UCLA

Report of the Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support

DECEMBER 2023

Table of Contents

Report of the UCLA Academic Senate and Administration Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support

I.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2023, UCLA Academic Senate Chair Jessica Cattelino and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt co-charged the creation of a Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support at UCLA (Task Force). The Task Force was comprised of members of the Academic Senate and individuals within the administration with responsibilities relating to graduate education and labor relations. The [charge](#) tasked members with recommending answers to a series of questions regarding financial support for graduate students and programs, academic training and employment, graduate program size and the relationship between graduate and undergraduate programs.

The Task Force met 11 times in 2023, with the first meeting in March and the final meeting in December. The Task Force received data from the Administration, Academic Senate and many departments and graduate programs, and met with numerous Administrative and Senate leaders from the campus and UC Office of the President.

Below, we outline the findings of the Task Force. The Task Force identified a number of ways in which the increased costs of graduate students may be addressed, however none of them are likely to cover more than a fraction of the shortfall. **If the university is to maintain its strong presence in graduate education and remain a leading R1 university, it is likely that the majority of cost increases will have to be funded from the current budget**. The Task Force acknowledges that decisions about how these costs will be funded should rest with the university's senior leadership with authority over campus-wide budgets, in consultation with the Academic Senate.

Graduate Student Support

Funding for graduate students at UCLA usually takes the form of employment compensation or fellowship support. The largest source of income support is through employment as an Academic Student Employee (ASE) or as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR), although the use of these two positions varies across campus. Costs associated with employing ASEs and GSRs increased due to the 2022-2025 UAW collective bargaining agreements and, if the number of positions remains consistent, likely represent a minimum annual increase of approximately $30 million. These increases lead to some pressure to increase internal fellowship stipends, which without additional funds, would result in fewer students receiving awards.

The increase in GSR pay is hitting some parts of campus strongly as it is unclear whether external funding agencies will raise caps that are, in some cases, below the current compensation levels. Faculty

in these fields have asked about eliminating fees and tuition for graduate students, however the Task Force found this not a feasible or advisable approach. Many external fellowships and training grants do not provide as much support for students as GSR positions. This may disincentivize students from applying for these positions in fields in which their research as a GSR is indistinguishable from their research as a student. The Task Force recommends that units in these fields provide incentives to encourage students to apply for these positions. Likewise, the Task Force recommends incentivizing faculty to write and maintain training grants, because while the training grants benefit programs, they do not directly benefit the Principal Investigator (PI) of the grant.

The Task Force appreciates that identifying new sources of income can be difficult, but identified two avenues that should be followed. First, the Task Force strongly recommends that the university continue to lobby the State Legislature for additional funding. It is crucial that, as part of this process, the university make a convincing case for the importance of graduate students to research and education. In addition, the Task Force encourages the university to continue outreach to funding agencies to ensure that research funding keeps up with the costs involved in performing the research. Second, fundraising for graduate students should be a major priority in UCLA's upcoming multi-year Capital Development campaign. Donors must be enabled to understand that graduate student support is essential to undergraduate education and to UCLA's research mission.

Evaluation of the Size and Purpose of Graduate Programs

One approach to evaluating the size and purpose of graduate degree programs is the development of an "optimal size rubric" or "resource allocation rubric," colloquially known as "right-sizing." The purpose of such initiatives is to assess the appropriate size of each graduate program, instead of basing size and resource allocation on historical norms. The Task Force discussed the possibility of conducting a campus-wide right-sizing initiative in depth, studying documents used at other UC campuses and interviewing another UC graduate dean who has gone through the process. After weighing the benefits and costs, the Task Force decided to take a different approach that encourages departments and programs to perform a similar process locally. The ability of programs to perform their own assessments of the optimal size of their graduate cohorts will be facilitated by documents provided by the Division of Graduate Education (DGE): program resource and size assessment reports and the graduate student support budget modeling tool. The Task Force recommends that departments use this information to make informed decisions about graduate admissions. In addition, the Task Force recommends that the Academic Senate incorporate an optimal-size analysis within the self-review document that departments and programs produce in preparation for their academic program review.

Relationship between Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

As ASEs, graduate students often serve as teaching assistants (TAs) in undergraduate courses and they often mentor undergraduates in research environments. In return, ASE appointments provide an important source of graduate student support. The Task Force asked whether this relationship should play a role in determining graduate student cohort size. Although members had a range of views, there was a general consensus that while the undergraduate teaching needs of a department may be considered, it should not be a primary factor driving graduate cohort size.

In thinking about this relationship, the Task Force entertained a number of options aimed at identifying

ways to make undergraduate education more cost-effective. Among the options discussed, the Task Force recommends that departments and units carefully evaluate ASE workloads, that faculty consider appropriate use of more learning assistants (LAs) and readers, and that the administration consider incentivizing faculty to use technology to reach more students.

The Dual Role of Academic Training and Employment

As the academic environment has evolved, it has become clear that effort needs to be made to distinguish between the work graduate students perform as employees and work they do to further their education and earn a degree. This was exemplified by Course 375 Teaching Apprentice Practicum, a credit-earning course that was widely thought to be required when employed as an ASE. Recognizing it as a concern, the Graduate Council is planning to disestablish the course and is working closely with departments and faculty to facilitate the transition.

Graduate students should be provided with clear written guidance to let them know what is expected of them in their own research and in their work as an employee. For their own research, the Task Force recommends that faculty clearly articulate academic criteria for grading 590-series courses: identifying goals, tasks and expectations. GSR Description of Duties letters, which must be issued in addition to appointment letters, should describe activities and project goals. While this may be sufficient to define the work a GSR does as an employee in some cases, in many cases, particularly in lab-based research, the research the student does as an employee and the research the student does for their own thesis or dissertation is exceedingly difficult to distinguish. In these cases, the Task Force recommends that appointment letters define employment by hours worked and may include a statement that the research carried out as an employee may be used in the students' own thesis or dissertation.

II.   INTRODUCTION

In February 2023, Academic Senate Chair Jessica Cattelino and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt co-charged the creation of a Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support at UCLA ("Task Force"). Comprised of members of the Academic Senate and individuals within the Administration with responsibilities relating to graduate education and labor relations, the Task Force[1] charge was to "create a UCLA plan for the future of graduate programs and graduate student support, given the University of California's mandated responsibility for the State's research enterprise and academic graduate education. Members will consider longstanding structural issues and also the new reality of graduate education in light of recent collective bargaining agreements with graduate student workers."

The charge tasked members with recommending answers to a series of questions regarding financial support for graduate students and programs, academic training and employment, graduate program size and the relationship between graduate and undergraduate programs (see Appendix A).

The current state of graduate education and the pressing challenges we face are the result of

---

[1] The Task Force members are listed in Appendix A.

longstanding structural issues across the UC system. For decades, faculty across the university, sometimes in collaboration with administrators, have produced eloquent and well-researched public letters and reports demonstrating the inadequacy of both state and federal support for graduate education at UC. These warnings grew increasingly and rightly concerned over the years with the rising cost of housing and the impact of insufficient funding on both the university's academic mission and its stated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This body of work constitutes a vortex of repetition, frustration, and hope. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we include some highlights below.

In an eloquent November 2022 letter that dared to imagine UC's negotiating with the State and Federal governments for more funding as conditions for settling the strike, UCLA's Executive Board (EB) echoed many previous task forces when they stated: "The State gave the University of California the responsibility for research and graduate education, yet the State's funding approach currently does not appear consistent with its mandate. Rebuilding toward a brighter future is especially important at this time when the UC has been increasing graduate and undergraduate student diversity" (UCLA Academic Senate Executive Board, 2022, p. 1). Citing reports spanning over a decade,[2] the letter reiterated consistent conclusions:

> 'The state ... does not fund graduate education in the same way it supports undergraduate enrollments, and until recently UC has made little or no effort to secure such funding. The failure to secure adequate funding to match the growth of graduate enrollments is in large part responsible for the current situation in which the UC finds itself with respect to graduate student unrest.' (2020, UCPB Letter on Graduate Student Funding, p. 4) 'The University must take positive steps to address the financial pressures facing our graduate students if we wish to maintain our reputation as a world-class university and serve the people of California.' (ibid., p. 1) 'Adequate funding for graduate students is also crucial to achieving UC's stated goals around diversity.' (ibid., p. 4) 'It is the responsibility of the UC and campus leaderships to address these structural problems, to ensure the future of the UC is as successful as its past.' (2022, Mitigating the Effects of Covid on Graduate Students, p. 5) (UCLA Academic Senate Executive Board, 2022, p. 1).

The 2022 UCLA EB letter concludes with a common theme of disappointment: "reading the reports is disheartening because the issues have not been resolved, and now the crisis has taken a new and dramatic form. Earlier reports couch academic graduate funding issues mostly in terms of competitiveness and recruiting the top community of diverse graduate students, but more and more

---

[2] For examples, see Former Senate Chair Jessica Cattelino's list in a November 18, 2022 Academic Senate update to the UCLA Faculty:

- 2022 Senate Academic Council endorsement of a letter from the Senate Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs and the UC Council of Graduate Deans on concerns about the future of graduate education and the impact of COVID-19: Mitigating the Effects of Covid on Graduate Students (PDF)
- 2020 Senate Academic Council endorsement of the Senate's University Committee on Planning and Budget's powerful letter, which discussed some of the structural issues that threaten the financial security of UC graduate students: UCPB Letter on Graduate Student Funding (PDF)
- 2019 Recommendations for Greater Support of Doctoral Education (PDF) from the Graduate Education Workgroup of the Academic Planning Council (a joint Academic Senate and UC Administration committee)
- 2012 Report of the Academic Senate Taskforce on Competitiveness in Academic Graduate Student Support (PDF) Adopted by the Senate Academic Council
- 2012 Report of the Joint Administrative/Senate Workgroup on Academic Graduate Student Issues (PDF)

they began to address wellbeing, dignity, and adequate levels of funding necessary for graduate students to live in our expensive cities" (UCLA Academic Senate Executive Board, 2022, p. 2).

This problem extends beyond UCLA. As the 2020 UCPB report argued, "the production of Ph.D. students is a crucial factor distinguishing UC from the other segments of higher education in California. Attracting and retaining high quality graduate students is imperative to support the research of faculty members and departments, the reputation and ranking of our campuses (including AAU status), and to our mission of training the next generation of scholars and teachers for the state of California and the world" (University Committee on Planning and Budget, 2020, p. 4). Indeed, the university administration has long admitted that improved funding for graduate education is required. In 2019 a UC-wide group of faculty and administrators, in the report of the Academic Planning Council Graduate Education Working Group, argued that

> understanding the value to UC of academic doctoral education is key to grasping the impact of chronic underinvestment in doctoral education. Doctoral education at UC is inadequately funded and students are inadequately supported. Among those familiar with postbaccalaureate degrees at UC, there is substantial awareness of these inadequacies, despite repeated efforts to address them. In fact, since 2000 alone, five task forces before this one have issued recommendations on graduate education at UC: 2001 – Innovation and Prosperity at Risk - Investing in Graduate Education to Sustain California's Future; 2003 – Commission on Growth and Support of Graduate Education; 2007 – Work Team on Graduate and Professional School Diversity; 2012 – Joint Administrative/Senate Workgroup on Academic Graduate Student Issues; and 2012 – Task Force on Competitiveness in Academic Graduate Student Support. Each committee produced a report with recommendations that echoed and amplified the previous group's efforts. Despite all of this thoughtful attention, these perennially concerning issues persist. Put most simply, both UC leadership and the State of California need to recognize the value of academic doctoral education as distinct from undergraduate education: it is a crucial component of the continuity of the University system, and essential to the State's economy and vitality. The importance of doctoral education is recognized by emerging economies such as India, where academic research institutions are being established at remarkable rates… Indeed, given the size of California's economy, and UC's scale and contributions to the state, nation, and world, UC should be comparing its conception of, and commitments to, doctoral education with growing nations rather than other states (Academic Planning Council Graduate Education Workgroup, 2019, p. 2-3).

Unfortunately, adequate steps have not been taken to address the challenge.

We would add that the prosperity and vitality of our State are dependent on the diversity of the graduate student body, and that graduate research, while it offers an excellent return on investment (Council of Graduate Schools, 2008), matters in terms that go far beyond the economic. As Christopher Newfield, professor of literature and American Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, compellingly argued in a January 2022 response to Governor Newsom's new budget, we need to make a case to our Governor that higher education is much more than job training: our state and our world's future also depends upon "revolutions in thought or in the public's collective cultural and political capabilities" that constitute graduate education at its most groundbreaking (Newfield, 2022).

One lesson we have learned from this archive of faculty arguments in support of increased funding for graduate education is that whatever changes are implemented as a result of *this* report must only be implemented in extensive consultation with and by the faculty, whose well-documented collective expertise and passionate advocacy are essential to any conversation about the future of graduate education.

III.   SUMMARY OF THE TASK FORCE'S PROCESS

The Task Force met for the first time in March 2023. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Task Force met twice during winter quarter 2023 (March 13, 2023 and March 20, 2023), and four times during spring quarter (April 10, 2023, May 1, 2023, May 22, 2023 and June 5, 2023). During Fall 2023 quarter, the Task Force met five times (October 16, 2023, November 3, 2023, November 13, 2023, November 27, 2023 and December 11, 2023). The Task Force met both in-person and virtually.

The Task Force invited several guests to provide briefings and to answer questions on relevant issues. A summary of the guests is included below.

- **March 13, 2023**: Academic Senate Chair Jessica Cattelino and Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt provided an overview of the Task Force's charge.

- **March 20, 2023**: Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activities Roger Wakimoto participated in a discussion on graduate student support with members.

- **April 10, 2023, May 1, 2023** and **May 22, 2023**: Undergraduate Council Chair Kathleen Bawn attended meetings as a representative for the Undergraduate Council and participated in discussions on the relationship between undergraduate and graduate programs.

- **May 1, 2023**: Associate Vice Provost, UCOP Academic Personnel and Programs, Amy Lee; Associate Vice President, UCOP Employee and Labor Relations, Melissa Matella; and UCOP Academic Labor and Employee Relations Director Aviva Roller provided members with a briefing on UCOP and systemwide discussions regarding the separation of graduate student work for academic credit and work for wages.

- **June 5, 2023**: UC Santa Barbara Interim Anne and Michael Towbes Graduate Dean Leila Rupp provided members with a briefing on UC Santa Barbara's right-sizing initiative.

The Co-chairs grouped related questions from the charge into four issues. These issues included "Graduate Student Support," "Evaluation of the Size and Purpose of Graduate Programs," "The Relationship between Graduate and Undergraduate Programs," and "The Dual Role of Academic Training and Employment." One remaining question from the charge, "What issues of graduate student education and funding remain unaddressed?" is addressed in the Recommendations section of this report.

Graduate Student Support

This issue includes the questions from the charge below.

- What should be the role of the faculty in determining student support?
- In what ways will changes to the graduate student support structure affect fellowship programs and external grants and fellowships?
- How should the campus and the UC allocate responsibility for the increased costs of graduate student funding?

In order to address these questions, the Task Force assembled and reviewed the data below.
- Briefing and discussion with Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activities Roger Wakimoto
- Funding data for master's and Ph.D. students
- UCLA's total expenditures on GSRs
- Admissions and Statements of Intent to Register (SIR) data for AY23-24
- Per capita and average time to degree for graduate students
- Briefings from UCLA Deans regarding their budgeting for increased TA and GSR salaries

Evaluation of the Size and Purpose of Graduate Programs

This issue includes the questions from the charge below.
- How should the campus evaluate the size and purpose of graduate degree programs?
- What is the best balance of graduate programs?

In order to address these questions, the Task Force assembled and reviewed data below.
- UC Irvine Academic Planning Group's Graduate Program Questionnaire and "Report on APG Workgroup on Reimagining Graduate Education"
- UC Santa Barbara Division of Graduate Education's Right-Sizing Reports for Departments and "Report on Right-Sizing Graduate Programs"
- Briefing and discussion with UC Santa Barbara Interim Dean of Graduate Education Leila Rupp

The Relationship between Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

This issue includes the questions from the charge below.
- What should be the relationship between graduate degree programs and undergraduate degree programs?
- How will UCLA meet the state mandate for enrollment growth in state-supported degree programs?

In order to address these questions, the Task Force assembled and reviewed the data below.
- Discussion with AY22-23 Undergraduate Council Chair Kathleen Bawn

- TA headcounts across the university

- Graduate program size data

The Dual Role of Academic Training and Employment

This issue includes the questions from the charge below.

- What should be the relationship between graduate student paid labor and educational training? How to differentiate between research for credit and for wages? What changes to current policy and practice are required?

In order to address these questions, the Task Force assembled and reviewed the data below.

- Briefing and discussion with UCOP Labor Relations and Academic Personnel and Programs

- GSR appointment letter template and guidance from Labor Relations

- Sample GSR appointment letters submitted by departments

- UC Davis and UC Irvine guidance on teaching-related courses for graduate students

IV. FINDINGS

A. Graduate Student Support

Overview

This section addresses the following questions from the committee's charge:

- What should be the role of the faculty in determining student support?

- In what ways will changes to the graduate student support structure affect fellowship programs and external grants and fellowships?

- How should the campus and the UC allocate responsibility for the increased costs of graduate student funding?

Background on Graduate Student Support

Funding for graduate students at UCLA may take the form of employment compensation (e.g., tuition, fees and stipend associated with ASE and GSR appointments) or fellowship support, including centrally-funded, privately endowed and external fellowships as well as departmental awards using block funding allocated by the Division of Graduate Education (DGE). Academic Planning & Budget (APB) allocates certain core funds directly to teaching units to support ASE appointments. Graduate financial aid funds (so-called "return to aid" described below) in combination with certain Chancellorial, gift, and UC Office of the President funds are provided to the DGE to allocate to schools and individual students annually, historically in the form of a block allocation to each school, centrally funded merit-based fellowships and other programs awarded to individual students, such as the Doctoral Travel Grant program and training

grant matching funds. The DGE also administers certain privately endowed fellowships.

In 2022-23, the DGE received $64.7 million in graduate student support from all funding sources, with Chancellor and Return-to-Aid accounting for $61 million (or 94%) of the total graduate student support funding provided to the DGE. The DGE then reallocated these resources to campus as follows: $38 million was allocated by the DGE to Schools and Divisions in the form of block funding, $22 million was used to support merit-based fellowships, $3 million was allocated for other DGE programs; and $2 million in privately endowed fellowships accounted for the remainder. Further detail on the graduate student support funding administered by the DGE, including both student funding sources and funding allocations, may be found in Appendix B.

A great deal of the DGE support associated with its fellowships and block grant program is used to offset fees and non-resident supplemental tuition ($28 million in AY21-22). The remainder is given as fellowship payments that support student living expenses ($32 million in FY21-22). In addition to the DGE's fellowship programs, school- and departmentally-administered fellowships supported Ph.D. students largely using gift funds and extramural sources such as training grants. In total, these departmental and school-administered funds and programs provided an additional $21 million in tuition offsets and $22 million in income support in AY21-22.

ASE and GSR appointments are the largest source of income support for graduate students at UCLA. Table 1 shows the number of ASE and GSR appointments made during the regular academic year between AY 2019-20 and AY 2021-22 by student degree objective.[3] As documented in the table, across campus, over 77 percent of ASE appointments and over 91 percent of GSR positions have been held by doctoral students over this period. The number of doctoral student ASE and GSR appointments made each year has been greater than 58 percent of the total number of doctoral students. As another point of comparison, the total dollars paid to doctoral students for GSR and ASE appointments is more than twice the total DGE-administered fellowship dollars provided to doctoral students (approximately $29 million in AY 2021-22).[4] Given the current level of reliance on ASE and GSR appointments to provide income support to doctoral students, any substantial reduction in the number of such appointments without a corresponding large increase in other forms of support or reduction in doctoral enrollment will greatly reduce doctoral students' access to income support.

