



OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
ONE SHIELDS AVENUE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8502
TELEPHONE: (530) 752-2231

November 3, 2005

Larry N. Vanderhoef
Chancellor
Davis Campus

RE: Representative Assembly Graduate Student Fee Resolution

Dear Larry:

I enclose for your information a resolution adopted by the Representative Assembly at its meeting on November 1, 2005, calling for abandonment of the existing policy of shifting graduate student fees and tuition to faculty research grants.

While the resolution itself does not so state, it was implicit in the discussion in the Assembly, and it is my desire, that resolution of the problems presented by high fees for academic graduate students requires a unified effort between the Senate and the Administration. The Senate and its leadership remain ready to work with the campus administration towards finding a formula for coping with graduate student fees and tuition other than shifting those costs to faculty research. I hope that you will receive this resolution with that spirit in mind.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dan".

Daniel L. Simmons
Professor of Law
Chair of the Division

c: Virginia Hinshaw, Provost
Andrew Waterhouse, Chair, Graduate Council
Jeffery Gibeling, Dean Graduate Studies
ec: Members of the Representative Assembly-Davis Division

Graduate Fees and Tuition Academic Senate Resolution

California's sophisticated and technically advanced economy requires highly skilled, critical thinkers to compete in the international arena. Thus, advanced degree graduates are essential to our state's success. This sophisticated education includes hands-on experience in creating new knowledge via research or performance. The faculty are responsible for finding the finances to support research, but during state budget crises, administrative mandates have required that research project funding be applied towards the actual educational cost of graduate student researchers.

At present the campus administration defines both resident and non-resident tuition and fees for graduate student researchers (GSRs) hired on grants to be an employee benefit to be funded by the grant. The result is an increasing and improper burden on faculty research funds, and the likely consequences are

- fewer graduate students funded as GSRs
- increased substitution toward post-doctoral researchers
- changes in graduate program requirements to reduce costs that compromise educational quality
- cuts in other budget categories within grants, leading to reduced research productivity, and
- increased difficulties in faculty recruitment/retention because the same grant at other institutions pays for much more research.

Further impacts are likely to follow from the particularly high cost to faculty from hiring non-resident GSRs:

- the campus will not compete nationally and internationally to recruit the best possible students
- programs unable to recruit graduate students from outside California will likely enroll a weaker and less diverse student population
- programs will find it harder to achieve a critical mass of students in elective graduate courses
- fewer graduate students will be employed and the budget for teaching assistants will represent a higher share of a program's available funding.

These changes all erode research quality and productivity on our campus, threaten the campus reputation for graduate education, and undercut other goals such as internationalization.

We call on the campus administration to abandon the policy of shifting the cost of graduate fees and tuition to faculty research funds.