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*Chair of the Assembly and the Academic Council
Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents
University of California
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, California 94607-5200*

November 2, 2009

**MARK YUDOF, PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

Re: Graduate student fee increases

Dear Mark:

At its meeting on October 21, the Academic Council unanimously endorsed CCGA's concerns expressed in the enclosed letter about the impact of graduate student fee increases on students and academic departments, particularly in the social sciences, arts and humanities. Council fears that fee increases will result in fewer graduate students at UC. Aside from disappointing would-be graduate students, reductions will affect undergraduates and faculty by shrinking the number of teaching assistants, leading to fewer small discussion sections and negative impacts on faculty research.

Council respectfully requests that you ask the Regents to reconsider fee increases for graduate students or, failing that, to adopt strategies identified by CCGA in its letter to mitigate these effects.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry C. Powell".

Henry C. Powell, Chair
Academic Council

Copy: Academic Council
Interim Provost Pitts
Martha Winnacker, Academic Senate Executive Director



COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE AFFAIRS (CCGA)

Farid Chehab, Chair

chehabf@labmed2.ucsf.edu

ACADEMIC SENATE

University of California

1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor

Oakland, California 94607-5200

October 7, 2009

ACADEMIC COUNCIL CHAIR POWELL

Dear Harry:

At its meeting of October 5, 2009, CCGA discussed the proposed student fee increases that the Regents will consider at their November meeting. While decreasing state resources and appropriations have prompted President Yudof to propose these fee increases, CCGA is gravely concerned about the impact that they will have on graduate academic students, the research faculty and the overall research mission of the University. Indeed, graduate students play a central role in educating undergraduate students and contribute substantially to the research and teaching mission of the University. In recent years, the dwindling of federal research grants, state support and endowments has forced many graduate programs to admit fewer graduate students, thereby threatening the quality of education and research at UC. Although some disciplines may suffer more than others, the proposed fee increases will largely exacerbate this situation and could not only lead to decreased enrollments of graduate students, but also to the attrition of junior and recently tenured faculty, who rely on graduate students to establish their nascent research programs.

A mix of extramural faculty grants, departmental funds, block grants and fellowships largely supports fees and stipends of most graduate academic students. Although in the biological and physical sciences, graduate student fees are paid from extramural grants such as from NIH or NSF, faculty in the Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities rely on departmental resources and block grants, thereby placing them at a higher risk of losing graduate students. In addition, a significant number of graduate students pay their fees out of pocket and will suffer substantial hardship as a result of these fee increases.

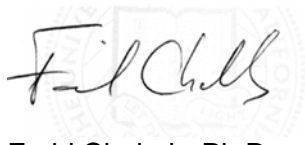
For these reasons, CCGA cannot support further increases in graduate student fees unless these are mitigated by other initiatives. We propose a few solutions, which when added to the return to aid, will lessen the financial burden on faculty grants and departmental resources.

- Increase block grant allocations especially to the Social Sciences, Arts, and Humanities.
- Increase the return to aid (RTA) to 60% for graduate academic students to encompass need and merit based allocations.
- Establish a central fund at UCOP that the Medical Centers will contribute to support professional and graduate academic students.
- Establish and promote a philanthropy fund earmarked for supporting graduate academic students.
- Make use of indirect costs revenues to support graduate education.

On January 19, 2005, the Regents were presented with a Commission report by then Provost Greenwood about the importance of graduate education in California. The ensuing discussion recognized the “increase in graduate student fees as a mistake and evidence seems to indicate that the campuses are beginning to lose their best students, which could result in an exodus of the faculty” (taken from minutes of the Regents January 19, 2005 meeting). These variables have worsened today and CCGA’s assessment is that the proposed fee increases are putting at considerable risk the affordability of graduate education at UC and the quality of faculty research.

Overall, CCGA anticipates that increases in graduate students fees to severely and negatively impact on graduate education. CCGA requests that Academic Council disseminate our utmost concerns to President Yudof and the Regents by urging them to reconsider graduate academic students fee increases or mitigate them with compensatory mechanisms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Farid Chehab". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Farid Chehab, Ph.D.
Chair, CCGA