---

[3] Because ASE and GSR appointments are made at a variety of effort levels, we divide the total number of ASE and GSR FTE hires by the typical ASE and GSR effort level to arrive at the reported number of graduate students employed as ASEs or GSRs. ASE and GSR appointments are typically made at 50 percent effort (during the school year). Accordingly, we measure the number of year-long appointments as twice the number of year-long 100% FTEs employed. The ASE employment data include the Teaching Assistant, Associate Instructor, and Teaching Fellow titles. The reported values exclude the Reader and Tutors titles that together comprise less than 3 percent of total ASE expenditures. Also excluded are ASE and GSR appointments made outside of the regular academic year. Compensation values do not include tuition & fee remission.

[4] The figure of $29 million in fellowship support excludes the awards used to cover student fees and describes only awards that can be thought of providing income support. Similarly, the dollar values associated with the ASE and GSR appointments do not include the student fees that are "paid" by the university when students are appointed to such position at efforts level of 25 percent or higher. The figure also excludes any fellowship awards that might be made directly to students by outside entities that UCLA does not administer.

Table 1: Academic Year ASE and GSR appointment by degree objective, AY 2016-17 to AY 2021-22

Student Degree Objective	Number Employed (No. of 50% FTE)			Compensation ($ million)	
	Total Enrolled	ASE	GSR	ASE	GSR
AY 2019-20					
Doctorate	4,507	1,453	1,151	$35	$27
Masters and Professional	4,894	455	93	$10	$2
Total	9,401	1,909	1,244	$45	$29
AY 2020-21					
Doctorate	4,594	1,511	1,201	$37	$30
Masters and Professional	4,798	399	112	$9	$2
Total	9,392	1,910	1,313	$46	$32
AY 2021-22					
Doctorate	4,651	1,439	1,257	$36	$32
Masters and Professional	5,191	454	136	$11	$3
Total	9,843	1,894	1,393	$47	$35

Underlying data provided by APB.

Figure 1: Balance of ASE and GSR employment by division and department, AY2018-19 to AY2021-22
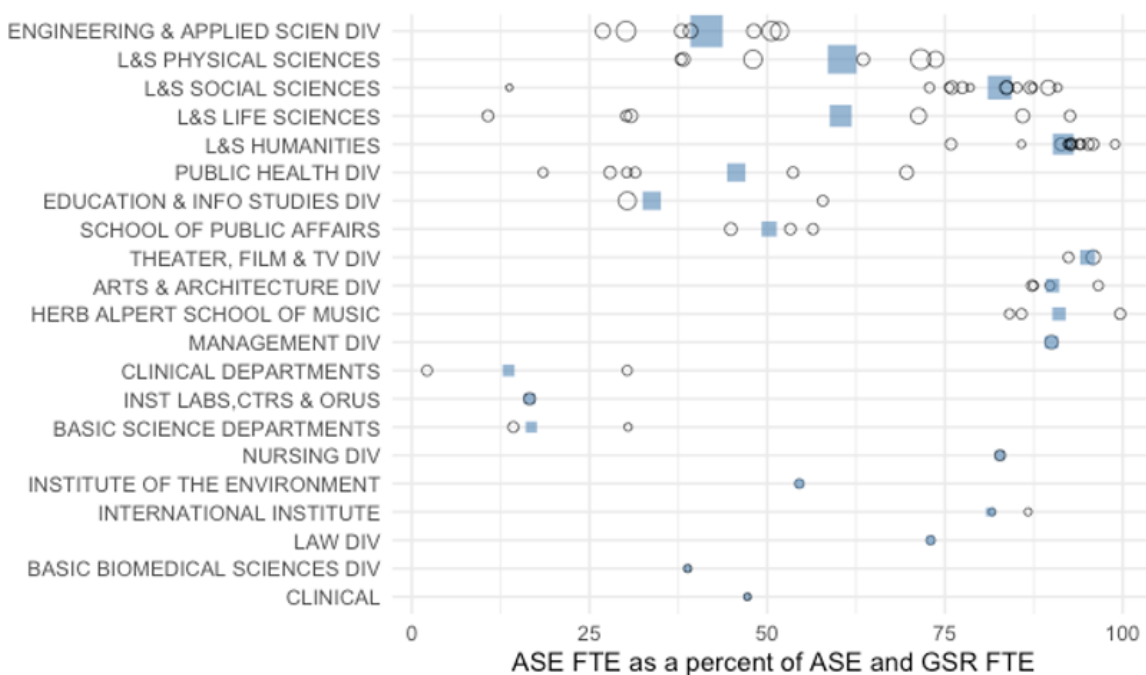
While ASE appointments comprised over half of all doctoral student ASE and GSR appointments and over 75 percent of such appointments for master's and professional students made campus wide, the

relative use of these two forms of appointment varies greatly across units. Figure 1 shows the share of ASE appointments as a percentage of academic year ASE and GSR appointments made by departments and divisions between AY 2018-19 and AY 2021-22. Each circle in the graph represents a department. Each blue square represents a school or division. The top row of points shows the departments of the School of Engineering, the school making the largest number of ASE and GSR appointments, with the other units following in descending order of the total number of appointments made. The size of each point reflects the total number of appointments made in the department or division. As one would expect, ASE appointments constitute a much smaller share of doctoral student support in the Engineering, Physical Sciences, and Life Sciences than in the Social Sciences and Humanities, which are overwhelmingly reliant on ASE appointments. With the exception of Public Health and Public Policy, the professional schools also provide far more graduate student income support via ASEs than GSRs.

Role of Faculty in Determining Student Support

As mentors, advisors and principal investigators, faculty have a vested interest in graduate student support. In departments and programs, faculty should be involved in determining how block funding is used to support graduate students, e.g., through a faculty oversight committee. In fields strongly supported by external funding, faculty are well positioned to know how that funding can best be used to support their students. When Administration seeks to make changes, such as changes in block funding, TA support or internal grants, the faculty should be consulted both at the departmental level and through the relevant Academic Senate committees, such as the Graduate Council or the Council on Planning and Budget.

Impact of Changes to Graduate Student Support Structure on Fellowship Programs

Employment compensation is distinct from block allocations and centrally-funded fellowship programs such as Cota-Robles, Dissertation Year Awards and other programs providing support to doctoral students for their degree progress. As such, changes to employment compensation should not affect block funding or central fellowship programs directly, although two types of indirect effects might occur.

The increase in employment compensation does put additional pressure on fellowship stipends to increase, which, in a fixed-budget environment, will result in fewer students receiving awards, thereby increasing the difficulty of funding graduate students. Some students on external grants and fellowships are in the bargaining unit while others are not, but given the precedent that has been set, the UAW has already begun exerting additional pressures to include all UC graduate students on fellowships – even those that are centrally funded – in the bargaining unit in the future.

Another indirect effect would occur if a portion of the graduate student support currently allocated by the DGE to campus for fellowships or other awards not dependent on employment were repurposed in order to subsidize employment compensation, such as the increase in ASE stipends. Such an approach would have limited scope to address the budgetary concerns, due to restrictions on the use of graduate student support funding tied to return-to-aid. It would also further conflate employment with graduate student support that is designed to promote the student's own degree progress and therefore should not be subject to collective bargaining. Furthermore, substituting employment for award support would be more expensive (as ASE compensation is generally higher than fellowship stipends to compensate for the reduced amount of time ASEs have to work on their own degree progress) and would likely increase time to degree, which would have a deleterious impact on the funding available to incoming cohorts.

Impact of Changes to Graduate Student Support Structure on External Grants and Fellowships

Overall research funding at UCLA has grown in the last decade: from approximately $1 billion, from 2009 to 2017, to well over $1.5 billion in each of the last three years (Appendix C). Likewise, the proportion of total research expenditures spent on GSRs has been increasing over time, from 5.56% in FY14 to 7.92% in FY23 (Appendix C). However, many funding agencies have caps on what can be spent on a graduate student that fall below the value needed to fully support a GSR. While some private agencies have adjusted their caps, the reports we have received from the Vice Chancellor for Research and Creative Activities suggest that the caps will not be raised by other agencies (e.g., NIH). This puts faculty with funding from these agencies in a difficult position – they have to identify other means to cover the full cost of their GSRs.

One option that is often raised is the idea of eliminating fees and tuition for graduate students. We do not consider this to be a feasible option. Per *Regents Policy 3101: The University of California Student Tuition and Fee Policy*, tuition is a mandatory charge that is assessed to each registered student uniformly across all campuses in the UC system (University of California Board of Regents, 2010). Even if this policy were to be changed in a way that allowed the elimination of tuition and fees, we do not find the idea advisable. Although the tuition and fees charged to graduate students is largely a "closed system" (i.e., the money paid into the system ends up coming back to the students in the form of fellowship stipends, fee remissions and so forth), external funders – including agencies and privately endowed funds – typically cover some or all tuition and fees separately from stipends. These external sources of funding would be foregone if graduate tuition and fees were no longer being charged.

An additional concern is that students on some competitive training grants or external fellowships may receive less money than if they worked as GSRs. On parts of campus where work done as a GSR is typically unrelated to the student's own research, this difference may not be a major concern – the students may be receiving less money than they would as a GSR, but they can dedicate all their time to their research, thereby reducing their time to degree. But when the work students do as a GSR is indistinguishable from the research they would do on a fellowship or training grant, the lower levels of support associated with individual training grants and fellowships could be seen as a disincentive for students to apply for these funds.

We strongly encourage divisions, schools and departments in fields in which this is an issue to provide incentives to encourage students to apply for fellowships and individual training grants. Although this may be seen as an additional expense, it removes the disincentive for students to apply for their own funding and will likely result in lower overall costs as more students obtain their own funding. A similar issue has been raised about institutional training grants, for which the PIs who write and maintain the grant often do not get any direct funding. We would encourage units to provide incentives to PIs so that the number of training grant positions for students does not drop, thereby adding further financial burdens to individual faculty or departments.

Responsibility for Addressing Increased Costs

As part of its charge, the Task Force was asked to address the question, "How should the campus and the UC allocate responsibility for the increased costs of graduate student funding?" The Task Force identified a number of ways in which increased costs could be addressed, by raising additional revenue, being more intentional about graduate student cohort size or by making cost-cutting changes in how undergraduate classes are structured and delivered. However, none of these individually or even

together appear capable of offsetting more than a fraction of the budgetary shortfall created by the new ASE and GSR collective bargaining agreements. Therefore, the need to reduce spending in other areas to balance that part of the ASE and GSR salary increases that cannot be accommodated by new revenue or by reducing the number of ASE and GSR appointments appears unavoidable.

The Task Force felt strongly that the university's response to these increased costs should be made in a way that preserves the quality of education and research at UCLA to the greatest extent possible and avoids actions, such as dramatically reducing graduate student admissions, that will fundamentally alter UCLA's position as a preeminent public research university. At the same time, the Task Force recognizes that decisions about how cost increases arising from the new ASE and GSR Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) will be funded is a fundamental responsibility of the University's senior leadership with authority over campus-wide budgets, in consultation with the Academic Senate.

We do not offer any recommendations about how these difficult tradeoffs should be made or how best to balance the university's core missions and account for strategic considerations. Instead, in the following discussion, we seek to provide campus stakeholders with a better sense of the magnitude of the financial challenge that the new CBAs entail. We will describe the size of this fiscal challenge relative to the current size of various university revenues and expenditures. Although this exercise could be read as implying a course of action for leadership such as across-the-board cuts, reductions in the size of the university workforce in one or another area, or placing the costs on teaching and research units, that is not our intent. For example, when we note that the unanticipated cost of the new CBAs is equivalent to some eight percent of the total ladder faculty salary bill, we do not mean to suggest that the correct way forward is to cut faculty salaries or the size of the faculty. Rather, we provide these data points to help stakeholders understand just how daunting the challenge is.

Under the new collective bargaining agreements reached in December 2022, the salaries of graduate student workers (ASEs and GSRs) are rapidly increasing. As shown in Figure 2, salaries paid to entry-level ASEs will increase by 57 percent over their AY21-22 level, and Step 3 GSR salaries will increase by 31 percent. APB estimates that employing the same number of ASEs and GSRs as UCLA employed in AY21-22 at the salaries that will be in effect in AY24-25 would cost campus $43.7 million more than it did in AY21-22, with ASEs accounting for $31.5 million of the increase and GSRs accounting for the remaining $12.2 million. This is a substantial and disruptive change in the cost of undergraduate teaching and scholarly research.

Figure 2:   Teaching Assistant I and GSR III salaries, 2006 to 2026
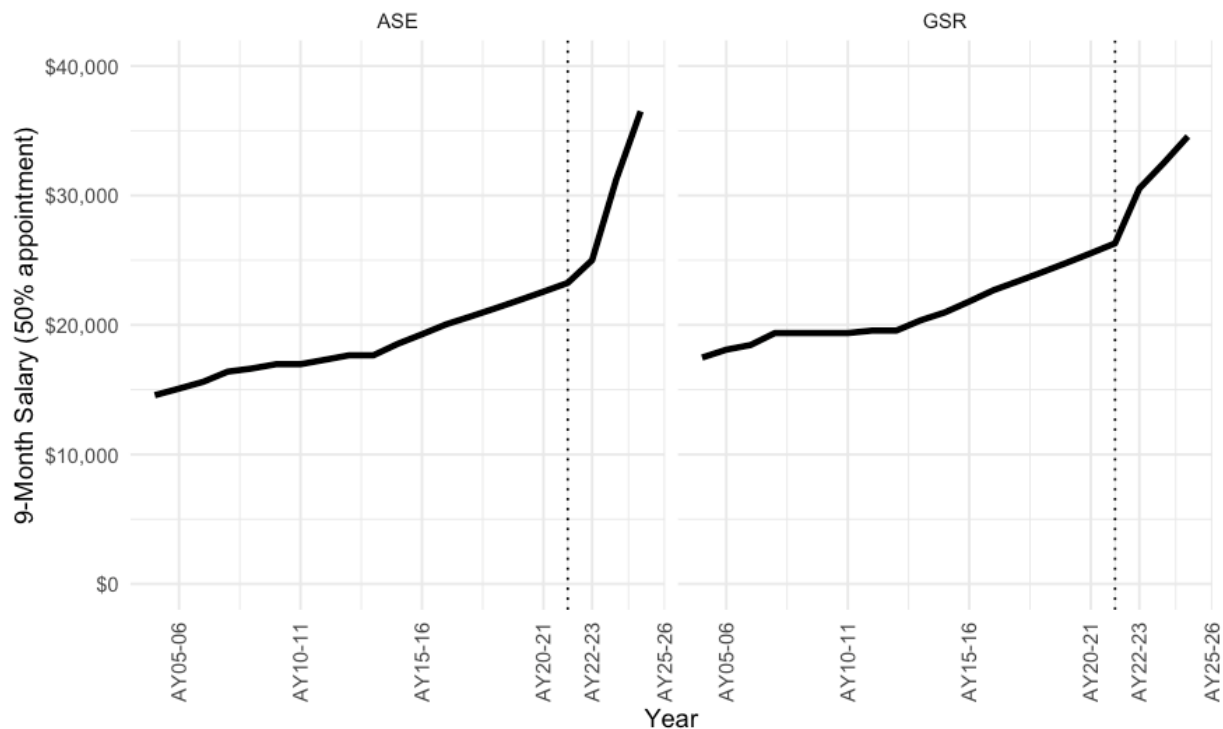
Source: APO salary scale tables and Labor Relation's tables of future salaries under the current ASE and GSR CBAs.

From AY15-16 to AY21-22, ASE and GSR salaries grew at 3.2 percent per year---a rate of increase sufficient to maintain ASE and GSR salaries in real (inflation-adjusted) terms (see Figure 3). Without the new collective bargaining agreements, we might suppose that ASE and GSR salaries would have continued to increase at between 3 and 4 percent per year. Thus, even without the new agreement, AY24-25 ASE and GSR salaries (all else equal) would likely have been about 10 percent higher in AY24-25 than they were in AY21-22. This suggests that in AY24-25, TA and GSR salaries will be 43 and 19 percent, respectively, higher than they would have been under the pre-CBA status quo. Adjusting APB's cost increase estimates to account for the expected pre-CBA rates of salary increase, we find that the "unanticipated" cost to campus of the increased ASE and GSR salaries holding graduate student employment levels fixed to be roughly $31 million per year (about $24 million for ASEs and $8 million for GSRs).

Figure 3: TA I and GSR III salaries in 2023 dollars
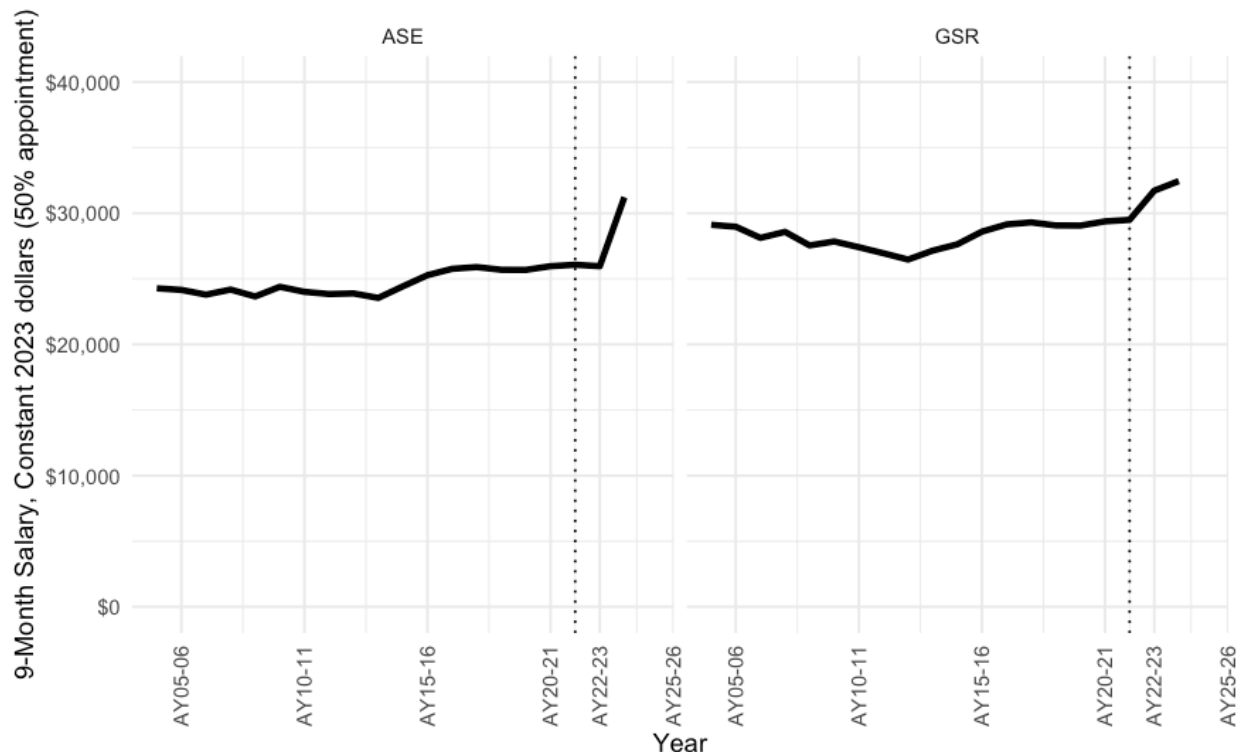
Source: APO salary scale tables and Labor Relation's provided tables of future salaries under the current CBA and the Southern California Consumer Price Index series from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

As we describe elsewhere in this report, the new CBAs could lead to changes in the number of ASE and GSR appointments that lessen this total campus cost. The degree to which the same amount of undergraduate teaching and research output might be produced at a lower cost through changes in the composition of the teaching and research workforce is difficult to anticipate and will likely vary across campus. For this reason, in order to provide perspective on the size of the financial disruption created by the new collective bargaining agreements, we will suppose that the cost savings achievable through changes in the composition of the teaching and research workforce (holding the total amount of teaching and research output constant) is small and that the additional resources required to maintain our teaching and research programs will be roughly equal to the $31 million in unanticipated expense required to maintain the current ASE and GSR workforce.

