

Graduate Council

GSA/USAC Resolution on Improving Graduate/Professional
Student Services

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UCLA Academic Senate

March 15, 2021

Emily Carter
Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost

Re: Memorandum Regarding GSA/USAC Resolution on Improving Graduate/Professional Student Services

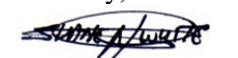
Dear Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Carter,

At its meeting on March 4, 2021, the Executive Board of the UCLA Academic Senate reviewed the attached “GSA/USAC Resolution for Graduate and Professional Equity at UCLA.” Previously, the Graduate Council had unanimously endorsed the resolution at its meeting on January 29, 2021. The Executive Board members expressed unanimous support for the resolution in order to affirm that graduate students are valued members of the university community and to support their success, goals intrinsic to the values of our public research university.

The key request is to fund adequately and permanently professional development services for all graduate students. We encourage efforts to offer effective services to graduate students in academic and professional degree programs so they can thrive as students, instructors, and researchers while simultaneously accessing the skills and resources necessary to succeed in a diverse range of careers after earning their academic master’s or doctoral and professional degrees.

Thank you for your on-going attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Shane White
Chair, UCLA Academic Senate

Encl.

Cc: Gene Block, Chancellor
April de Stefano, Executive Director, UCLA Academic Senate
Susan Ettner, Interim Dean, Graduate Division
Monroe Gorden, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs
Andrea Kasko, Graduate Council Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Jody Kreiman, Vice Chair/Chair Elect, UCLA Academic Senate
Megan McEvoy, Undergraduate Council Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Michael Meranze, Immediate Past Chair, UCLA Academic Senate
Emily Rose, Assistant Provost and Chief of Staff to the EVCP

GSA/USAC Resolution for Graduate and Professional Equity at UCLA
Resolution Sponsor: Jean Paul (JP) Santos, GSA President
Date: December 2, 2020

Approved by Forum: December 2, 2020 (17 YES - 0 NO - 0 ABS)

Approved by Undergraduate Student Association Council (USAC): December 8, 2020 (12 YES - 0 NO - 0 ABS)

Whereas, there is tremendous inequity in supporting graduate and professional students at UCLA

Whereas, according to UCLA Academic Planning and Budget¹, graduate students represent 28% of the total student body (12,828 graduate/professional students out of the 45,742 total UCLA students).

Whereas, approximately 3 out of every 10 student at UCLA is a graduate and professional student

Whereas, there are present discrepancies with graduate resource graduate student affairs support due to the tremendous dependency of graduate and professional students are to how well informed the individual department and faculty are

Whereas, individual academic departments and individual faculty to students orientation are insufficient in disseminating appropriate resources (i.e. CAPS, Student Legal Services, Case Management, ECRT, Food Bank, etc.) to students

Whereas, a majority of key graduate student services are currently housed within “Student Affairs, such as Graduate Writing Center (GWC), Graduate Student Resource Center (GSRC), and Graduate Career Services (GCS), are tremendously understaffed, missing key positions, and programs are tremendously underfinanced

Whereas, staff that support graduate services are financed through temporary dollars subject to available SFAC funding and are therefore not institutionalized

Whereas, although UCLA Student Affairs is focused on affairs of students at UCLA, the practice has heavily skewed service to undergraduates

Whereas, while UCLA Student Affairs individual units have tried to outreach, engage, and create programming for graduate and professional students, there lacks an overall thread, both logistically and programmatically, to reach out to graduate and professional students.

Whereas, UCLA Graduate Division is serves only graduate and professional students but is under the umbrella of academic affairs and Academic Senate and institutionally, is not financed and staffed to directly assist in the student wellness and affairs

Whereas, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the understaffing and underfinanced support are hurting student support and services since they are more needed now than ever before

Whereas, the lack of support and engagement to graduate and professional students are tremendously hurting our most vulnerable populations and underrepresented graduate and professional students even more

Therefore, be it resolved that the GSA Forum and the Undergraduate Student Association Council (USAC):

1. urges Student Affairs and Graduate Division, as a campus unit, support financing and staffing of onboarding orientation such as Graduate Student Orientation (GSO), Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Week, and the National Graduate and Professional Student Appreciation (NGPSA) Week to the same level as is done for undergraduates like *True Bruin Welcome* and *This is Bruin Life*
2. urges Student Affairs and Graduate Division that for the above events, that they be made institutional and campaigned as an essential Bruin experience
3. urges Chancellor's and the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost's offices to support better staffing and dedicated resources to Graduate Career Services quantitatively and qualitatively on par with undergraduate career services
4. urges Chancellor's and the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost's offices to create a permanent campus task force and charge the *Graduate and Professional Student Welfare Committee* to create a strategy to better serve graduate and professional students. This campus task force should consist, at minimum, with representatives from *Graduate Student Association (GSA), UCLA Student Affairs, Graduate Division, Graduate Student Resource Center, Graduate Writing Center, Alumni, Graduate Career Services, and Academic Senate/Graduate Council.*

¹ 2019-2020 Enrollment, <https://www.apb.ucla.edu/campus-statistics/enrollment>

February 3, 2021

Shane White, Chair
Academic Senate

Dear Chair White,

I am writing in response to the request to review the *Graduate Student Association (GSA)/Undergraduate Student Association Council (USAC) Resolution for Graduate and Professional Equity at UCLA*.

The Council was joined by GSA President, Electrical Engineering doctoral candidate Jean Paul Santos, at its meeting on January 29, 2021, to present the resolution and discuss ways in which the university can provide the necessary support services and structures to help graduate and professional students thrive. By a unanimous vote (13 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions; GSA Reps: 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions), the Graduate Council endorsed the resolution and recommends approval by the Executive Board.

The Graduate Council fully supports the resolution and recognizes that graduate and professional students are critical members of the university, integral to the research enterprise, and provide invaluable teaching support. The Graduate Council also fully supports the creation of a permanent campus task force/committee whose charge would be to create a strategy to better serve graduate and professional students. The Graduate Council will provide faculty representatives from its Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Well-being Committee membership to serve on the campus taskforce/committee and looks forward to working with campus partners on this important initiative.

If have any questions or require any additional information, please feel free to contact me via Graduate Council Analyst, Estrella Arciba, at earciba@senate.ucla.edu.

Sincerely,



Andrea Kasko, Chair
Graduate Council