Doctoral GA Stipend Increase Plan

The Path to New Market-Based Minimum Doctoral GA Stipends by Graduate Program

• Each graduate program was asked to prepare an R2PC plan, including a GA plan specifying what the minimum competitive stipend rate is in their field among peers and aspirational peers. Departments were asked to either rely on the Oklahoma State Study of GA Stipends (which we provided everyone and which lists average stipends for GAs by CIP code so that they can be matched directly to comparable programs here, and at other institutions) for their new proposed minimum, or to provide concrete data and/or references if they have other sources of information to make a case for a new minimum stipend that is higher than the OK State average.

• Department plans were reviewed by Deans and forwarded to the Grad College.

• We collated all of the information on GA stipends from every R2PC plan and listed it alongside the highest average from the OK State data for the comparable CIP code. In some cases the average Research GA was the highest stipend, in others the highest stipend was the overall average, and in a handful of others the highest stipend was the average Teaching GA. In every instance we used the highests OK State national average for each CIP code.

• The RSCA GA sub-committee, the Grad Council Ad-Hoc Top Tier committee members, and the Grad Executive committee, along with key staff in the Grad College, held a full day GA stipend retreat to systematically determine guidelines for determining minimum competitive stipends by department. Members of this day-long working group included: Dr. Janet Dufek (Kinesiology), Dr. Merrill Landers (Physical Therapy), Dr. Bryan Spang elo (Chemistry), Dr. Hasan Deniz (Teaching & Learning), Ms. Surbhi Sharma (GPSA President), Dr. Nader Ghafoori (Engineering), Dr. David Damore (Political Science), Dr. Peter Gray (Anthropology), Drs. Kate Korgan & Kendall Hartley (Graduate College), and Leslie Hunter, Katelyn DiBenedetto, Matt Martinez, Maulik Maniar, Brianne Heinle, Janine Barrett, and Kara Wada from the Grad College.

• This working group then reviewed every department's minimum stipend proposal, assessed the value of their supporting data, and came to a collective decision on the appropriate competitive minimum stipend. Some new minimum stipends are what the department requested; some stipends are lower than their request because the group found the data to support the higher request lacking; some new stipend minimums are higher than the department requested in order to maintain competitiveness against our peers and aspirational peers in the Oklahoma State study data. Finally, we rounded each department's new minimum doctoral stipend to the nearest $250.

• The attached spreadsheet shows each department and their final, approved, minimum doctoral stipend. Departments may still pay more, but this is the new minimum amount.

• Non-academic units (like the Provost's office, the Grad College, CAEO, student affairs, financial aid, etc.) who hire GAs will now need to pay the new minimum of the student's program. So if you hire a graduate student from Chemistry you'll pay them at least the minimum stipend as specified for
Chemistry, but if you hire a doctoral GA who comes from Anthropology you'll pay their minimum stipend rate.

• New stipends will go into effect for all doctoral students beginning right away in January 2016. Non-academic units will need to increase their stipends at the same time out of their own funds. Externally funded academic GAs (i.e. paid on grants, contracts, etc.) will also have their stipends increased in January from their own external funds or overhead funds (the faculty advisor’s, the department’s funds, and/or the Dean’s funds). If it is impossible to cover the externally funded GA’s increase in this way at the investigator, department or college level, the Dean will need to reach out to Tom Piechota and Kate Korgan with a specific request and rationale for financial assistance; this should be a very rare occurrence. If it does happen, we will work with these parties to facilitate the increase for the spring semester.

• With this plan there may be a handful of doctoral students on campus who receive no net increase this semester. This would only be the case for those doctoral GAs in departments where the new minimum doctoral stipend is $15k and where the student has already been post-ABD and on a $15k stipend. Also, students who were already paid higher stipends and whose new minimum stipend is at that same amount will not see an immediate stipend increase unless the department opts to pay above the minimum.