Beyond their direct cost to the university's research and teaching programs, the new CBAs will likely indirectly lead to increases in other costs. In particular, as noted above, we have already seen the stipend levels increase for certain DGE-funded award programs such as the Cota-Robles and Graduate Opportunity Program in response to the new CBAs. At least some Ph.D. programs have similarly increased their first-year funding packages. Some of this increased cost per fellowship may be offset by awarding fewer such fellowships in the future. However, to the extent that they are not, additional campus resources will have to be allocated to graduate fellowship (nonemployment-based) support for Ph.D. students. Furthermore, if award rates do decline to offset the higher stipend levels, students who previously might have been supported fully (or partially) on fellowship and are no longer offered awards will now need to be supported instead through (greater) employment. Thus, even if increases in

fellowship stipend levels were fully offset by declines in award rates to hold the total amount of fellowship funding constant, the total amount of funding needed to support the current number of graduate students would still increase.

Similarly, the recent ASE and GSR bargaining agreements could lead to increases in the future salaries of lecturers and other non-ladder faculty that would create additional future increases in the cost of UCLA's teaching programs. Though difficult to quantify, these additional costs could be substantial. Accordingly, the assessment that follows should be understood as establishing a floor for the financial impact of the new CBAs, while the ceiling is considerably higher.

Putting the Increased ASE and GSR Costs into Context

How disruptive is an unexpected $31 million annual increase in the university's teaching and research costs? In the context of UCLA's overall annual revenue of $10.5 billion in 2022 revenue, $31 million is 0.3%. However, it makes up almost 1% of the $3.8 billion that the university spent on teaching and research in 2022. Nearly all of the increased cost of ASEs and GSRs will appear on the budgets of the university's schools and the college; $31 million is nearly 3% percent of the total $1.1 billion in core-funds expenditures made across all of UCLA's schools and the college in AY21-22. This is made especially challenging given that the campus began a program of overall annual reductions (1% targeted reductions of core-funds across all schools and the college and 2% in administrative units) in AY 22-23.

Another yardstick is provided by the total amount of money that UCLA spends on other employees. The unexpected increased costs of ASEs and GSRs is about 8 percent of the $403 million in base salaries paid to UCLA ladder and equivalent faculty in 2022 and 10 percent of the base salary bill for ladder faculty outside of the Health Sciences (most GSRs and ASEs are employed outside of the Health Sciences).[5]

Some have suggested that resources might be reallocated from the ranks of high-level administrators. $31 million dollars is 37 percent of the base salaries paid to *all* non-ladder faculty employees earning more than $200 thousand per year outside of the health system ($85 million).

Revenue-generating versus Cost-cutting Approaches

Some have suggested that the state might cover the cost of the increased compensation of ASEs and GSRs. To do so would require a permanent additional increase of nearly 5 percent to the state appropriation of $697 million that UCLA received in 2022. To date, we have not received any information suggesting that the state might be willing to provide this additional funding to the UC system, but we encourage the administration to continue lobbying for funding that will support these students. Consistent with this recommendation, we strongly support the joint Systemwide Senate-Administration Workgroup on the Future of Doctoral (and MFA) Programs recommendation to make the impact of graduate education more visible.

Some funding agencies have caps on what can be spent on a graduate student that fall below the value needed to fully support a GSR. We encourage the university to continue lobbying these agencies to increase the caps to ensure that research funding keeps up with the costs involved in performing the funded research.

---

[5] Faculty and staff salary comparisons are based on data provided at in the https://ucannualwage.ucop.edu/wage/ accessed on November 25, 2023.

Holding undergraduate enrollment fixed at the Fall 2023 level of 33,040 and accounting for the 33 percent of undergraduate in-state fee revenue that is reserved for financial aid ("return to aid"), generating $31 million in additional campus revenue would require an undergraduate fee increase of $1,400 per year (11 percent).

Endowment growth is another way that the increase in ASE and GSR costs might be absorbed. At the current endowment payout rate of 4.25 percent per year, increasing campus revenue by $28.6 million would require UCLA's 2022 endowment of $6.7 billion to be increased by $673 million (10 percent). A major limitation to this approach is the fact that donors typically provide gift funds for specific purposes and historically, it has been difficult for institutions of higher learning to raise money for graduate education even through named fellowships, let alone when the funds might be used as employment subsidies. Nonetheless, we recommend that fundraising for graduate students should be a priority in the upcoming multi-year capital development campaign, which should emphasize the important role graduate education plays in maintaining UCLA's research activities and central undergraduate education mission. Rather than address graduate funding in isolation, Development must treat it as an essential component of research and undergraduate education, as well as of UCLA's mission of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Novel approaches, such as considering named graduate programs, may be necessary, and we urge Development to work with faculty and administration to think creatively and proactively about these efforts.

Given historic challenges around the growing of endowment support specific to graduate education, as well as recent UCLA successes in growing the overall size of its endowment, campus leadership may also want to examine the rate of endowment payout. Even minor payout adjustments, carefully considered, could contribute to helping meet overall academic budget challenges.

One additional option that might be considered, although it would not cover the whole cost, would be to create an ASE enhancement fee for undergraduates. This could be accomplished as a student-driven referendum fee. If set at a reasonable level, this could have traction, given the experience that undergraduates had during the 2022 strike. Nonetheless, this option puts the burden on undergraduate students and affects the affordability of a UCLA education.

B. Evaluation of the Size and Purpose of Graduate Programs

Overview

This section addresses the following questions from the committee's charge:

- What is the best balance of academic graduate programs, professional graduate programs, and self-supporting graduate degree programs in order for UCLA to advance its academic mission (of research, teaching and service) through inclusive excellence?

- How should the campus evaluate the size and purpose of graduate degree programs, going forward?

After some initial discussion, the Task Force concluded that the first question was subsumed under the second, as determining the optimal size of each (current and potential) graduate degree program will automatically lead to an appropriate balance among them. The Task Force therefore focused on options

for addressing the second question.

Evaluation of the Size and Purpose of Graduate Degree Programs

One approach to evaluating the size and purpose of graduate degree programs that has been used at a number of other universities, including other UC campuses, is the development of an "optimal size rubric" or "resource allocation rubric," colloquially known as "right-sizing." The purpose of right-sizing initiatives is to assess the appropriate size of each graduate program, instead of basing size and resource allocation on historical norms. Based on a rubric, information is collected annually from each program and used to recommend ideal program size (and resources). Typically, a joint Senate-Administration workgroup is charged to lead the process, soliciting extensive campus input.

A few examples of universities that have engaged in initiatives to assess graduate cohort sizes include UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, University of Missouri, Brandeis University, and Columbia University. Even within the UC system, graduate divisions vary in terms of how prescriptive they are with regard to determining appropriate graduate cohort sizes, e.g., the UC Santa Barbara Graduate Division used the information collected through its right-sizing initiative primarily to start a dialogue with departments, while UC Berkeley routinely sets the maximum number of admission offers that can be made by each department.

As one example of the type of information considered relevant to cohort size assessment, the following broad rubric categories were used by UC Irvine during its recent initiative:

- Competitiveness, Recognition and Reputation

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

- Contributions of Program to Campus Teaching, Research and Service Missions

- Career Pathways and Opportunities

- Financial Support Levels for Program

Questions discussed by the Task Force included the following:
- Should UCLA engage in right-sizing?
- If UCLA decided to conduct its own right-sizing initiative:
    – What would our rubric look like?
    – What process would be used to collect and evaluate data?
    – How would the results be used, i.e., what decisions would be based on it?
    – How and when would campus stakeholder input on all of these questions be obtained?
- If UCLA decided not to undertake such an initiative, what are some possible alternative approaches to ensuring appropriate graduate cohort sizes?

Potential Advantages and Disadvantages of Right-Sizing Initiatives

Some of the potential advantages of right-sizing approaches are that they:

- Allow resources to be allocated based on transparent, equitable and meaningful criteria rather than historical norms

- Address some of the limitations of current allocation methods, e.g., the disincentives the current block allocation methodology provides for programs to reduce graduate cohort sizes in order to better support their students

- Provide a clear and transparent process for assessing resource needs of brand-new programs

- Account for changing market conditions instead of memorializing historical decisions for indefinite periods of time

Some of the potential disadvantages of right-sizing are that such initiatives:

- Are time- and labor-intensive, e.g., UC Irvine took two years to develop and implement their process, despite being a smaller campus than UCLA

- Require ongoing data collection and evaluation

- Can be politically sensitive, giving rise to campus stakeholder concerns regarding how the results will be used, especially if some programs are currently larger than ideal and the recommendation is to reduce their size

- Might potentially yield results that conflict with the goals of the state legislature and UC Regents, e.g., the UC 2030 Capacity Plan proposed that state-supported graduate enrollment at UCLA should increase by a minimum of 552 students by 2030 (and up to as many as 937 in an aspirational target).

The campus political sensitivities may be addressed in part by soliciting and incorporating extensive input from diverse stakeholders on the rubric, process, which campus entity will make the determinations of optimal cohort sizes, and how the results will be used. Nonetheless, the ongoing burden of such a large and repeated data collection effort and the lack of an obvious mechanism for equitably translating the resulting data into quantitative enrollment targets dampened the enthusiasm of the Task Force for this approach.

The Task Force gave the idea of rubric-based, centralized assessment of optimal cohort sizes serious consideration, investigating how other campuses have implemented such initiatives and inviting Leila Rupp, Interim Dean of Graduate Education at UC Santa Barbara, to discuss how her campus collected and used such rubric-based information. From that very helpful conversation, it became clear that establishing and implementing a rubric-based system at UC Santa Barbara required a great deal of effort and yielded a tool which has, to date, not substantially altered any resource allocations. Instead, that project has been useful for generating department-level discussion about cohort size and for working with departments on a case-by-case basis. Given the benefit of the UC Santa Barbara experience and in light of the fact that UCLA has many more graduate programs than does UC Santa Barbara, the Task Force concluded that the effort required to complete a similar project at UCLA was too great, and the likelihood that it would lead to significant changes in the size or composition of UCLA graduate program too small, to recommend that such a project be undertaken at UCLA at the present time.

Alternatives to Right-Sizing Initiatives

In lieu of an approach that would directly set enrollment targets for the departments, the Task Force considered several alternatives that might support optimal decision making of departments around graduate enrollment – in particular doctoral admissions – or improve the incentives provided to departments.

Program Resource and Size Assessment (PRSA) Reports
Recently, the DGE developed customized reports for each doctoral program to support the department in making admission decisions (see example in Appendix D). The PRSA reports rely on existing data to address as many of the right-sizing considerations as possible and an appendix provides additional questions the department may wish to consider in assessing its cohort sizes. The DGE developed the report templates from July-September 2023 and distributed them at the end of October 2023.

Graduate Student Support Budget Modeling Tool
In addition to creating and disseminating the PRSA reports, the DGE is developing an Excel modeling tool that can be used by departments to project graduate student support needs under various admission scenarios. The aim of this tool, which is currently being piloted, is to allow departments to more accurately predict the financial implications of admitting different cohort sizes or cohorts with differing financial needs, e.g., resident vs. non-resident students; in turn, this information can better inform the department's admission decisions.

Incorporate Right-Sizing in Senate Program Review
Although the Task Force decided not to recommend a campus-wide right-sizing initiative, there was a consensus that working through the right-sizing process is an excellent way for departments to critically evaluate program size. We recommend that as part of the Academic Senate program review process, departments perform an internal optimal-size analysis as part of their self-review. Use of the available data dashboards and a list of questions should allow departments and programs to provide a data-driven justification of their size or recognition that a change in size may be appropriate.

Paradigm Shift: Rethinking the Block Allocation
With regard to the financial incentives facing departments, the current block allocation methodology (described in Appendix B) effectively rewards departments for increasing their graduate cohort sizes by basing allocations on the number of eligible students (master's students through normative time-to-degree and doctoral students through their first seven years); conversely, it penalizes departments that shrink their cohort sizes in response to the new budget realities. The current methodology provides undesirable incentives in the new graduate student support climate, raising the question of how to allocate central graduate student support in a more thoughtful way.

In looking to other UC campuses for possible models of how to allocate block funding, methodologies again vary greatly. At UC Berkeley, block allocation is historically based and independent of the enrollment targets provided by its Graduate Division to its departments each year. UC Santa Barbara uses a "hold harmless" policy if departments reduce their cohort sizes, but this method may penalize departments that were more conservative with their cohort sizes to begin with and also does not directly address the inequity that arises if graduate cohorts in some departments ought to stay the same size or grow. UC San Diego counts only first-year graduate students, not total enrollment, in allocating block funding. Although this method provides an incentive for departments to support timely degree progress, it does not account directly for differences in normative time-to-degree (although there is

some variation in per capita rates depending on discipline).

One idea that would support the university's goal of maintaining graduate student "throughput" in the face of higher annual per capita costs of supporting graduate students is to convert the block grants to degree "completer" funding. With this approach, the funding currently used for block grants could be repurposed to provide a fixed amount of per-student funding for degree completion within normative time-to-degree (NTTD).

Although this approach would be markedly different from current practice, one advantage is that it not only provides strong incentives to support graduate students to complete their degrees on time, but it automatically adjusts cohort sizes. The same structural explanations for why students fail to complete their degrees on time – e.g., inadequate funding, inadequate mentoring, poor employment prospects – are also reasons for programs to reduce their cohort sizes in order to be able to provide better funding, mentoring and job market support. Thus, the diminution in resources available to graduate programs whose students are not completing their degrees on time would automatically encourage those programs to be cautious with their graduate admissions until they are able to address the concerns.

If requiring degree completion within NTTD were felt to be too strict, a grace period could be allowed. However, in the current block grant allocation methodology, the enrollment eligibility of master's students is already tied to their program's NTTD, so there is precedent for requiring the same of doctoral students. Moreover, departments set their own NTTD (with approval from the Graduate Council), so in the interest of transparency for prospective students, the department should be adjusting its NTTD if it is not currently set at a realistic level.

Degree completer funding would also not necessarily be homogeneous across schools and divisions; as with the current per capita block allocations, the amount of the funding could vary, potentially depending on a variety of factors such as the availability of external research funds or gift funds. The ability to work closely with stakeholders to establish school/division per capita rates that the campus views as transparent and equitable is another advantage of rethinking the current methodology for allocating central graduate student support.

A concern with allocating the bulk of the DGE's graduate student support budget via degree completer funding is that not all students might have the same expected trajectories and using an outcomes-driven approach might result in unintended consequences, such as risk-averse departments choosing to admit only students considered to be "safe bets" for completing their degrees on time. Depending on how departments assess a student's potential for timely degree progress (e.g., relying heavily on standardized test scores), such responses might undermine the university's goal of diversifying its graduate student population. This risk might be attenuated by encouraging holistic admissions practices, through offering resources to support these practices (as is currently done by the DGE), or passing new academic policies requiring them (e.g., asking departments to develop graduate admission rubrics that use a holistic approach to evaluating applications). Another option for addressing this concern is that degree completer funding could be adjusted for any anticipated differences in student outcomes that are independent of the program's role in student success, in a similar manner to how risk adjustment works in the healthcare sector when adjusting employer payments to HMOs for treating beneficiaries with different expected costs.

If the current block allocation were converted to degree completer funding, the campus should consider whether to also convert the funding for the centrally funded fellowships (other than the diversity

fellowships) to degree completer funding. Such a conversion would not help to address the funding needs related to the new CBAs even if the funding could be redeployed to use as employment compensation; it would simply be reallocating a fixed amount of central funding for graduate education. As noted above, it costs less to fund a fellowship award than an academic apprentice personnel (AAP) position. However, increasing the amount of the degree completer funding by including this additional funding would enhance the aforementioned incentives, as well as provide more predictable and stable funding to schools/divisions/departments by eliminating the year-to-year variability inherent in merit-based fellowship funding. It would also give schools/divisions/departments control over which students receive the funding, which would be an attractive feature for many departments.

An argument against repurposing central award funding is that the DGE's competitive fellowship programs have well-defined objectives, including recruiting top-ranked prospective students (GDSA), facilitating faculty mentor relationships early in a student's program (GRM and GSRM) and releasing students from employment obligations in their final year of study to support degree completion (DYA). The existing fellowships also have accountability measures, such as the degree progress forms completed by GRM and GSRM awardees at the end of the award period and the inability of DYA awardees to receive additional DGE support if they do not complete their degrees by the end of the award year.

A major change to the allocation of graduate student support such as conversion to degree completer funding would require careful consideration and discussion with campus stakeholders to understand possible unintended consequences. In the short run, a less extensive change that would still encourage timely degree completion within the NTTD set by departments would entail tying doctoral student block eligibility to NTTD, as is already done for master's students, rather than using a uniform seven-year eligibility rule for all programs.

C. The Relationship Between Undergraduate and Graduate Programs

Overview

This section addresses the following questions from the committee's charge:

- What should be the relationship between graduate degree programs and undergraduate degree programs?

- How will UCLA meet the state mandate for enrollment growth in state-supported degree programs?

Relationship between Graduate and Undergraduate Degree Programs

As a large R1 university, there are many connections between graduate and undergraduate students. Graduate students often serve as ASEs in undergraduate courses and mentor undergraduates in research environments. In turn, ASE appointments provide an important source of graduate student support. Here we address the question of whether this relationship should be a factor in determining graduate student cohort size.

Many on the Task Force believe that the optimal size of graduate student cohorts should be evaluated based on factors related to the graduate students, such as the availability of faculty mentors, potential

for employment (within and outside of academia), placement record of the program and availability of funds for guaranteed packages for a set time period (e.g., five years). Some, but not all, members of the Task Force believe the optimal graduate enrollment should not be exceeded solely to meet the undergraduate teaching needs of departments. This does not mean some training in teaching is not appropriate, just that the needs of the department should not justify admitting a higher number of incoming graduate students. Others point to the reality that the university's undergraduate population continues to grow, with minimal growth in the faculty and insufficient funds to cover the instructors and ASEs we already have. From this perspective, it was argued that undergraduate teaching needs should be considered when thinking about graduate cohort size and, in meeting those needs, programs are better able to financially support their graduate students. Having said that, there was a consensus that the undergraduate teaching needs of a department should be only one of a number of factors and that it should not be a primary factor driving graduate cohort size.

Meeting the Mandate for Enrollment Growth

In a compact with the Governor, the UC system has proposed to increase state-supported enrollment by 23,055 students by 2030. This includes an estimated increase in 14,230 undergraduate students and 6,000 graduate students (the remaining 2,825 will be met by replacing non-resident undergraduates with in-state students and will not result in additional students). In return, state funding to UC would increase by 5% per year for the next few years. UCLA proposes to increase undergraduate enrollment by 2,962 and graduate enrollment by 351, which is 14% of the proposed increase. Increasing the number of undergraduate students will lead to an even greater demand for graduate student teaching. This will exacerbate the concerns laid out below about how to cover the number of classes we already teach with higher-cost labor, although it may be partially offset by dedicating some of the annual increases in state funding to ASE budgets, which would also support some of the increase in graduate students.

An approach to minimize the financial impact of enrolling more graduate students would be to strategically increase cohort sizes in fields in which students are typically supported as GSRs on research grants. Acknowledging that this does not avoid the problem of caps for GSR salaries from some agencies, the additional cost is less than having to cover the students as ASEs. The downside of this approach is that it may reduce the number of ASEs available to teach the increased undergraduate population.

Alternative Approaches Considered

When thinking about the relationship between graduate students and undergraduate students, the Task Force emphasized the importance of doing whatever possible to maintain the quality of undergraduate education and the availability of research for undergraduate students, while also giving our graduate students fair opportunities to work as ASEs and GSRs to receive a basic income and to gain experience as educators and in guiding research. If financial resources are not provided, the number of graduate students on campus might drop. In the following sections, we address the relationship between graduate students and the undergraduate population and the important role that graduate students play as mentors and educators to undergraduate students. As we will note, without additional support to maintain graduate student and ASE numbers, the quality of undergraduate education at UCLA will undoubtedly suffer. We will describe these roles separately for graduate students as research mentors and as ASEs.

