%	16.36%
2010-11	52.52%	5.79%	8.90%	6.82%	16.17%

Master's	Level of Indebtedness (in \$1,000s)				
Year	\$0	< \$5	\$5 to \$10	\$10 to \$20	> \$20
2003-04	42.81%	8.34%	8.93%	15.94%	23.93%
2004-05	35.29%	7.17%	8.09%	16.21%	25.43%
2005-06	33.32%	6.77%	8.84%	15.54%	27.30%
2006-07	32.94%	6.48%	7.65%	14.09%	29.70%
2007-08	32.27%	6.63%	7.01%	14.56%	30.15%
2008-09	32.22%	6.37%	7.10%	12.94%	32.35%
2009-10	31.13%	5.21%	7.13%	12.37%	35.46%
2010-11	29.91%	3.95%	5.56%	12.13%	39.50%

³ National Center for Education Statistics, Trends in Graduate Borrowing: Selected Years, 1995-96 to 2007-08; <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010180>

GPSS Survey on Student Indebtedness.

In winter, 2012, the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) conducted a survey of UW graduate and professional students. Survey overview:

1,160 respondents

418 (36 percent) master's students

446 (38 percent) doctoral students

204 (17 percent) professional students

87 (7 percent) medical/dental students.

40% first year students

30% second year

13% third year

16% fourth year (or beyond)

Survey results:

- >80 percent have taken out loans (either subsidized or unsubsidized) (These include both Research Assistants and Teaching Assistants)
- 55 percent: Rising tuition biggest obstacle to degree completion
- 45 percent: Inadequate financial aid an obstacle to degree completion
- 43 percent: Worry about ability to repay loans
- ~50 percent: Graduate debt >\$20,000
- ~50 percent: Graduate and undergraduate debt >\$20,000
- 3 percent: Graduate and undergraduate debt >\$200,000

Our recommendations:

- 1. Recognize that graduate students are central to UW's mission – they are teachers, students, researchers, mentors, and provide enormous support for our faculty. <http://youtu.be/ZZ6ufLoz8wc>**
- 2. Recognize that state support for graduate education and particularly for graduate students is not likely to meet our needs for recruitment and retention of the best students in the next decade or beyond.**
- 3. Create matching opportunities for partnerships with donors, industry, and the community to provide critical financial support for UW graduate students**
- 4. Make graduate student financial support (primarily fellowships) a centerpiece of the next public campaign.**