



Chair, Academic Council and Assembly of the Academic Senate
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Faculty Representative to the Board of Regents
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August 8, 2006

ROBERT C. DYNES
PRESIDENT

Dear Bob,

At its July meeting, the Academic Council voted to endorse the recommendations in the “Final Committee Report and Recommendations to the Provost” from the Competitive Graduate Student Financial Support Advisory Committee (GSAC).

The Council agrees that the report provides the University with a blueprint for addressing the principal challenges related to graduate student support at the University of California – namely, the need to compete successfully with other research universities for the very best academic graduate students and the need to meet the University’s academic graduate student enrollment objectives.

The Council believes that prompt action to implement the Report’s first three recommendations is particularly important.

1. **Nonresident Tuition.** The Committee recommends eliminating nonresident tuition for academic doctoral students in two stages: starting with continuing students in 2007-08 and adding first-year students in 2008-09, if possible.
2. **Future Tuition and Fee Increases.** The Committee recommends that the Educational Fee and Registration Fee for academic graduate students be frozen at their 2005-06 levels for the indefinite future. The Committee also recommends that nonresident tuition for academic masters students (and academic doctoral students, if the Committee’s first proposal is implemented as a return-to-aid) be frozen at its current level for the indefinite future.
3. **University Student Aid Program (USAP).** Remove the portion of USAP funds that OP allocates for TA fee remission from the USAP allocation and place it in a separate “TA Fee Remission” budget category distinct from graduate return-to-aid. Allocate increases in USAP fellowship funds (i.e., excluding funds allocated to campuses in accordance with their need to cover TA fee increases) to campuses based upon their budgeted academic graduate student enrollment, with greater weighting assigned to academic doctoral students. Increase over time the USAP fellowship return-to-aid from its current 24% to 33% of fee-increase revenue in order to generate substantial new graduate funding to meet in part the competitive gap.

The first recommendation would effectively implement the recent Senate faculty Memorial to the Regents, passed with an 83% majority, urging the Regents to eliminate nonresident tuition. In light of this strong faculty support (which included consideration of the costs), we hope that the full implementation will be done within two years.

We hope that the second and third recommendation can be implemented in the budget that is being prepared now for the 2007-8 fiscal year.

We also draw attention to the important point made in the Report, that, because most expenses (including nonresident tuition and fees) for academic doctoral students are paid from University sources, implementing these recommendations will substantially bring down the costs of meeting the University's goal of increasing graduate student enrollment over the next five years (from \$122 million to \$27 million). This long-term benefit of implementing these policies should be stressed to the Regents, campus leaders, and other policy makers, during the debates over the details of implementing these recommendations.

The Council also endorses the other two recommendations (related to seeking new state funds for research and increased fund raising efforts on the campuses devoted to graduate education), but sees these efforts as longer term steps that can be implemented concurrently or after the first three recommendations. The Council does not see these two recommendations as alternatives to the first three.

Finally, we want to note that both at the June and July Academic Council meetings, we have discussed and agreed that a direct return of non-resident tuition to the campus from which it is collected and restriction of these funds to support of non-resident students, can be implemented quite easily under the current budgetary process. This option, which is also discussed in the GSAC report (p. 17), will provide a direct, immediate, and welcome relief for the campuses in their recruitment and retention of out-of-state graduate students in the 2006-7 academic year. We urge you to expedite all the necessary changes in the budgetary process so that this return of non-resident tuition to the campuses for the specific purpose of offsetting nonresident tuition charges to academic graduate students can occur in the 2006-7 academic year.

Please share our comments on the GSAC report with the Regents.

Sincerely yours,



John Oakley, Chair
Academic Council

Copy: Provost Rory Hume
Academic Council
Senate Director Bertero-Barcelo