Graduate Students as Research Mentors

UCLA is a vibrant place for undergraduates to conduct research. The Undergraduate Research Centers (URCs) host two units: URC-Sciences and URC-Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (URC-HASS). Both URCs are dedicated to providing undergraduate students with exposure to the research process through workshops, placement in laboratories or with research mentors, providing fellowships and research stipends, and supporting applications to graduate programs. There are ample opportunities for students to receive financial support as they pursue research interests, including the Amgen Scholars Program, Beckman Scholars Program, Undergraduate Research Scholars Program, Maximizing Access to Science Careers (MARC), and the Integrated and Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research Program, among others through the URC-Sciences. The URC-HASS hosts an undergraduate research journal, the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Summer Research Incubator, and Transfer Research Entry Program, among others. In each of these programs and in research labs, graduate students often serve as mentors to undergraduates. The annual Undergraduate Research Week celebrates the innovative work of students across campus who are performing research and creative inquiry in all disciplines. Students from all disciplines gather to share their innovative and impactful work with the UCLA community at events such as the Undergraduate Research & Creativity Showcase. These research opportunities provide undergraduates with experience conducting cutting-edge research and enhance their competitiveness for admission to graduate and professional schools.

Graduate students in research environments are often asked to mentor undergraduate students who are carrying out undergraduate research. If the number of graduate students on campus was reduced, this decline would reduce the availability of research mentors for undergraduates, which would either mean that fewer undergraduate students would have opportunities to do research or faculty would need to spend more time mentoring the undergraduate students on research. Given how stretched faculty are, this additional workload could only be achieved if there were more faculty or if current faculty put less time into other commitments.

Graduate Students as Academic Student Employees

Graduate students have a direct impact on the quality of undergraduate education in their role as ASEs. Most ASEs teach course sections, allowing the university to have large classes that accommodate more students while giving undergraduate students smaller instructor-to-student ratios than they otherwise would have. Some senior ASEs take on more and may teach courses, with faculty oversight. Unfortunately, if additional financial resources are not provided, it is likely that the number of ASE positions will have to be cut. At current levels, there is expected to be a shortfall in ASE funding of approximately $30 million in 2024-2025. Assuming $36 thousand per ASE (not including tuition and fee remission), that would represent a loss in over 800 ASE positions out of the approximately 2000 ASE positions currently funded.

The Task Force identified a number of strategies the campus could use to maintain teaching excellence while facing increased costs of ASEs. These typically fell into two main categories: those that aimed to constrain costs without making changes in class pedagogy and those that could change the structure of classes. While it is likely that implementing some of these changes may bring some relief, none of the options will come close to solving the budgetary shortfall. Continued academic excellence with a mandated growth in the number of undergraduates requires a strong team of educators, including ASEs (University of California Office of the President, 2022). If the university wishes to maintain this level of excellence, other sources of funding will need to be found. Teaching is one of the core missions of the

university and strong undergraduate teaching is central to that mission.

A number of the options discussed involve reducing the number of ASEs. These options may not be viable in the short run, given that many current Ph.D. students are already guaranteed ASE positions in the next few years, based on their offer letters. We would also note that many programs rely on ASE positions to partially fund graduate students, particularly on north campus, so a reduction in ASE positions would just move the funding problem to departments and units. Alternatively, programs could enroll fewer graduate students and guarantee fewer ASE positions going forward, but this approach would negatively impact the research mission of the university.

We start with options in which courses stay mostly as they have been.

1. Reducing the number of ASEs by optimizing section/lab size

Because there are no campus-wide workload standards, the workload of ASEs can range across departments and schools/divisions. There is a wide range in the assignments for a 50% TA position, including but not limited to three discussion sections of 25 students each, three sections of 20 students each, three sections of 40 students each, two sections of 25 students each, and one section of 20 or 25 students (typically for writing-intensive courses). There is also a wide range for lab courses, depending on the department and lab, which may include but is not limited to two sections of 12 students each, three sections of 24 students each, and two sections of 35 students each. Some lab courses may also have two graduate students assigned to one section of 20 students or fewer, necessary in some cases to maintain safety. These numbers can also vary based on whether a course has readers and whether it is upper division or lower division. Nonetheless, it is possible that some ASEs may not have been putting in the full 50% effort expected for a 50% position. In such cases, the size or number of sections or labs that some ASEs teach could potentially be increased, particularly on south campus, thereby reducing the total number of ASEs required.

Identifying courses in which the number of ASEs should be reduced is challenging. One option would be for each school/division to have its own standards, with some calibration between schools/divisions done at the campus level. Another option would be for the campus to have a series of standards based on audits done of courses across the campus so that standards are not restricted by the school/division in which a program sits. In either case, faculty should be involved in this process, particularly in writing-intensive fields and those with labs. Because the collective bargaining agreement sets limits on the work an ASE may do, care should be taken to make sure that these standards are within the agreed-upon limits.

This process would be arduous to conduct initially, but in the long term could reduce inefficiencies. However, given that this is likely to help only around the margins, it is highly unlikely that the savings of this process would cover the budget shortfall.

2. Increase the number of classes offered in Summer Sessions

Some classes in Summer Sessions are taught by ASEs and those classes provide economic benefits to the offering department that are used to pay for faculty recruitment and retention, core staff salaries, academic and research programming such as seminar series, and in some cases graduate support. In Summer 2022, graduate student instructors (teaching fellows, associate instructors, and teaching assistants) were paid $4.1 million. Expanding the use of ASE instructors in Summer Sessions is

potentially a cost-effective way to provide income support for graduate students while also providing benefits to undergraduates and departments. However, implementing this solution is not as simple as increasing the number of summer course offerings. Particularly since the 2008 global financial crisis, large enrollment departments have worked to optimize the net financial return of their summer offerings (indeed, replacing high-cost ladder faculty as instructors with ASE instructors has been a component of this optimization). Because summer session offerings are already designed to maximize net revenue, simply increasing the number of Summer Sessions courses offered is unlikely to significantly increase summer enrollment and, thus, would likely reduce the summer-session "profit" margins that departments rely upon to finance their annual operation. Significantly expanding summer enrollment would require an undergraduate curricular redesign that regularized some amount of summer session enrollment for most or all undergraduates. Such approaches are currently being studied by another task force. This approach could potentially allow the campus to handle more undergraduates and could help undergraduates decrease their time to degree. There is also the possibility of offering summer minors, something that UC Berkeley does. A potential downside of this is that shorter intensive courses may not always be an ideal alternative to taking a standard 10-week course during the academic year.

3. The use of Unit 18 lecturers instead of ASEs to run sections

Large lecture classes enrolling 120 or more students account for over one-third of all credit hours earned by undergraduates at UCLA.[6] The new ASE salary scales greatly increase the cost of mounting large lecture classes that rely heavily on ASEs to teach their secondary sections. In order to maintain the size of large lecture classes in the face of increased ASE costs, some have suggested that Unit 18 Lecturers rather than ASEs might be used to teach secondary sections. However, a closer examination reveals that using Unit 18 Lecturers in this way would not yield cost savings. By AY 2024-25, the cost to a teaching program of employing a 50 percent Teaching Fellow, the most expensive ASE designation, for one quarter including benefits will be $14,975. On the other hand, the cost to a teaching program of employing the least expensive Unit 18 Lecturer in AY 2024-25 for the same 50 percent one-quarter appointment will be $14,968.[7] Thus, even in the case with the greatest potential for cost savings, directly replacing an ASE with a Unit 18 Lecturer is effectively a wash, saving just $7. In all other cases, replacing an ASE with a Unit 18 Lecturer would increase costs.

This analysis assumes that the number of students assigned to an ASE and to a Lecturer leading the same sections would be the same. Even if courses could be redesigned such that each section could be larger when led by a Lecturer than by an ASE, any resulting cost saving is likely to be short-lived, given that the current Unit 18 Lecturer collective bargaining agreement expires in June 2026.

Even if it were less expensive to employ Unit 18 Lecturers rather than ASEs to lead secondary sections in terms of undergraduate instructional cost, doing so would have negative fiscal and programmatic

---

[6] Based on class-level registrar data provided by APB covering Fall 2018 through Winter 2022.

[7] We assume that lectures used to lead sections previously instructed by ASEs would teach the same number of students as had the ASEs. That is, we assume that the effort level associated with the work would not differ between ASEs and Unit 18 Lectures doing the same work. While the annual 100 percent FTE salary for a teaching Fellows will substantially exceed that of a Unit 18 Lecturer I in AY24-25 ($86,644 versus $62,247), the composite benefit rate applied to ASE salaries is only 3.7 percent as opposed to 31.6 percent for Unit 18 Lectures nullifying the apparent cost-saving potential implied by the salaries alone. Salary data taken from the ASE collective bargaining agreement and Unit 18 Lecturer salary scale. Composite benefit rates provide by APB.

consequences. As noted above, ASE positions are currently the largest source of income support for graduate students on campus. Drawing down ASE positions would either require redirecting substantial campus resources from their current purposes to provide new forms of income support for doctoral students or a correspondingly large reduction in the number of doctoral students that graduate programs can take on. Substantially reducing graduate enrollments would in turn harm the research mission of the university and the rankings of its departments.

The following options consider changes in pedagogy:

4. Better use of learning assistants

Learning assistants (LAs) are undergraduate students enrolled in Course 192, who currently receive only credit for their effort. The activities they can perform are relatively limited and they cannot be used to replace ASEs. However, there are several ways in which an increase in the number of LAs could be used to reduce the workloads of ASEs, enabling them to handle more students or sections than they would otherwise be able to do. For example, in certain fields, much larger sections could be assigned to an ASE, but the ASE would have multiple LAs within the section to give closer personal attention to the undergraduates taking the class. This is especially the case for certain labs. LAs could also hold office hours, reducing the time ASEs spend in office hours, allowing them more time on other activities, such as running sections or grading. An additional benefit of this approach is that it would give more undergraduate students the opportunity to hone their teaching skills and to reinforce their knowledge in particular fields.

5. Better use of readers

Readers have more constrained duties than TAs. These are restricted to assisting the instructor in the grading of student's papers and exams. It is possible that some courses, in which TAs typically focus on grading or reading, could be more cost-effective by reducing the number of TAs and increasing the number of readers.

6. Replace large courses led by a faculty instructor and ASEs with multiple smaller classes taught by lecturers (Unit 18 lecturers and/or lecturers with security of employment)

This is not an option that the Task Force recommends, but one that the Task Force heard is being evaluated at other universities. The savings is in the long term, with the replacement of more expensive tenured/tenure-track faculty by the lecturers. However, the cost is the loss of the other roles that ladder faculty play, particularly in research, which will inevitably foreclose knowledge production and the growth of our fields.

7. Combine smaller classes to create larger classes, keeping the ASE to student ratio constant

If smaller classes were merged to create fewer numbers of larger classes, while keeping the ASE –to-student ratio constant (i.e., increasing the number of sections), then the number of faculty needed to teach these classes would be reduced. This option would save money over the long term by reducing the number of regular series faculty. However, like the previous option, the cost is the loss of the other roles that faculty play, which damages the standing of the university as a research university.

8. Reduce the number of classes with ASEs

Although this is also not an option recommended by the Task Force, an obvious way to save money on ASEs is to not hire ASEs for all classes that have traditionally used ASEs. The first downside of this approach is self-evident: undergraduate students will not get the attention they would otherwise receive, degrading their educational experience and affecting their ability to learn the material. Fewer graduate students could be supported, with the reduction in graduate cohort sizes again harming UCLA's reputation as an R1 institution. Faculty that teach these courses may push back by shrinking enrollment for their courses or refusing to teach courses of a certain size. This would cause trickle-down effects such as making it harder for students to get into classes and to meet their requirements for majors or minors, increasing undergraduate time to degree. A solution to these secondary issues could be to hire lecturers (see #6 above), but then the savings would be limited, and with a likely cost to the research excellence of the university.

9. Using technology to reach more students

As remote and online learning become easier to implement, it may be possible that technology can allow classes to grow without having to increase the number of ASEs or faculty. The key to making this approach viable is ensuring that the quality of the online instruction is at least as good as, if not better than, in-person classes. Creating an academically rigorous course using technology takes time and effort and often requires faculty to obtain additional resources. Given that faculty cannot be required to teach in a particular format, it is likely that incentives and instructional designers would be needed to encourage faculty to put the necessary work into creating strong courses. We would also note that most impactful online courses typically require some interaction between instructors and students, so the student-to-instructor ratio is unlikely to be substantially different from that in traditional courses.

D. The Dual Role of Academic Training and Employment

Overview

This section addresses the following questions from the committee's charge:

- What should be the relationship between graduate student paid labor and educational training? How to differentiate between research for credit and for wages? What changes to current policy and practice are required?

- What issues of graduate student education and funding remain unaddressed?

Relationship between Graduate Student Paid Labor and Educational Training

Historically, the work graduate students do for academic credit and the work they do for pay has often been blurred. As the academic environment evolves, it has become clear that effort needs to be made to distinguish between these two roles as much as possible. Graduate students typically work for pay as ASEs or GSRs. Below we propose recommendations that aim to separate out work for pay and work for academic credit, while giving students flexibility to include work they do for pay in their final thesis or dissertation.

Graduate Students and Academic Credit

Graduate students are, first and foremost, students. While a full-time student may be employed up to half-time, their overarching objective is to graduate with a master's or doctoral degree, which is obtained by fulfilling the requirements for their program. This typically includes enrolling in 590-series courses (e.g. 596 Directed Individual Study/Research). Traditionally, little effort has gone into clearly defining what represents sufficient academic progress to get a satisfactory grade for these courses – indeed, many faculty provide no written indication of their expectations at all. We support the systemwide guidelines and recommendation that all faculty establish, ideally in writing (as a syllabus, course description or other document), their expectations for the quarter or academic year and how they will measure academic progress (Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on the Future of UC Doctoral Programs, 2023; Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs, 2023). As noted in the systemwide joint workgroup update, "research and creative activities are by their nature open-ended. Learning from trial and error, and even failure, are intrinsic parts of the process." Thus, academic expectations should be defined in a way that incorporates these possibilities. Given the effort that may be required to produce written expectations for each student, we encourage the Teaching and Learning Center or a similar unit on campus to create template documents aimed at specific fields for use by faculty advisors.

Academic Student Employees

Graduate students at UCLA have typically enrolled in Course 375 "Teaching Apprentice Practicum" while working as ASEs. Indeed, based on earlier versions of the Academic Apprentice Personnel (AAP) manual, enrolling in 375 was historically treated as a prerequisite for working as an ASE. This gives students academic credit for work they do for pay in the classroom. In this case, the obvious way to separate work for pay and work for academic credit is to have students not enroll in Course 375, clarifying that the work they do as an ASE is purely for pay. As a first step, the Graduate Council looked into the history of Course 375 and found no evidence that it was designated as being required. The written description of the course on page 7 of the 2022-2023 AAP manual stated that "All students holding appointments as teaching assistants, teaching associates or teaching fellows **should** enroll in Course 375 during each quarter/semester of their appointment." As a result, on June 2, 2023 the Graduate Council clarified that Course 375 is not required as a condition of employment as an ASE, requested that DGE update this information in the AAP manual and on the DGE website, and sent out a memo to programs announcing the clarification. In that email, the Graduate Council also noted that, because Course 375 often gives academic credit for work done as an employee, the Council is considering removing it entirely and requested the following information from the units:

- What portion of the department's 375 is credit for work being done as part of employment, and what portion is substantive pedagogy coursework? Note that substantive pedagogy coursework must clearly go beyond work that could reasonably be considered supervision of an employee.

- If Course 375 is removed, would this be a problem for your program? If so, please describe the specific concern.

The Council received responses from 37 programs and units. Many replied that Course 375 enrollment was pro forma and that removal of the course would not be a problem. However, a few programs, mostly in the humanities, raised come concerns. These fell into four main categories:

1. Pedagogy training

Some faculty in some programs have used Course 375 as formal pedagogical training for the class the ASEs were teaching. The Graduate Council is working with Labor Relations to come up with guidelines for departments that use such courses. It is likely that a new course number will be used to clarify that these are pedagogical courses and not apprentice practicum courses. This change will likely not happen until the 2024-2025 academic year, to allow programs time to design and implement these courses.

2. Twelve unit minimum for full-time enrollment

A number of programs use the credit students get for taking Course 375 to get to the 12-unit minimum for full-time enrollment. Concerns were raised that if students had to take additional graduate courses, they would not have the time to work as an ASE. The Council recommended that units concerned about this issue investigate the use of Individual Study and Individual Research courses in the 590 series. This may require a paradigm shift in programs that have traditionally used Course 375 to give students enough credit for full-time enrollment. However, relying on credit given for work done for pay to define a student as full-time is untenable moving forward, particularly if that credit is used to make them eligible to work as an ASE.

3. Evaluation of ASE work

A number of programs said they used the grades of students taking Course 375 as a way of indicating the student's performance as an employee. Referencing Article 10 of the UAW BX Contract, the Graduate Council has indicated to programs that Course 375 should not be used as a means to evaluate a student as an employee and recommended communicating with Labor Relations for ways to develop their evaluation criteria and procedures.

4. Tracking Quarterly Count as an ASE

A number of programs noted that they use Course 375 enrollment as a way to track how many quarters a student has been employed as an ASE. ASE quarter count is important because it affects ASE progression and salary, so an alternative method needed to be identified to track this accurately. As a result, the DGE developed the "Student TA Experience" report, which provides quarter count data for continuing students who have worked previously as a TA through Spring Quarter 2023 and will be updated annually. While the report was developed to assist departments in determining experience level, it is the responsibility of hiring departments to maintain detailed Academic Apprentice Personnel records. Hiring departments are required to issue offer letters/notices of appointments, and while this may provide a record for students working in their home department, it would require coordination between departments if students are hired across multiple departments.

Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs)

The relationship between research done by a GSR and by the same student for credit differs across the campus. Some GSRs work on projects completely unrelated to their thesis or dissertation, while for others, the research they do as a GSR may be indistinguishable from their research for credit. The latter is often seen in lab environments, in which research done for the PI has the same aims and goals as the research the student is doing for their thesis or dissertation. As such, identifying ways to clearly demarcate research done for credit and research done for pay is easier in some circumstances than

others.

The approach we have taken is to attempt to identify ways in which we can distinguish research done for credit and research done for pay in the most ambiguous situations and then integrate that into how work as a GSR is defined. There are several approaches that could be used to clearly define research a GSR does for pay from research the same student does for credit and, ultimately, their degree:

1. Define GSR work by projects or research goals

When a student is working on a project that is unrelated to their own research, as happens frequently on north campus, this is a good way to define work for pay and we would encourage it as a path forward. However, it is unlikely to work for all GSRs working in lab environments. One situation in which this may be possible is if a student is an expert in a specific technique and, as their GSR work, they do that technique for other projects (in their lab or in other labs) that are not related to their own research. In this case, it would be appropriate to define work based on the project; however, it would be important to make sure that the GSR is able to complete the assigned work in the time allocated to them as a GSR.

This may also be a potential approach for a student who is working on two projects for their dissertation. In agreement with their PI, their work on one project could be defined as their work as a GSR, with permission to use the results in their dissertation. There are two potential problems with this. First, projects can change over time and can, at times, be halted (particularly if funding is contingent on results or productivity). In addition, appointments may need to be done more frequently to keep the projects outlined in the appointment letter current. Second, project-based research often does not parcellate out into blocks of 20 hours per week. If this is the case, students may get paid for more time than they spend working on that project or they may think they need to put more time on that project than they are paid for, putting them in the position of having to decide whether to do the research anyway or have an aspect of a project potentially fail. As such, we think that this approach will not always be appropriate for students in this position. Likewise, if a student's research has a single main goal at any given time, then this approach is unlikely to provide clarity on what work the student is doing for pay and what they are doing for credit.

Overall, defining GSR work based on projects or research goals is a good solution when the outcome of the work the GSR is doing is clearly not for their own research, but is probably not appropriate when there is some overlap between the research they are doing as a GSR and their own project.

2. Define GSR work by activities

Based on this approach, research done as a GSR would be defined by the activities they are assigned to do. For example, a PI could list attending lab meetings, required training or journal clubs as work done as a GSR, if these are not listed in their academic expectations. Likewise, the use of certain methodological techniques could be listed as work that is done for pay. Conversely, the actual writing of a thesis or dissertation should not be defined as work done as a GSR as it directly contributes to the student's degree. The difficulty with this approach is that the research of students in some lab environments is so repetitive and intertwined that defining GSR work in this way is highly unlikely to produce a clear line between work for credit and work for pay. If a PI stuck to the most concrete examples (e.g. attending lab meetings and required training) as GSR work, it would only represent a small percentage of the time the student works as a GSR. Given the ambiguity of defining work based on

activities, we think this would not be a good approach moving forward.

Although work should not be defined by the activities a GSR will do, appointment letters or supplemental documents should clearly state the PI's expectations and activities and/or methods that a GSR is expected to do as part of their employment.

3. Define GSR work by time

The research many, if not most, graduate students do in lab environments as a GSR is so similar to the research they are conducting for their own project that the above methods of defining GSR work are likely to be inadequate. The majority of the lab-based researchers on the Task Force noted that it is often difficult to clearly demarcate the research their graduate students do for pay from the research they do for their thesis or dissertation. If we take the point of view that research done for pay and research that a student does for their thesis or dissertation must be clearly defined and separable, then for many of these lab-based students we could be led in one of two extreme directions: either students may not perform work as a GSR that overlaps with the work they do for their own project, which is likely to dramatically increase time to degree, or almost everything the student does fits the category of work for pay and the majority of their time would be as an employee, in which case they cannot be considered a full-time student and may not fulfill the requirements to earn a degree.

As noted on page 1 in the interim guidelines for directed studies courses developed by the systemwide Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) and approved by the Academic Council on July 26, 2023, "while employment is performed as a service for a defined period of time or for a specified set of activities, academic effort is undertaken in pursuit of a defined academic goal that is not always associated with a precise expectation of time or with predetermined activities." In this vein, we think that a possible approach for students whose research as a GSR and as a student is indistinguishable may be to focus on hours worked as a GSR rather than on the activities they do. One way to approach this would be to acknowledge that there is overlap between the research the student does as a GSR and the research they do as part of their studies, and to clearly state the number of hours the GSR is expected to work each week in their appointment letter. An alternative option would be to spell out the hours that the GSR would be expected to work. In this case, the time should be clearly described and easily measurable, so expected work hours could be defined (e.g., 1 – 5 pm Monday to Friday) with a formal way to change those hours when the GSR is unable to work during that time.[8] In either case, the appointment letter would still have to identify the activities that the GSR would perform. It may also be useful to include a statement noting that "work performed as a GSR may be used in your thesis or dissertation" and, if felt necessary, a note that "all research performed outside the preapproved GSR work hours is considered research for academic credit." We do not opine on what the appropriate percentage effort should be for these GSRs; instead, we recommend that the Administration should develop guidelines for faculty who supervise and mentor graduate students in this situation.

To be clear, when research done as a GSR is clearly distinguishable from research done for academic credit, then defining GSR work based on criteria such as research goals, projects or activities is the better approach. We only suggest defining work by time for those cases in which the research a student does as a GSR and as a student is effectively indistinguishable.

---

[8] Article 28, Section A.1 of the GSR CBA requires that a "GSR's workload [] be commensurate with the appointment percentage and title classification."

V.   RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section we provide general recommendations based on the findings outlined above. Not all the recommendations are appropriate for all schools/divisions, units or departments, as different parts of the campus have different concerns. For example, there is little concern about creating description of duties letters for GSRs that clearly distinguish between work a student does as a GSR and work they do towards their degree in parts of north campus because for most students, there is little, if any, overlap between the two. However, in many lab-based STEM departments, the two are often intertwined. Conversely, some departments have fewer concerns about graduate student funding: external grants are able to cover the incremental GSR costs and faculty and administrators have worked together to fine-tune the number of TAs required for courses to meet the budget.

Recommendations:

Graduate Student Support

- The Task Force identified many ways in which increased costs could be addressed, but none came close to covering the estimated shortfall. As such, senior leadership with authority over campus-wide budgets, in consultation with the Academic Senate, will need to make strategic choices about how to fund the cost increases.

- Divisions, schools and departments should consider incentives to encourage students to apply for fellowships and training grant positions, and incentives to encourage faculty to write and maintain training grants.

- The university should continue to lobby the State Legislature for funding for graduate students. As part of this process, the university should highlight the importance of graduate students, including their critical roles in making the UC and UCLA a top-tier research university, their potential for shaping the future of research and education in the state and the nation as the next generation of the professoriate, and their direct impact on our undergraduate population as ASEs and mentors.

- The university should also continue to lobby funding agencies to ensure that research funding for graduate students can cover the costs associated with employing graduate students.

- Fundraising for graduate students should be a priority in the new development campaign. Our development efforts must frame graduate student funding not as an isolated need but rather as crucial to research and undergraduate education.

Evaluation of the Size and Purpose of Graduate Programs

- Departments should be encouraged to use pertinent data (e.g., the PRSA reports developed and distributed by the DGE) and pose questions considered critical by their faculty to engage in internal discussions around the optimal size of their graduate programs.

- Departments should be encouraged to make use of either their own or (once available) the DGE's new graduate student support budget modeling tool, to ensure that they are using the most accurate calculations possible to make their budget projections.

- Departments should be encouraged to re-evaluate the department's mission and purpose for academic training.

- The Academic Senate should incorporate a routine assessment of appropriate cohort sizes into the self-reviews included as part of the academic program reviews, thereby ensuring that at regular intervals, departments give appropriate consideration to this critical issue and provide justification for the size of their graduate programs.

- The DGE, in consultation with the Graduate Council or its Fellowships and Assistantships Committee (FAC), should consider alternative methods for allocating graduate student support funding that would provide better incentives for optimizing graduate cohort sizes than the current block allocation methodology.

The Relationship between Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

- Divisions and schools should review and update, if needed, ASE workloads in role descriptions to ensure that all ASEs on the same percent effort have equivalent workloads.

- Instructors should consider increasing the appropriate use of LAs in classes in which ASEs spend more time doing lower-level tasks that LAs could perform, thereby freeing up ASEs to perform duties with more responsibility.

- Instructors should consider increasing the appropriate use of readers in classes in which ASEs spend a disproportionate time grading students' papers and exams.

- The Teaching and Learning Center should continue to incentivize faculty to use technology to reach more undergraduate students.

The Dual Role of Academic Training and Employment

- Faculty should clearly articulate academic criteria for grading 590-series courses. This should include the use of syllabi, course descriptions or other documents.

- The Teaching and Learning Center, with input from the Graduate Council, should provide templates to help faculty articulate these criteria.

- The Graduate Council should continue to disestablish course 375 and work with departments to find solutions for problems that may arise due to this change.

- The PI should clearly articulate the role of the position based on specific projects or research goals in the GSR description of duties letters.

- When the work a GSR does as an employee is indistinguishable from the research they are doing for their own thesis or dissertation, the PI should consider defining the position based on the hours the GSR will work in the description of duties letter. The letter should still outline the project, research goal and activities and can make clear that work done as an employee may be used towards a thesis or dissertation.

- The Administration should develop guidelines to help faculty determine the appropriate GSR employment percentage when the work a GSR does for a PI is indistinguishable from the GSR's own research.

Unaddressed Issue:

This report has focused on financial and practical recommendations. We identified one issue that we did not address because it was less tangible.

- The relationship between faculty members and their graduate student advisees has historically been as mentor and mentee – like an apprentice. As the academic landscape shifts, many faculty and students are unsure how to move forward, which has resulted in friction and, in some cases, ill-feelings between the two groups. Some of this is due to lingering concerns or feelings about the 2022 strike, but some is due to the move from a mentor/mentee to more of an employer/employee relationship. Additionally, some faculty are concerned that the union will attempt to become involved in academic decisions. We strongly encourage the university to identify the hurdles that students and faculty face in working together and to provide recommendations that will help bring the two together in a way that retains the interpersonal aspects of the mentor/mentee relationships, while recognizing the formality of the employer/employee relationship.

VI.   REFERENCES

Academic Planning Council Graduate Education Workgroup. (June 2019). Recommendations for Greater Support of Doctoral Education. https://www.ucop.edu/graduate-studies/_files/apc-grad-ed-wrkgrp-report.pdf.

Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs. (August 7, 2023). Interim Guidance from CCGA on Directed Studies Courses. https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/sc-senate-divisions-guidance-on-directed-studies-courses.pdf.

Council of Graduate Schools (2008). Graduate Education and the Public Good. https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2018/gradedpublicgood.pdf.

Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on the Future of UC Doctoral Programs. (August 11, 2023). Update on the Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on the Future of UC Doctoral Programs [Memo]. https://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/apc_memo_acad_delineation.pdf.

Newfield, Chris. (January 12, 2022). For UC and CSU, Newsom's 'Big Funding" Budget is Flat [Blogpost]. https://utotherescue.blogspot.com/2022/01/newsoms-big-funding-budget-for-uc-and.html.

UCLA Academic Senate Executive Board. (November 23, 2022). UCLA Senate Executive Board to UC Senate re UC Graduate Education Funding [Memo]. https://dms.senate.ucla.edu/issues/issue/?6728.UC.Graduate.Education.Funding.

University of California Board of Regents. (2010). Regents Policy 3101: The University of California Student Tuition and Fee Policy. https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/policies/3101.html.

University of California Office of the President. (July 21, 2022). Item B5: Presentation of the UC 2030 Capacity Plan for the July 21, 2022 Meeting of the UC Regents. https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/july22/b5.pdf.

University Committee on Planning and Budget. (March 23, 2020). Graduate Student Funding and Support [Memo]. https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/kkb-mb-graduate-student-funding.pdf.

VII. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Joint Task Force Charge

Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support

February 2023

The Joint Task Force on the Future of Graduate Programs and Graduate Student Support (JTFGPGSS), co-charged by Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Darnell Hunt and Academic Senate Chair Jessica Cattelino, will create a UCLA plan for the future of graduate programs and graduate student support, given the University of California's mandated responsibility for the State's research enterprise and academic graduate education. Members will consider longstanding structural issues and also the new reality of graduate education in light of recent collective bargaining agreements with graduate student workers. The task force will recommend answers to questions such as:

1. What should be the relationship between graduate student paid labor and educational training? What changes to current policy and practice are required to fit this emerging vision and also harmonize with graduate student employee contracts? How can UCLA best differentiate between graduate student research for academic credit and research performed for wages? How should the campus and the UC allocate responsibility for the increased costs of graduate student funding?
2. What should be the relationship between graduate degree programs and undergraduate degree programs (e.g., with regard to enrollment management, teaching, and research mentoring)?
3. How will UCLA meet the state mandate for enrollment growth in state-supported degree programs, "to meet state workforce needs, expand research capacity, support undergraduate learning, and grow and diversity future researchers and [the] professoriate"?
4. What is the best balance of academic graduate programs, professional graduate programs, and self-supporting graduate degree programs in order for UCLA to advance its academic mission (of research, teaching, and service) through inclusive excellence?
5. Graduate student support is being restructured. What should be the role of the faculty in determining student support through departmental funding packages, including fellowships? In what ways will changes to the graduate student support structure affect campuswide fellowship programs and external graduate student grants and fellowships?
6. Many matters of graduate student education and funding fall outside of labor contracts. What issues remain unaddressed that require the attention of the campus in the coming months and years? For example, does the Joint Task Force wish to recommend systemwide changes to the structure of tuition and fees and their remission?
7. How should the campus evaluate the size and purpose of graduate degree programs, going forward?

In making recommendations to answer these questions, the Joint Task Force will consider how changes to graduate programs and graduate student support might affect UCLA's role as an R1 research institution.

The Joint Task Force will begin work in winter quarter of the 2022-23 academic year and produce recommendations as well as a final report by the end of fall quarter of the 2023-24 academic year.

Membership:

- Co-Chairs:
    - James Bisley, AY 2022-2023 Chair, Graduate Council, Academic Senate
    - Susan Ettner, Dean of Graduate Education

- Members:

    - Helen Deutsch, Professor, English
    - Adriana Galván, Dean, Division of Undergraduate Education
    - David Glanzman, Professor, Integrative Biology and Physiology, Neurobiology
    - Jeff Lewis, Special Assistant to the EVCP on Academic Planning and Budget
    - Joseph Loo, Professor, Biological Chemistry, Chemistry and Biochemistry
    - Kim Massih, Manager, Labor Relations
    - Jens Palsberg, Professor, Computer Science
    - Brett Steele, Dean, School of Arts and Architecture

- Staff Support:
    - April de Stefano, Executive Director, Academic Senate
    - Tara Hottman, Administrative Analyst, Academic Senate
    - Emily Le, Principal Policy Analyst, Academic Senate

Appendix B: Graduate Student Support at UCLA

Modified/updated from Heider K, McKinney K, Lebon A and Ettner SL. Report on Central Graduate Student Funding at UCLA. Draft, Fall 2022.

BACKGROUND/OVERVIEW

The [UC 50th Annual report on Student Financial Support for 2020-21](#) noted key goals of graduate student funding that distinguish it from funding provided at the undergraduate level, including:
- Support for graduate students is intended not simply to make the university accessible, but also to help entice top students to choose UC over other institutions for graduate study.
- Graduate-level assistance at UC is distributed largely based on merit in order to increase its effectiveness at recruiting strong graduate students.

UC' s graduate student population encompasses a diverse mix of academic and professional degree programs and disciplines. The levels and types of support received by graduate students vary by program and discipline, reflecting differences in both the competitive environment and extramural funding sources for these programs. For example, research universities typically cover tuition and fees for students in academic doctoral programs as well as provide students with a net stipend for living expenses. International students are particularly costly to fund because they are subject to nonresident tuition until they advance to candidacy (and for any period of enrollment beginning three years after they advance to candidacy). In contrast to academic programs, professional degree programs typically expect students to finance a portion of their tuition and/ or living expenses through student loans.

Research grants, which provide funding for graduate student research assistantships, are the principal source of student financial support for academic doctoral students in science and engineering disciplines. In contrast, fellowships and teaching assistantships play a proportionately larger role for academic doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences.

GRADUATE ENROLLMENT

With the exception of the Fall 2021 cohort, which was unusually large due to deferred admissions and other factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic, graduate enrollment at UCLA has been relatively stable. UCLA has the largest graduate population across any UC, with a [current graduate student enrollment](#) of 14,007.

TIME-TO-DEGREE (TTD)

Normative time-to-degree (NTTD) is set by each graduate program, subject to approval by the Graduate Council.   Although NTTD is under the control of the program and therefore could be adjusted to reflect current program length, in many cases, empirical TTD (e.g., actual median or mean TTD) differs from normative TTD, typically exceeding it.

Consideration of TTD is critical in discussions of graduate funding, as reducing empirical TTD for current students frees up funding for incoming students. Thus, reducing empirical TTD is one of the few

mechanisms for supporting graduate education that does not pose a "zero-sum" tradeoff requiring reductions in support for other campus needs in order to increase support to graduate students. In cases where it would be challenging to reduce empirical TTD to be consistent with NTTD, programs may seek approval from the Graduate Council to increase their NTTD in order to ensure transparency with prospective students about the time commitment required for the degree.

Table A1 below shows the variation across PhD programs in the difference between the average actual time to degree and nominal time to degree for students completing between AY2017-18 and AY2021-22. Each circle represents a PhD program. The location of each circle indicates the mean difference between the actual and nominal time to degree for graduates of a particular program in a given school. The size of the circle indicates the number of program graduates during the period.[9] The squares show the school-wide averages and size in proportion to the number PhDs awarded school-wide.

Figure A1: Difference between average and nominal time to degree for PhD students finishing between AY2017-18 to AY2021-22 by program
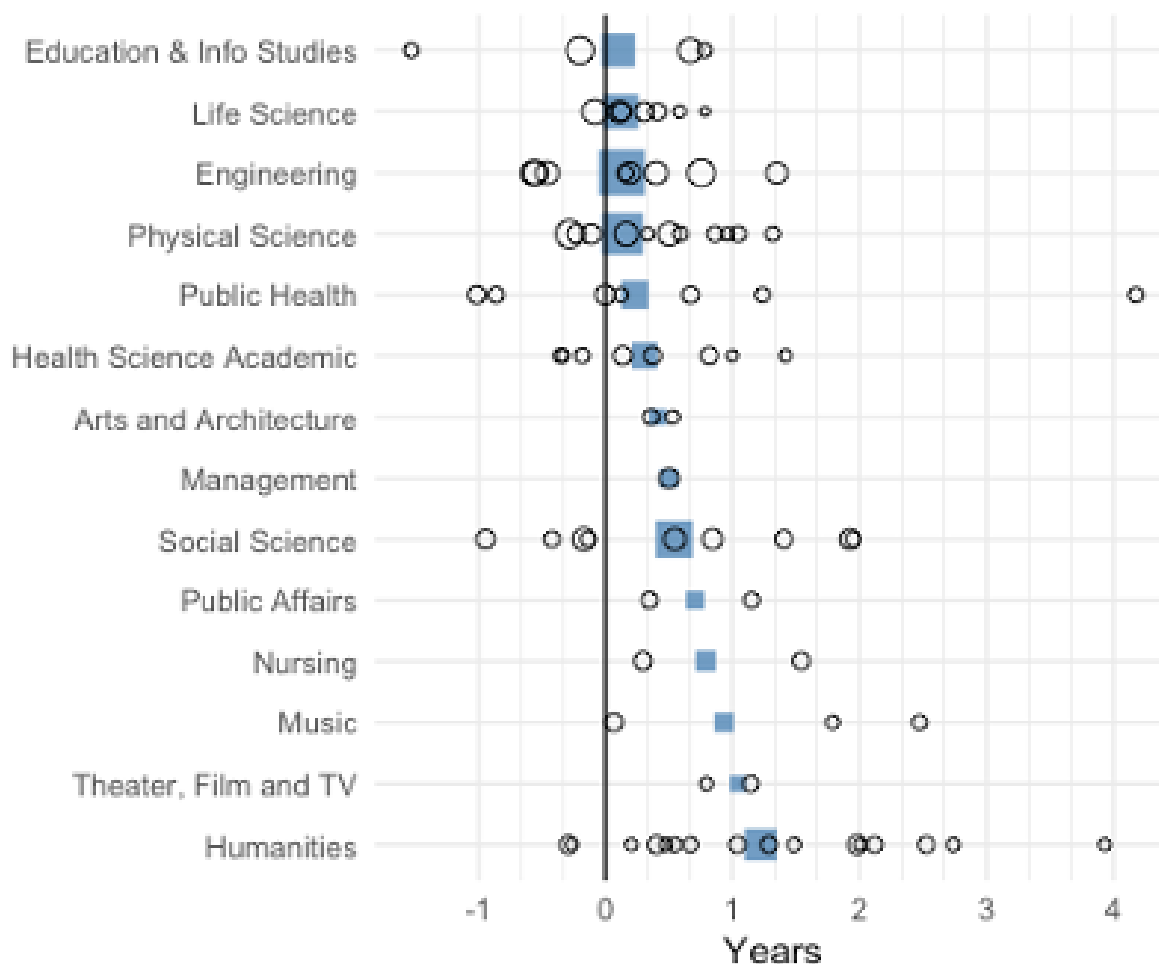
---

GRADUATE TUITION AND FEES

In-state Tuition & Student Services Fee
[Graduate student tuition and fees at UCLA](#) include a mix of UC-wide and campus-based fees. The In-State Tuition and the Student Services Fee are determined by the UC Regents and are uniform across UC campuses. Both charges have been relatively stable over the past ten years. For 2023-24, In-State Tuition is $12,264 and the Student Services Fee is $1,206.

Nonresident Supplemental Tuition
Nonresident students are assessed additional [Nonresident Supplemental Tuition (NRST)](#). As with In-State Tuition, NRST is set by the UC Regents. Annual NRST has been constant over the past ten years at $15,102 for graduate academic programs and $12,245 for graduate professional programs. Domestic nonresident students who move to California for graduate school are expected to establish California residency after enrolling at UCLA so that they are not subject to NRST beyond the first year of graduate study. Beginning with the first academic term following advancement to candidacy, doctoral candidates who remain non-residents for tuition purposes, including international students, have their NRST reduced by 100% (waived) for up to three consecutive years.[10] Nonregistered terms such as Leaves of Absence count toward the NRST waiver period. If a nonresident doctoral candidate remains enrolled beyond the three-year waiver period, per University of California policy, the NRST is reinstated.

Other Fees
In addition to tuition and the student services fee, most graduate students pay roughly $5,000 in other fees, including those specific to UCLA, such as the Ackerman Student Union Fee and the Graduate Students Association Fee. The UC Student Health Insurance Plan (UCSHIP) accounts for about 90% of these remaining fees. Students with health insurance coverage that meets or exceeds specific criteria may apply to opt out of the UCSHIP fee.[11]

Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition
Students in professional degree programs pay [Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition (PDST)](#). Regents' policy specifies that an amount equal to at least one-third of any new fee increase (e.g., PDST) must be used for financial aid. The remainder is retained by the professional schools to maintain academic quality.[12] Fellowships funded by the Division of Graduate Education (DGE) do not cover these professional program-related charges. The PDST charged by UCLA programs varies from $7,200 to $41,672 in 2023-24. As of the same year, the following programs assessed PDST: Architecture MArch I,

---

[10] Update on the Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on the Future of UC Doctoral Programs, https://academic-senate.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/apc_memo_acad_delineation.pdf
Interim Guidance from CCGA on Directed Studies Courses, https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/_files/reports/sc-senate-divisions-guidance-on-directed-studies-courses.pdf
[10] A registered PhD or professional doctoral student is eligible to have NRST waived if they meet the following criteria: (1) is classified as a nonresident for tuition purposes; (2) is registered in a doctoral or professional doctorate program that has an advancement-to-candidacy requirement; (3) has been approved by DGE to be advanced to doctoral candidacy by the day before the start of the applicable quarter for which NRST will be assessed.
[11] Waiving UCSHIP. https://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu/insurance/benefits/waiving-uc-ship
[12] UCLA Registrar's Office – Fee Descriptions. https://registrar.ucla.edu/fees-residence/fee-descriptions

Art MFA, Dentistry DDS, Environmental Science and Engineering DEnv, Film and Television MFA, Genetic Counseling MS, Law JD, Medicine MD, Nursing MSN, Public Health MPH and DrPH, Public Policy MPP, Social Welfare MSW, Theater MFA, and Urban Planning MURP.

Self-Supporting Graduate Professional Degree Programs
As their name suggests, self-supporting graduate professional degree programs (SSGPDP) charge their own tuition and fees to cover program costs. Unlike state-supported programs, self-supporting programs and their students do not receive funding from the DGE. Academic doctoral degree programs are not allowed to be self-supporting and SSGPDPs primarily serve professionals seeking to advance their careers and often enroll non-traditional populations.[13] Many SSGPDPs are offered through an alternative mode of delivery (e.g., online or hybrid instruction) and/or offer alternative scheduling (e.g., evening, weekend and/or summers). As a result, self-supporting programs allow UCLA to serve students above and beyond those supported with state funds, while simultaneously fulfilling demonstrated higher education and workforce needs.[14]

As of 2023-24, UCLA had 25 SSGPDPs with plans to launch more by 2025.[15] As with state-supported programs, SSGPDPs are subject to Academic Senate oversight and review to ensure they meet UC standards of academic rigor and quality.[16] While state funding levels and academic base tuition increases are largely beyond UCLA's control, campus has identified SSGPDPs as one potential source of increased funding. That is, the revenue generated by SSGPDPs has the potential to benefit students in state-supported programs.

Planned Changes to Graduate Tuition and Fees
The UC Regents approved a multi-year Tuition Stability Plan in July 2021 aimed at addressing a growing budget shortfall. Under the plan, In-State Tuition, NRST and the Student Services Fee for new and continuing graduate students will increase annually for five years beginning in Fall 2022. In an effort to keep costs flat in constant dollars, the three-year average annual inflation rate will be used to adjust tuition and fees each year, with annual increases capped at 6%. According to the Tuition Stability Plan, a multi-year plan with moderate and predictable adjustments to student tuition and fees will help UC address its critical needs while providing costs that are manageable to families.[17]

RETURN TO AID

The University of California provides financial aid for graduate students with the "primary goal" of "provid[ing] competitive levels of support in order to attract a diverse pool of highly qualified students who are willing and able to pursue graduate academic and professional degrees."[18] Each year the Office of the President establishes minimum percentages of the resident tuition and fees assessed to graduate

---

[13] Non-traditional populations may include full-time employees, mid-career professionals, international students with specialized goals, and students whose professional education is supported by their employers.
[14] UCLA Registrar's Office – Self-Supporting Degree Programs. https://registrar.ucla.edu/fees-residence/self-supporting-degrees
[15] Some SSGPDP information sourced from an internal 2021 APB report on SSGPDP growth at UCLA.
[16] UC SSGPDP Policy. https://apb.ucla.edu/file/c63e70eb-219a-4ace-a99e-dc4bd8edaf70
[17] UC Tuition Stability Plan. https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/tuition-financial-aid/tuition-cost-of-attendance/tuition-stability-plan.html
[18] https://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/bap/systemwide_budget_manual.pdf page 5-3.

students enrolled in state-supported programs that campuses that are expected to be dedicated to financial aid.[19] For example, in AY2020-21, the return-to-aid (RTA) percentages were set to 48.2 percent of academic master's and doctoral students and 29.1 percent for graduate students pursuing professional degrees, resulting in a total RTA of $34.1 million for academic graduate students and $11.9 million for graduate students in professional programs. This total of $46 million can be thought of as the funding floor for graduate student support at UCLA in FY2020-21. (Note that above this RTA base, approximately $15 million in additional resources for non-employment based graduate support were provided by general fund allocations beyond the required return-to-aid, endowment income, and other sources to form the total resources for graduate support administered by DGE.) Also, additional financial aid for professional school students was generated through a separate return-to-aid requirement for professional school supplemental tuition and which is applied to and distributed by each program that charges supplemental tuition. Further non-employment-based financial support for students in both academic and professional programs totaling over $84 million is provided by extramural training grants and departmental and divisional gift funds. Across all sources including self-supporting degree program tuition, professional school supplemental tuition, and all of the sources already enumerated above, and others, the total amount of non-employment-based financial support provided to graduate students across programs of all types exceeds $200 million annually.

SOURCES AND ALLOCATION OF CENTRAL FUNDING FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION AT UCLA

Graduate Student Support Under the Purview of the DGE

Overview
In 2022-23, the DGE received $64.7 million in funding for graduate student support. Approximately five percent of graduate student support funds come from gifts and endowments (3%), Student Services Fee return-to-aid (2%), and UCOP (1%). The majority of the funds, 94%, were provided by the Chancellor or allocated to DGE by Academic Planning and Budget (APB) based on graduate student base tuition return-to-aid. While the total return-to-aid earned from graduate student tuition varies annually, the return-to-aid funds allocated to the DGE each year do not. Rather, temporary and permanent increases to the return-to-aid allocation are requested by the DGE and are subject to approval by APB.

---

[19] Professional schools assessing professional school supplemental tuition are required to provide additional financial assistance equal to at least one-third of their supplemental tuition revenue.

DGE Student Funding Sources 22-23

UCOP
$483,850

Student Services Fee Return-to-Aid
$1,455,255

Gifts & Endowments
$1,736,389

22-23 Total
$64,741,783

Chancellor's & Return-to-Aid
$61,066,288

Chancellor's & Return-to-Aid		$61,066,288 (94%)
Gifts & Endowments		$1,736,389 (3%)
Student Services Fee Return-to-Aid		$1,455,255 (2%)
UCOP		$483,850 (1%)
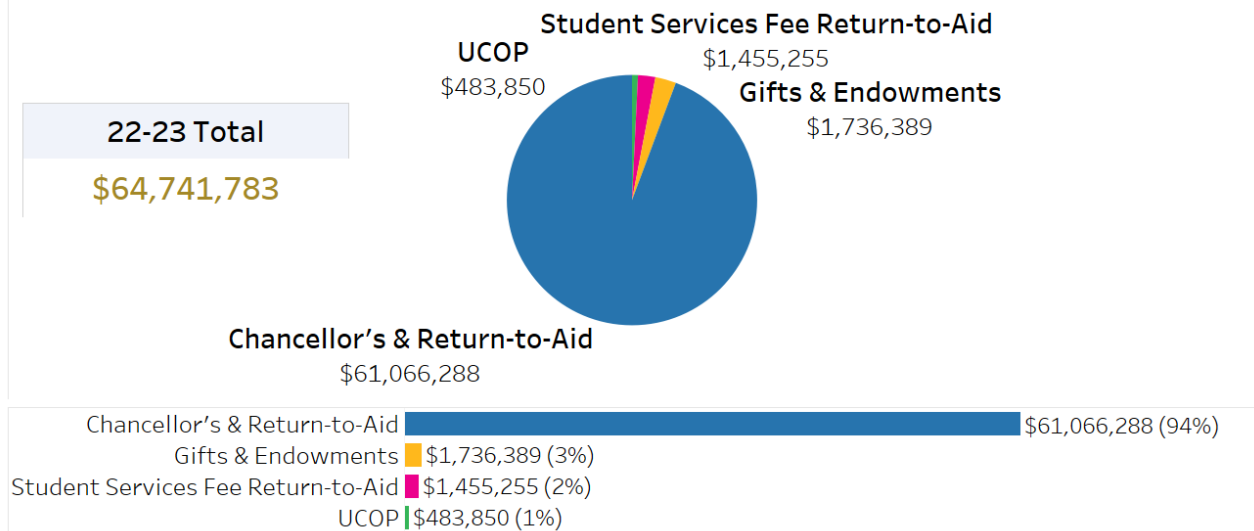
The DGE then employs a set of procedures for allocating all of its graduate student support funds to Schools/Divisions, departments, and students each year. In 2022-23, 59%, or about $38 million, of the funds was allocated directly to Schools/Divisions through the annual block allocation. Another 2%, or $2 million, was disbursed via privately endowed fellowships. Four DGE programs allocated or awarded 5%, or approximately $3 million, directly to departments or students. These programs include the Graduate Dean's Scholar Award (GDSA), Recruitment Visit Funding, the Doctoral Travel Grant and Training Grant Matching Funds. Five merit-based fellowship programs, totaling $22 million, accounted for the remaining 33%. Note that in any given year, the graduate student support funds may not be fully spent out because the DGE allows departments to carry forward a certain amount of funding and some fellowships may not end up being activated.

Division of Graduate Education Funding Allocations

DGE Merit-Based Fellowships
$22M (33%)

$64M

Other DGE Programs
$3M (5%)

Privately Endowed Fellowships
$2M (2%)

Department Block Allocations
$38M (59%)
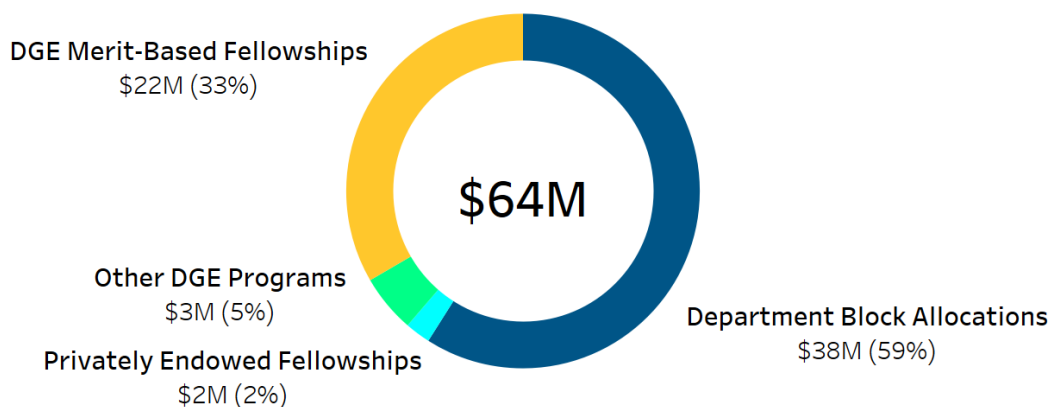
The merit-based fellowship budget is currently spread across five competitive programs that provide awards based on faculty-reviewed student applications and nominations. Diversity fellowships for

incoming students, including the Eugene V. Cota-Robles Award (CR) and the Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP), make up half of DGE merit-based fellowship funding. The other half of merit-based fellowship funding is set aside for the Graduate Research Mentorship Program (GRM), Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Program (GSRM), and Dissertation Year Award (DYA), which each provide funding to continuing doctoral students.
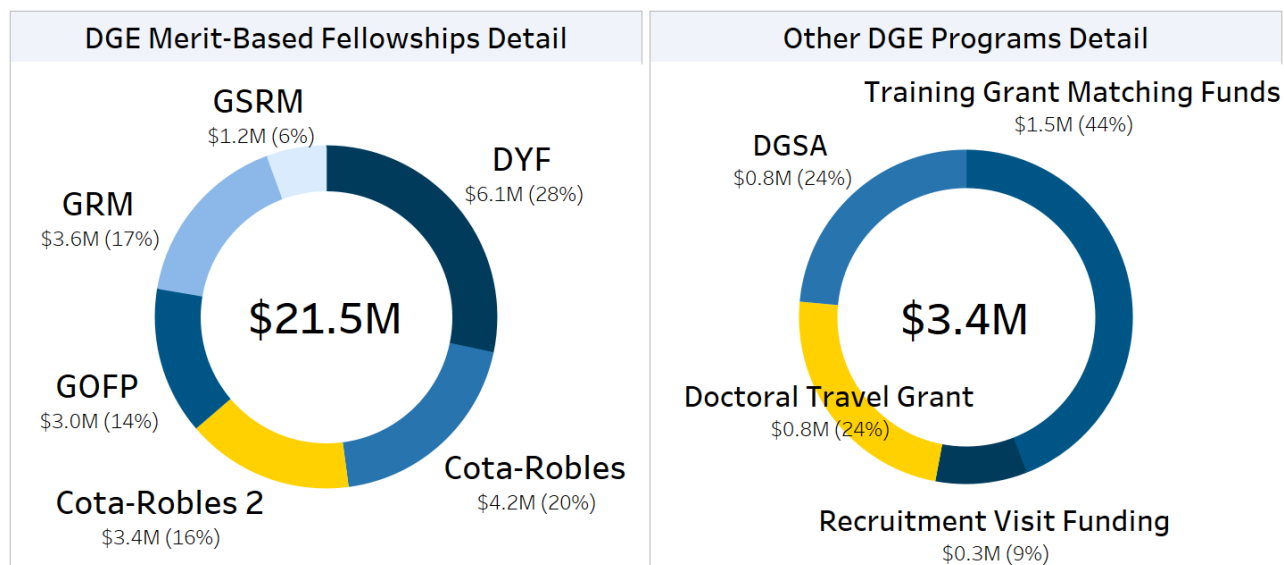
Block Grant Allocation

Each December, the DGE completes the block grant allocation in which unrestricted funds are allocated directly to Schools and Divisions for their state-supported academic programs to use in the following academic year. SSGPDPs do not receive block grant funding.[20] The timing of the allocation is intended to allow departments to competitively recruit new students and confirm funding for continuing students well before the following fall quarter.

Broadly, the current block grant allocation process consists of identifying which master's, doctoral and JD students are eligible for block grant funds and then allocating funds to departments based on the number of students that have been deemed eligible for the allocation and the per capita block rate assigned to the School or Division.[21]

The current per capita approach to the block allocation process was implemented in 2016-17. However, as institutional memory has waned—and with a lack of historical documentation surrounding the factors

---

[20] Registrar's Office Self-Supporting Degree Fees https://registrar.ucla.edu/fees-residence/self-supporting-degrees
[21] The JD, LLM, SJD, MD and DDS are not under the purview of the DGE. While the School of Law is allocated funding for JD students, the School of Medicine and School of Dentistry are not allocated funding for the MD and DDS, respectively. The historical rationale for the inclusion of the JD in the block allocation, and exclusion of the other degree programs not under the DGE's purview, is not well-understood. A 2015 EVCP announcement about changes to the block grant allocation noted that the MD and DDS do not receive block grant funding because they are wholly outside the purview of DGE. However, by this logic, the JD should also be excluded from the allocation (https://grad.ucla.edu/deans/announcements/evcmemo20151201.pdf).

that shaped the current approach—DGE is in the position of implementing a block allocation process for which some of the rationale is not well-understood. As a result, the DGE has begun re-evaluating the method by which Schools and Divisions are assigned per capita values for the purpose of allocating block grant funds.

Eligibility

The block grant allocation is based on official fall 3rd week registered enrollment counts. In order to limit the impact of year-to-year enrollment fluctuations, eligible enrollment counts for the past three fall quarters are averaged for the allocation. Registered fall enrollment counts used for the block grant allocation are subject to eligibility restrictions. In particular, eligibility is currently based on each student's degree objective and number of quarters enrolled.

- **Doctoral** - All doctoral students who are within the first seven years of elapsed enrollment from admit term to the current fall term are eligible for funding.[22]
- **Master's and JD** - Master's and JD students who are within their program's published NTTD are eligible for funding.[23] Those students in the final year of their program's NTTD are counted fractionally based on how many remaining quarters they have between elapsed enrollment and NTTD. For example, students in the second year of a five-quarter program would be eligible for 2/3 funding in the block grant allocation.

According to the recently established graduate student part-time enrollment policy, part-time graduate students acquire TTD at one-half the rate of full-time students for those quarters during which they are approved for part-time study.[24]

With few exceptions, total elapsed enrollment is used to determine student eligibility. Terms in which students are on *In Absentia* registration, conducting research outside of California, count towards elapsed enrollment when determining block grant eligibility. Similarly, terms in which students are on Leave of Absence (LOA) count towards elapsed enrollment with one exception—parental leave LOA quarters are subtracted from a student's total elapsed enrollment for the purpose of determining block grant allocation eligibility. Students on Filing Fee in a given fall term are not enrolled and are, thus, ineligible.

Allocation Process

Once eligible enrollment counts for the current fall term have been generated, each School/Division's three-year average fall enrollment counts are calculated. Each School/Division is additionally assigned per capita block funding amounts for its master's and doctoral students. Each School/Division's master's

---

[22] Doctoral students in their 22nd quarter as of the current Fall quarter for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 block grant allocations were granted an additional year of eligibility in order to account for any delays in degree completion as a result of COVID-19.

[23] Master's students who, as of the current fall quarter for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 block grant allocations, were just beyond eligibility based on their NTTD were granted one additional quarter of eligibility.

[24] Part-time Graduate Study https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/part-time-enrollment/?utm_source=BP06392&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=&utm_content=Graduate+Division+website

and doctoral per capita values are multiplied by the corresponding average eligible enrollment counts to determine their total allocation.

Per capita assignments have been static since the 2018-19 allocation, with master's degree per capita values ranging from $2,150 to $5,725 and doctoral degree per capita values ranging from $5,800 to $8,150.[25] The table below provides the per capita assignments by School/Division. The historic derivation and rationale for heterogeneity in the per capita assignments across Schools and Divisions is not well-understood. The paucity of written documentation to justify the differences in the per capita rates raises concerns about transparency and equity in the block allocation.

Per Capita Block Grant		
School/Division	Masters	Doctoral
Arts and Architecture	$2,400	$8,120
Dentistry	$5,725	$8,150
Education & Info Studies	$2,150	$5,800
Engineering	$2,150	$5,800
Grad Programs in Bioscience (GPB Life Sciences + Health Sciences Academic)	$3,227	$6,454
Humanities	$5,725	$7,095
International Institute	$5,725	N/A
Law	$2,150	N/A
Life Science (EEB/Physical Sciences/Psychology)	$2,400	$5,970
Music	$2,275	$7,095
Management	N/A	$5,980
Nursing	$2,150	$5,800
Physical Science	$2,150	$5,800
Public Affairs	$2,150	$5,800
Public Health	$2,150	$5,800
Social Science	$5,725	$6,990
Theater, Film and TV	$4,720	$8,150

After calculating the block grant allocation, the School/Divisional deans are given complete flexibility in distributing the allocated funds across the departments under their purview. In turn, departments control how the funds allocated to them by their deans are distributed to new and continuing students. Departments may request to underspend the allocation by carrying forward up to $40 thousand or 10% of their block grant allocation, whichever is greater, to the following academic year. Similarly, departments may overspend their allocation by requesting an advance of up to $40 thousand on the following year's allocation.

---

[25] The School of Music has had one per capita increase since 2018-19 where the doctoral per capita assignment was increased from $5,960 to $7,095; all other School and Division per capita assignments have been static.

Block Grant Allocation History[26]

1990-91 to 2015-16

In January 1991, a UC Joint Advisory Committee of Graduate Student Support issued a report outlining system-wide priorities for Graduate Student Support. The report established three levels of priority for graduate student support: the highest priority was granted to academic doctoral students, the second highest priority was given to academic master's students, and third priority was given to professional doctoral students in the health sciences and professional master's students in all fields (including J.D.). The report additionally established "target fractions" to indicate the percentage of total funding costs that should ideally be covered using merit-based support and need-based grants for the students from each of these groups. The "target fractions" were as follows:

- Academic Doctoral Students – 90%
- Academic Master's Students – 45%
- Health Science Professional Doctoral Students – 12%
- Professional Master's Students (including J.D.) – 15%

According to a former Vice-Chancellor of Graduate Studies, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, these recommended weights were formally presented to UCLA leadership and the Graduate Council, who endorsed them to be used in DGE's initial block grant allocation formula. There were some slight modifications to the above weightings in UCLA's proposed formula, such as assigning MFA degree programs a 0.9 weight. This was likely because the MFA serves as the terminal degree in those disciplines.

In the originally proposed formula, each department's eligible enrollment count was determined based on the previous fall quarter enrollment. Each student was counted based on the above weights (e.g., one academic doctoral student contributed 0.9 towards a department's total eligible enrollment count). The proposed formula then determined departmental block grant allocations based on a department's share of all weighted enrollment multiplied by the total block grant funding available in a given year. The proposed formula also accounted for student progress towards degree completion in determining eligible enrollment. That is, academic and professional master's students enrolled more than two years, pre-ATC academic and professional doctoral students enrolled more than four years, and post-ATC academic and professional doctoral students enrolled more than three years after ATC were ineligible.[27] Although some components of the proposed formula were formally adopted, the final step of the proposed formula that distributes block grant funds based on each program's share of total weighted enrollment was not part of the adopted annual formula. Instead, Schools/Divisions were assigned an overall pool of money which remained relatively static over time as a share of total block funding.[28] A

---

[26] The block grant allocation history is compiled from various documents and represents, to the best of our knowledge, a broad overview of the historical changes to DGE's block grant allocation process.

[27] Different eligibility cutoffs were used for some master's programs. For example, MBA students had no eligibility cut-off (before they were a self-supporting program), most MFA programs were given 9 quarters of eligibility, the M.Arch. I program was given 9 quarters of eligibility and the M.Arch. II program was given 4 quarters of eligibility. The JD program had no eligibility cut-off based on enrolled quarters.

[28] It is unknown how the original School/Division pools were established. The 2012 campus workgroup that analyzed current funding methods ultimately assumed that the originally assigned pools were largely based on formula-weighted enrollments in 1991. They further assumed that weighted enrollments may have been taken into consideration in some subsequent adjustments to the pools.

School/Division's overall pool was then distributed to its programs based on each program's share of the School/Division's total weighted enrollment. That is, the enrollment formula was only used to distribute block grant funds among the programs within a School/Division. In years in which the total block grant funding available increased, the default approach for distributing the additional funds was to increase each pool by the same percentage as the overall increase. For example, if total block grant funding grew by five percent, the funds would be distributed by increasing each pool by five percent as well. Although this was the default approach, the Dean of Graduate Education had the discretion to adjust the pools each year.

There were likely a number of modifications and adjustments to the block grant allocation process over the following two decades that, given limited documentation and loss of institutional knowledge, are difficult to identify. Nevertheless, by the early 2010s, the formula enrollment weights had been adjusted for some specific programs. Professional doctoral programs, including the Dr.Ph., D.M.A. and D.Env., had been revised to a 0.9 weight. African American Studies, American Indian Studies and Asian American Studies academic master's programs had also been adjusted to receive a 0.9 weight. Finally, M.P.H. professional master's programs had been revised to receive a 0.25 weight.

In July 2012, UCLA's then-Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost (EVCP), Scott Waugh, created a Graduate Funding Allocation Workgroup charged with reviewing and recommending changes to the block grant allocation methodology employed by the DGE (then known as the Graduate Division). The workgroup's objective was intended to address questions from campus about the distribution methodology and assess the allocation methodology's alignment with departmental and campus needs. In addition, the workgroup was asked to recommend changes to the existing methodology that would:

- Enable multi-year strategic planning to recruit and retain a high-quality, diverse student body, supported by competitive packages
- Incorporate mechanisms to recognize, reward and promote best practices in graduate education, within and across disciplines
- Enable timely notification to support recruitment and yield activities
- Provide flexibility to support strategic priorities at the decanal and campus level

The workgroup produced a 2013 report suggesting options for revising the block grant allocation method which was used to frame campus discussions and solicit feedback. EVCP Waugh then asked then-Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, Robin Garrell, to use this input to present him with a final set of proposed options for revising the block grant allocation process.

2016-17 to 2022-23
In December 2015, then-EVCP Scott Waugh and then-Dean and Vice Provost of Graduate Education Robin Garrell introduced a revised approach for allocating the block grant to Schools/Divisions for graduate student support.[29] The announced methodological changes broadly represent the block grant allocation process that was still in use as of the 2022-23 allocation. Updates to the methodology were as follows:

---

[29] Revised Block Grant Allocation Methodology Announcement
https://grad.ucla.edu/deans/announcements/evcmemo20151201.pdf

- *Eliminated 'off-the-top' funding* – Off-the-top funds that were previously allocated to Dentistry, Law, Management and Medicine were combined with each School's block grant and the funding category was eliminated.[30]
- *Full decanal control granted* – Prior to 2016-17, deans had the ability to shift up to 15% of the proposed block allocation among programs under their purview. The new methodology granted deans full flexibility in distributing their allocations amongst their programs.
- *Revised degree weightings* – The enrollment weighting system was updated such that all professional and academic master's programs, as well as the J.D. program, would be treated equally for the purpose of determining eligible enrollment (albeit not per capita rates).
- *Revised enrollment eligibility* – In order to smooth year-to-year fluctuations, the process for determining eligible enrollment was updated to be based on the prior three fall quarters rather than just the preceding fall quarter. Moreover, enrollment eligibility limits were simplified to seven years for all doctoral students. Enrollment eligibility limits were also revised for master's and J.D. students to reflect normative TTD for their programs.
- *Per capita allocations established for each School/Division* – The methodology was updated to assign static per capita allocations for each School/Division and broad degree objective. In addition, a minimum per capita of $5,700 and a maximum per capita of $8,100 was established for doctoral students. Similarly, a minimum per capita of $2,100 and a maximum per capita of $5,700 was established for master's and J.D. students

During the 2018-19 block grant allocation, all of the per capita values by School/Division were adjusted. Tiers of School/Divisions were established and the per capita rates were then adjusted at the tier level. The rationale for the per capita values that were assigned to Schools/Divisions beginning with the 2016-17 block grant allocation, as well as the tier assignment for the 2018-19 funding increase, is not fully understood by current DGE leadership due to lack of written documentation.

Merit-Based Awards

Eugene V. Cota-Robles (CR) Program
The Eugene V. Cota-Robles award aims to increase the number and diversity of qualified candidates for faculty positions. Students nominated for the award are evaluated based on underrepresentation—in their discipline and/or at UCLA overall, depending on the arguments made by the nominating department—and their contributions to diversity, which could include a previous history of activities supporting diversity (e.g., leadership in organizations supporting diversity or mentorship of individuals from underrepresented groups) or plans for future activities supporting diversity (e.g., research on diversity-related topics, serving as a faculty role model for other underrepresented students, and so forth).

CR is structured to release awardees from employment or loan obligations that might delay progress toward their degree by providing a four-year funding package split by DGE and the student's home department. The DGE pays tuition and fees (including NRST if applicable) and a stipend (currently $30

---

[30] According to an Academic Planning & Budget Budgeting Participants Manual from 2006, the contract and grant off-the-top overhead fund was used to cover contracts and grants costs disallowed by the federal government. Like block grant funds, off-the-top funds were essentially unrestricted funds to be used to support incoming or continuing graduate students.

thousand) in years one and four. In years two and three, the home department commits to match funding for its awardees at the same level as DGE via stipend, teaching assistant, or GSR positions. The award does not cover PDST for awardees in professional degree programs.

Eligibility for the CR award is limited to:
- Entering doctoral (DMA, DEnv, DrPH, PhD) students (Master's, JD, DDS, and MD degrees are not eligible).
- US citizens, permanent residents or registered California AB540 students. (Under the CA budget SEC. 2. Section 66021.9 (a), (b), and (c) undocumented students who are non-AB540 and ineligible for DACA also qualify through June 2027.)

In 2022-23, the DGE received 265 CR nominations, offered about 149 awards, and had approximately 90 awardees accept the award. CR is an important resource for recruiting a diverse graduate student population. An average 62% of CR nominees and 74% of CR awardees were from underrepresented minority (URM) groups over the past five years. Over the same period, 24% of domestic doctoral applicants admitted to state-supported programs were URM on average. Gender data display a similar pattern. While an average 50% of admitted domestic doctoral applicants over the last five years were female, an average 62% of nominees and 62% of awardees were female. Similarly, since adding a non-binary gender option to the graduate application in Fall 2020, an average 2% of admitted domestic doctoral applicants each year are non-binary, while 4% of nominees and 5% of awardees are non-binary. Among students reporting they identify as LGBTQ+, this population made up 19% of domestic doctoral applicants and 25% of nominees and 26% of awardees on average over the last five years.[31]

The importance of CR in recruiting students from diverse groups is emphasized when analyzing the yield of CR nominees based on whether they were offered the award. CR nominees from 2012-13 to 2021-22 who were offered the award had a 56% admission yield rate, compared to a 42% yield rate among nominees that were not offered the award—a 14 percentage point difference. The effect is slightly larger when considering the difference in yield among URM and non-URM nominees. URM CR nominees who were offered the award had a 15 percentage point higher yield rate than URM nominees who were not awarded the award. Meanwhile, non-URM CR nominees who were offered the award had a 12 percentage point higher yield than non-URM nominees who were not offered the award.

Graduate Opportunity Program (GOP)
The Graduate Opportunity Program award provides critical diversity funding for entering students pursuing state-supported terminal master's, professional master's, non-terminal engineering master's or JD degrees.[32] Students nominated for the award are evaluated based on underrepresentation—in their discipline or at UCLA overall—and their contributions to diversity.

Similar to the CR funding protocols, departments nominating applicants for GOP must commit to match funds with DGE. Specifically, for programs on a quarter schedule, DGE covers tuition (including NRST if

---

[31] LGBTQ+ is defined as students that self-identify as gay or lesbian, bisexual, other sexual orientation (free-response option), trans female/trans woman, trans male/trans man, genderqueer/gender non-conforming or different gender identity (i.e., aside from the options provided) on the graduate admissions application.
[32] Non-terminal Engineering master's programs were granted GOP eligibility under DGE's prior Vice Provost and Dean, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan.

applicable), fees and the stipend for Fall and Spring of the first year of graduate study, while the department covers the same costs in Winter.[33] Programs on a semester schedule have a similar structure in which DGE covers Fall expenses and departments cover the same costs in Spring.

Eligibility for the GOP award is limited to:
- Entering students pursuing either terminal (i.e., MA/MS degree in a program/department that does not offer the doctorate), non-terminal engineering, or professional (e.g., MEd, MSW, MFA, MPH, MPP) master's degrees. Those applying for the JD are also eligible.
- US citizens, permanent residents or registered California AB540 students. (Under the CA budget SEC. 2. Section 66021.9 (a), (b), and (c) undocumented students who are non-AB540 and ineligible for DACA also qualify through June 2027.)

In 2022-23, the DGE received 205 GOP nominations, offered about 93 awards, and had approximately 65 awardees accept the award. Like CR, GOP is an important resource for recruiting graduate students from underrepresented groups. In each of the last five years, 72% of GOP nominees and 84% of awardees were from URM groups on average. Over the same period, 30% of domestic applicants admitted to state-supported master's or the JD program were URM on average. Similarly, since adding a non-binary gender option to the graduate application in Fall 2020, an average 1% of admitted domestic master's and JD applicants are non-binary each year, compared to 5% of GOP nominees and awardees. Among students reporting they identify as LGBTQ+, this population made up 19% of domestic master's applicants, 24% of nominees and 23% of awardees on average over the last five years.[34]

The yield of GOP nominees based on whether they were offered the award further points to its importance as a recruitment tool. GOP nominees from 2012-13 to 2021-22 who were offered the award had a 68% admission yield rate, compared to a 47% yield rate among nominees who were not offered the award—a 21 percentage point difference. URM GOP nominees who were offered the award were more likely to accept admission than URM non-awardees by the same magnitude. The effect was smaller but still substantial for non-URM awardees, who were 18 percentage points more likely to accept the offer of admission than their counterparts who were not offered the award.

Graduate Dean's Scholar Award (GDSA)
The Graduate Dean's Scholar Award (GDSA) aims to enhance UCLA's competitiveness for the most highly recruited doctoral students. Approximately 85 highly recruited students receiving a multi-year funding offer from their department are additionally awarded a GDSA each year. The GDSA supplements a department's offer with $14.5 thousand from DGE payable as a $2.5 thousand fall term supplement for the student to use as needed (e.g., transition allowance housing, research-related expenses, etc.) and two $6 thousand summer awards following the completion of the first and second years of graduate study.[35] Departments agree to offer and provide GDSA students a minimum of two years of support

---

[33] Departments may request an exception to change the matched term (e.g., Spring rather than Winter).
[34] LGBTQ+ is defined as students that self-identify as gay or lesbian, bisexual, other sexual orientation (free-response option), trans female/trans woman, trans male/trans man, genderqueer/gender non-conforming, or different gender identity (i.e., aside from the options provided) on the graduate admissions application. School of Law JD students apply for admission through a different system and, therefore, are excluded from LGBTQ+ status percentage calculations.
[35] GDSA awardees who received other summer funding may request to defer GDSA summer funding to future

including tuition, fees, NRST (if applicable), and a stipend or compensation of at least $21 thousand per year. The stipend or compensation may be in the form of an award, teaching assistantship, graduate student research assistantship or traineeship. Ideally, the first year of support is a departmental award. DGE expects that departments will not reduce the normal funding package offered to highly recruited students that are also awarded the GDSA.

Eligibility for the GDSA award is limited to:
- Entering doctoral students
- US citizens, permanent residents, international or registered California AB540 students.

Students must have been enrolled/registered the spring quarter prior to the award and must be registered/enrolled the following fall for GDSA summer awards. Students are not eligible for centrally-funded summer awards in the same summer they receive the GDSA. Awardees must also have a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA at the time of any award disbursements.

Starting with the 2023-24 award cycle, the GDSA awards are allocated to deans, similarly to the block allocation. The number of awards allocated to each School/Division is based on its three-year average of new doctoral enrollment, with a target of a minimum of 90 total awards, and minimum award of one GDSA per School/Division. The deans have the flexibility to determine the number of GDSA awards each of their departments will receive in a particular year.

Graduate Research Mentorship (GRM)
The GRM is a year-long award specifically designed to assist students in developing advanced research skills under faculty mentorship. Faculty mentors are in frequent contact with the student participants and assist them with research leading to the development of a doctoral dissertation throughout the duration of the award. The award provides one year of funding, including tuition and fees and a $20 thousand stipend to doctoral students who have not yet advanced to candidacy (ATC). NRST and PDST fees are not covered by the award.

Eligibility for the GRM award is as follows:
- Doctoral students in the arts, humanities, social sciences, public health, nursing, psychology and Institute of the Environment & Sustainability.
- In year one, two or three of doctoral study at the time of application; priority is given to students currently (at the time of application) in year one or two of doctoral study, and to students who have not already received a GRM award.
- Not advanced to doctoral candidacy at the time of application.
- U.S. citizens, permanent residents or registered California AB540 students
- Students may receive the award up to two times, with second awards only made in exceptional cases.

Throughout the duration of the award, awardees must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA and be enrolled in 12 or more units. At the end of the program term, awardees submit a year-end program evaluation

---

summers. Students must begin using the deferred funding no later than the summer following the fifth year, and the funding must be fully utilized by the end of the summer following the seventh year.

survey to DGE. Faculty mentors also submit a year-end evaluation survey of their participation in the program.

The DGE receives about 220 GRM nominations each year, from which it offers approximately 100 awards.

Graduate Summer Research Mentorship (GSRM) Program
The GSRM promotes opportunities for students to work closely with a faculty mentor in developing a paper for presentation at an academic conference and/or for publication. In addition to facilitating close working relationships between faculty and students during the early stages of graduate education, the award promotes timely degree progress and encourages creative scholarship and research productivity. The award provides a $6 thousand stipend in summer support to pre-ATC doctoral students.

Eligibility for the GSRM award is as follows:
- Doctoral students in the arts, humanities, social sciences, public health, nursing, psychology and certain areas of the Institute of the Environment & Sustainability.
- In year one, two or three of doctoral study at the time of application; priority is given to students currently (at the time of application) in year one or two of doctoral study, and to students who have not already received a GSRM award.
- Not advanced to doctoral candidacy at the time of application.
- U.S. citizens, permanent residents, international or registered California AB540 students
- Students enrolled/registered the spring quarter prior to the award who will be enrolled/registered the following fall quarter.
- Have a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA at the time of the award disbursement.
- Students may receive the award up to two times, with second awards only made in exceptional cases.

As the GSRM is intended to be the principal summer activity, awardees are not permitted to have other summer funding and may not work more than 25% time. Moreover, by the end of the summer, awardees are expected to have a draft of a paper (either single authored by the student or coauthored with faculty) to be submitted for publication or presentation at an appropriate conference sometime during the following academic year. It is also expected that the faculty mentor will be in the same locale as the student during the summer and will work closely with the student throughout the term of the award. Awardees and mentors must complete a program evaluation at the end of the summer, which includes submitting a draft of the paper to DGE.

Each year DGE receives roughly 450 GSRM applications, from which it offers approximately 200 awards.

Dissertation Year Award
The Dissertation Year Award (DYA) provides support in the last year of graduate study for outstanding doctoral students who are in the dissertation-writing stage, within one year of filing their dissertation, and plan to start teaching or research appointments soon after graduation. The DYA releases awardees from employment obligations that might otherwise delay degree completion.

DGE provides one year of funding to DYA awardees including tuition, fees and a $20 thousand stipend. NRST and PDST is not covered by the award. Once the award is activated, DYA recipients have twelve months to file their dissertation and are not eligible to receive DGE funding of any kind after the last payment has been issued. Due to the time-sensitive nature of the award, award recipients may decide whether to activate their award in the summer, fall or winter quarter of the award year.

Eligibility for the DYA award is limited to:
- Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy at the time of department nomination and are prepared to file their dissertation within twelve months of the start of the award.
- US citizens, permanent residents, international or registered California AB540 students

Throughout the duration of the award, awardees must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA and be enrolled in 12 or more units. Recipients must also submit a progress report at the midpoint of the award tenure. Each year DGE receives roughly 360 DYA applications, from which it offers approximately 170 awards.

Other Division of Graduate Education Funding

Recruitment Visit Funding
Recruitment visit funds are allocated annually to departments to improve their ability to persuade the most talented and academically promising students from their applicant pool to enroll at UCLA by enhancing their campus visit experience. Recruitment visit funds may be used to support campus visits and student recruitment, including the cost of travel. The allocation method is based on a program's rolling three-year average of new enrollment counts. Doctoral and MFA enrollment are given full weight in the allocation formula, while non-MFA master's programs are given a 50% weight. Every program receives a minimum allocation of $500.

Supplemental CR and GOP Recruitment Visit Funds
In addition to the allocated recruitment visit funds, departments are eligible for a recruitment visit funding supplement for each of their CR and GOP awardees. The supplement may be used for travel expenses incurred for campus visits, in the amounts of $800 for out-of-state awardees and $400 for in-state awardees. The supplement may not be used to cover travel expenses incurred by other admitted students.

Doctoral Travel Grant (DTG)
The DTG program encourages doctoral students to present their work and network at conferences in their field, supports travel associated with off-campus research and enables them to take advantage of off-campus professional development opportunities. Each new and continuing doctoral student is provided up to a $1 thousand reimbursement that can be used, in whole or in part, at any time through a student's seventh year in their doctoral program, as long as the student and activities meet eligibility requirements.

Training Grant Matching Funds

Funding Partnership for Extramural Graduate Student Training Grants

Faculty and academic units are strongly encouraged to seek external financial support for graduate education. To encourage this activity and amplify its impact, the DGE offers matching funds for training grants that provide competitive funding for doctoral graduate students in the form of stipends and/or tuition/fees. Specifically, DGE matches up to 15% of the amount awarded by external agencies that is designated for student (nonemployment-based) financial support—student financial support encompasses academic year and summer stipends (awards), tuition and fees. Research, travel, professional development, administrative costs and other expenses are not eligible for matching. The amount matched by DGE depends on the availability of funds and is provided in the form of tuition/fees. In addition, the grants (and student recipients of the funding) must meet certain eligibility criteria.

Cost-sharing for Individual Extramural Graduate Awards
Academic graduate students are encouraged to seek funding from external sources. Preparing fellowship and grant applications contributes to students' professional development and garnering an award represents a significant achievement. To encourage academic departments to support this activity and to amplify the impact of the award, the DGE partners with departments to cover the cost of education—tuition and fees—not covered by the award. Specifically, DGE provides 50% of the shortfall between an extramural award amount and UCLA's cost of education, defined as the sum of tuition, fees and NRST if applicable. Departments are responsible for covering the other 50% of the shortfall. DGE offers cost-sharing for the NRST portion of the cost of education shortfall for the first year. Students and fellowships must meet certain eligibility criteria.

Graduate Student Support Outside the Purview of the DGE

Native American Opportunity Plan (NAOP)
The Native American Opportunity Plan ensures that in-state tuition and student services fees are fully covered for undergraduate and graduate California resident students who are members of federally recognized Native American, American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.[36] The program, announced in April 2022, was first implemented for the fall 2022 quarter.[37] In order to be eligible for NAOP, new or continuing graduate students must be:
- California residents
- Enrolled members of a federally recognized Native American, American Indian and/or Alaska Native tribe[38]
- Enrolled in a state-supported degree program (i.e., students in self-supporting and certificate programs do not qualify)

---

[36] UC Native American Opportunity Plan website https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/tuition-financial-aid/types-of-aid/native-american-opportunity-plan.html
List of U.S. Federally Recognized Tribes https://www.bia.gov/service/tribal-leaders-directory/federally-recognized-tribes
[37] UC announces Native American Opportunity Plan https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/uc-announces-native-american-opportunity-plan
[38] The U.S. Department of the Interior defines a federally recognized tribe as "an American Indian or Alaska Native tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation..."
https://www.bia.gov/frequently-asked-questions

In order to verify eligibility, students must submit tribal enrollment documentation from their federally recognized tribe or the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). Students must also submit tribal contact information if it is not included on submitted documentation. Documentation may include any of the following:

- Certification of tribal enrollment on tribal letterhead
- Enrollment/membership card that contains the tribal seal and/or official signature of a tribal leader
- Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) if the CDIB includes tribal enrollment information
- Tribal identification card with enrollment number.

Eligible students are currently identified and verified by DGE staff but their NAOP benefits are reimbursed by the Academic Planning & Budget office.

Academic Student Employee Funding

The mechanism for funding ASEs is through the 19900 funds. APB pays ASE salary costs up-front and reimburses departments for tuition and fee remission costs, which are initially paid by the hiring department.

Graduate Student Researcher Funding

Graduate Student Researchers assist faculty with scholarly research under the direction and supervision of a faculty member. Departments and their faculty have full purview over the selection, hiring and funding of GSRs. GSRs are generally not funded using central funding resources and the expectation is that extramural grants will cover the cost of hiring GSRs.

Gift Funds

In addition to central funding, Schools and Divisions have access to gift funds, ranging from about $2.5 to $111 million. The Academic Planning and Budget Office recently performed an audit concluding that for the majority of these gift funds, there are no prohibitions on their use to support graduate students.

Appendix C: UCLA Extramural Support

UCLA Research Awarded Dollars, FY 2004 to FY 2023. Total FY23 $1.67B.
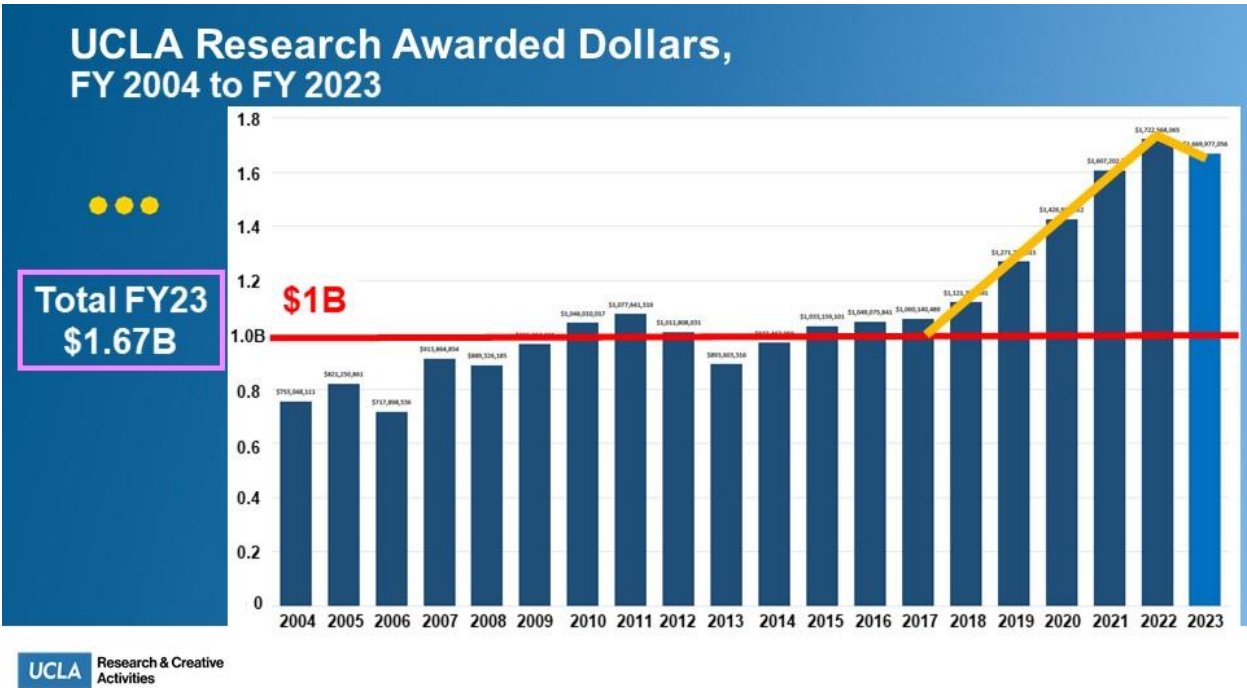
Expense Category	GSR Salaries	GSR Benefits		Total GSR Research Expenditures	Total of All Research Expenditures	% of GSR Expenditures to Total
GSR Research Expenditures vs Total Research Expenditures (FY 14 - FY 23)						
Expense Type	Salaries	Health Benefits	Fee Remission Benefits			
FY 14	$34,941,151	$2,075,220	$11,713,091	$48,729,461	$876,773,227	5.56%
FY 15	$36,586,681	$2,359,973	$12,118,205	$51,064,860	$895,597,233	5.70%
FY 16	$40,395,858	$2,500,986	$12,128,786	$55,025,630	$915,476,778	6.01%
FY 17	$44,122,033	$2,848,976	$12,247,851	$59,218,860	$930,640,435	6.36%
FY 18	$45,906,395	$2,975,033	$12,367,017	$61,248,445	$1,003,487,928	6.10%
FY 19	$60,161,451	$3,096,983	$12,506,624	$75,765,057	$1,038,406,583	7.30%
FY 20	$71,573,681	$3,724,751	$13,706,256	$89,004,688	$1,104,185,397	8.06%
FY 21	$84,154,672	$4,115,125	$14,790,612	$103,060,409	$1,213,641,508	8.49%
FY 22	$85,565,483	$4,675,033	$15,626,317	$105,866,833	$1,361,117,092	7.78%
FY 23	$89,132,905	$4,813,009	$16,747,092	$110,693,006	$1,396,924,115	7.92%

Source: UCLA Office of Research Administration

Appendix D: Example of Program Resource and Size Assessment (PRSA) Report

Program Information

UCLA Division of Graduate Education

Sample Program PhD, Doctorate with Masters in Passing

Support

More information at: https://go.grad.ucla.edu/internal/reports/funddash.aspx

As context for graduate student support needs for future admission cycles, please see Appendix A for comparison of old and new AAP salary scales.

Merit Funding 5-Year Sum Totals
2017-18 through 2021-22. Merit support includes funding from fellowships, GSRships, TAships, or other private award sources. It does not include financial aid, loans or other employment sources of funding.

	Amount Awarded	% of Total Amount Awarded
ASE (TA)	$7,113,222	50%
GSR	$2,782,777	20%
Student Financial Support Awards	$3,931,222	28%
Private Support	$299,555	2%
Average Yearly Merit Support Per Capita	$45,045	

Merit Funding levels
Number of students who fall within a particular funding range. This is a yearly average for enrolled students for the years of 2017-18 to 2021-22.

	# of Students	% of Total
$1 to $20,000	0	0%
$20,001 to $30,000	2	5%
$30,001 to $40,000	7	16%
$40,001 to $50,000	15	34%
$50,001 to $60,000	17	39%
$60K+	3	7%

Academic Career Support
Data pooled from students who graduated 2017-2018 to 2021-2022. Non-completers are not included. Numbers are overall averages, and ASE and GSR counts include summers.

Number of quarters as ASE (TA)	7.5
Number of quarters as GSR	10.5
Number of quarters with Student Financial Support Award	14.5
Percent of students with any support for entire graduate career*	80%

*This percentage is calculated using: Numerator: Number who have any merit funding within any term of an academic year for all years (grads 2017-18 to 2021-22). Denominator: Number of students who graduated 2017-18 to 2021-22.

Inside-Outside Dept. Student Workers
Data pooled from students who were enrolled 2017-2018 to 2021-2022. Yearly average counts of students.

ASEs Working Outside Dept	4
ASEs from Outside Depts	2
GSRs Working Outside Dept	3
GSRs from Outside Depts	1

Note: Double dashes -- indicate no data available.

Program Information

Sample Program PhD, Doctorate with Masters in Passing

Degree Completion

More information at: https://go.grad.ucla.edu/internal/reports/outcomesdash.aspx

10-Year Completion Rates
This calculation uses the entering cohort groups of 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13.

Starting Cohort - Overall N	URG N	Domestic Non-URG N	Intl N
15	2	11	2

Completion Rate - Overall %	URG* %	Domestic Non-URG %	Intl %
80%	100%	82%	50%

*URG = Underrepresented Groups. These are Domestic American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black/African American, Hispanic, and Filipino students.

Time-to-Degree

Definitions
Normative Time-to-Degree comes from a length established by the department subject to approval by the Graduate Council. Elapsed Time-to-Degree counts the number of non-summer quarters between the starting term and graduating term including quarters of non-enrollment. Enrolled Time-to-Degree is the number of enrolled non-summer quarters of a student. Data pooled from students who graduated 2017-2018 to 2021-2022.

Normative TTD quarters (no summers): 20

Observed Number of Terms

	Elapsed TTD	Enrolled TTD
All Students		
Avg TTD	19.80	18.44
Median TTD	21.00	19.00
URG Students		
Avg TTD	17.33	16.67
Median TTD	17.00	16.50
Dom Non-URG Students		
Avg TTD	21.12	19.65
Median TTD	22.00	21.00
International Students		
Avg TTD	16.00	13.50
Median TTD	16.00	13.50

Note: Double dashes -- indicate no data available.

Program Information

Sample Program PhD, Doctorate with Masters in Passing

Applicants, Admissions, SIRs

More information at: https://go.grad.ucla.edu/internal/reports/admissionsdash.aspx

Apps, Admits, & SIRs (Statement of Intent to Register) - 5-Year Averages (Fall 2019-2023)

	Overall	URG	Domestic Non-URG	Intl
Number of Applications	78.8	7.8	15	56
Number of Admits	5.2	1.4	2.4	1.4
Number of SIRs	3.8	1	2	0.8

Selectivity & Yield 5-Year Average

Selectivity is the Number of Admits/Number of Applications. Yield is the Number of SIRs/Number of Admits.

	Overall	URG	Domestic Non-URG	Intl
Selectivity %	7%	18%	16%	3%
Yield %	73%	71%	83%	57%

Enrollment

More information at: https://go.grad.ucla.edu/internal/reports/enrollmentdash.aspx

Demographics - 5-Year Averages (Fall 2018-2022)

Overall Enrollment - 5-Year Avg	32

% First Gen	% Female	% Non-Binary*	% URG	% Domestic Non-URG	% Intl
9.0%	70.5%	0.5%	21.3%	53.1%	25.6%

*Non-binary category only collected since Fall 2019

Committee Participation

Committee chairs are counted regardless of whether they were from the student's major and department. All committees formed between August 2018 to August 2023.

Number of Post-ATC students per faculty committee chair:	14.5

Faculty Committee Service

These counts are obtained by taking the total number of students in the major who had committees and counting total number of faculty who served on those committees. Faculty may be in or out of the students department/major.

	Chair or Co-Chair	Any service
# Faculty who served on 1-2 committees	10	25
# Faculty who served on 3-5 committees	5	9
# Faculty who served on 6-10 committees	3	3
# Faculty who served on 11-15 committees	2	6
# Faculty who served on 16+ committees	0	4

Note: Double dashes -- indicate no data available.

UCLA | Division of **Graduate Education**

Sample Program PhD, Doctorate with Masters in Passing

Job Market

Doctoral Exit Survey Responders
2019-2023

Number of responders are number who responded to "What is the status of your postgraduate plans" question. Number of grads leaving with jobs are those who responded to the status question below with "Returning to or continuing in predoctoral employment or "Have signed contract or made definite commitment for a postdoc or other work".

Number of Responders	49
How many grads leave with jobs?	36

What is the status of your postgraduate plans (in the next year)?

	Total	% of Total
Returning to, or continuing in, predoctoral employment	0	0%
Have signed contract or made definite commitment for a postdoc or other work	36	75%
Negotiating with one or more specific organizations	3	6%
Other full-time degree program (e.g., MD, DDS, JD, MBA, etc.)	1	2%
Seeking position but have no specific prospects	5	10%
Do not plan to work or study (e.g., family commitments, etc.)	1	2%
Other	2	4%

How would you characterize the type of employer you will be/plan to be working for next year?

	Total	% of Total
Academic institution or research institution	19	46%
Industry/for-profit organization	21	51%
Non-profit, non-government organization	0	0%
Government, elected or civil service	0	0%
None - Self-employment	1	2%

Note: Double dashes -- indicate no data available.

Appendix A - Salary Scales

Please note that the salary scales in this appendix are provided for general context only, not for purposes of determining appointment or compensation levels for specific students. For more information, please refer to the *Academic Apprentice Manual* posted at https://grad.ucla.edu/gss/appm/aapmanual.pdf

Salary Scales (Group 2)*

Starting 4/1/2023	Starting 10/1/2023	Starting 10/1/2024

Teaching Assistant

	Monthly	9 Months	9 Months
	100%	100%	50%
	$5,556	$50,000	$25,000

Increments	Monthly	9 Months	9 Months
	100%	100%	50%
1	$6,948	$62,531	$31,266
2	$7,156	$64,407	$32,204
3	$7,371	$66,339	$33,170

	Monthly	9 Months	9 Months
	100%	100%	50%
	$8,111	$73,000	$36,500
	$8,354	$75,190	$37,595
	$8,605	$77,446	$38,723

Teaching Fellow**

	Monthly	9 Months	9 Months
	100%	100%	50%
	$6,594	$59,346	$29,673

Increments	Monthly	9 Months	9 Months
	100%	100%	50%
1	$8,247	$74,220	$37,110

	Monthly	9 Months	9 Months
	100%	100%	50%
	$9,627	$86,644	$43,322

Graduate Student Researcher

Increments	Monthly	12 Months	12 Months
	100%	100%	50%
1	$5,090	$61,080	$30,540
2	$5,485	$65,814	$32,907
3	$5,910	$70,915	$35,457
4	$6,368	$76,411	$38,205
5	$6,861	$82,333	$41,166
6	$7,393	$88,714	$44,357

Increments	Monthly	12 Months	12 Months
	100%	100%	50%
1	$5,416	$64,990	$32,495
2	$5,836	$70,027	$35,013
3	$6,288	$75,454	$37,727
4	$6,775	$81,302	$40,651
5	$7,300	$87,603	$43,802
6	$7,866	$94,392	$47,196

Monthly	12 Months	12 Months
100%	100%	50%
$5,761	$69,129	$34,564
$6,207	$74,487	$37,244
$6,688	$80,260	$40,130
$7,207	$86,481	$43,241
$7,765	$93,184	$46,592
$8,367	$100,406	$50,203

*Estimated from draft negotiated February 2023. Salary and benefits are subject to collective bargaining agreement between University of California (UC) and the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, AFL-CIO, and its Local Union 2865 (UAW) (the union representing Academic Student Employees (ASEs) and Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) appointees). Please see the current pay scale and schedule from the University of California Office of the President.
https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/compensation/index.html

**Teaching Fellow is only for students who are grandfathered into UCLA's old progression model (i.e., those who held a teaching position at UCLA before Summer 2023), or those whose first teaching appointment occurred during or after Summer 2023 and who fulfill the Teaching Fellow definition in APM 410.

Appendix B - Additional questions/issues for program to consider (no data available).

Support:

What proportion of your students are guaranteed support for at least 5 years at the time of admission? What other levels of support do you offer students? Data should become routinely available on this issue once the centralized funding letter has been implemented for the 2023-24 admission cycle.

With regard to the average number of quarters your students work as ASEs and GSRs, is this the right amount for their training and progress?

Do you have other means of covering the need for ASEs/GSRs? Will ASE/GSR duties and time spent on duties need to be updated or reallocated?

Have you made or discussed arrangements with other departments to codify commitments for hiring your graduate students so these opportunities could be factored into 5-year recruitment packages?

If faculty members in your department have grants, do they prioritize the funding of graduate students over others (e.g. postdocs or research assistants)?

Do faculty members have the ability to generate more grants and external support that could be used to support students as GSRs? Are there any departmental obstacles to doing so?

Do faculty members receive GSR lines or other graduate support lines in their startup packages? Do they use these lines to recruit graduate students?

Admission and recruitment:

Does the program compete with the best departments for students?

Would the department be better served by admitting cohorts only in alternate years?

What strategies does the department use to increase the diversity in the applicant pool and to recruit promising students?

Teaching and mentoring:

Are faculty members eager for more advisees?

Do graduate students have sufficient courses?

How often do faculty members have the opportunity to teach graduate courses?

How many faculty are available to serve on dissertation committees and are not yet doing so?

Can the department meet their undergrad teaching needs with their current grad student cohort sizes and other teaching titles?

Job market:

How does your department prepare students to pursue diverse types of jobs, including tenure-track, non-tenure track, and non-teaching positions within universities, as well as professional options outside of academia?

What do you think the employment opportunities in your discipline will be like in 5 to 7 years? Are the positions your completed students secure commensurate with the education they received in your department?

If your completed students don't leave with positions in hand, how long is it generally before they secure employment?