

From: Administrative Vice Chancellor Michael J. Beck and Dean & Vice Provost Robin L. Garrell
Sent: Thursday, February 20, 2020 5:30 PM
Subject: Supporting Our Graduate Students



Offices of the Administrative Vice Chancellor Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Division

To Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, and Administrative Officers:

As instructors, researchers and future colleagues, graduate students play key roles in the teaching and research mission of world-class universities like UCLA. As you may be aware, some UCLA graduate students are participating in a number of campus actions this week, calling for a cost-of-living adjustment for Teaching Assistants (TAs).

We recognize that the high cost of living in Los Angeles presents unique financial challenges to students pursuing graduate and professional degrees. UCLA is committed to continuing to provide the strongest possible financial support packages to help our graduate students pursue their educational goals.

Through sustained effort and commitment, UCLA has increased financial support for graduate and professional degree students by approximately 32 percent over the past decade, even as enrollment increased by only 10 percent.

Between 2009–10 and 2017–18, merit-based funding for graduate students increased 43.8 percent, including an 81.6 percent increase in TA funding and a 43.7 percent increase in fellowship funding. Funding for need-based financial aid increased 109 percent, while student loans increased by only 2.8 percent.

UCLA deans are receptive to guaranteeing multi-year funding packages for all doctoral students, and we remain committed to increasing the availability of both merit- and need-based support for all graduate students.

The University of California 2017 Graduate Cost of Attendance Survey showed that graduate student housing costs in our area are the second highest in the UC system. To address this challenge, UCLA has been working to create additional housing inventory and new lower cost housing options for graduate students. Some inventory will be piloted this fall at rents below \$1,000 per month.

The terms of our TAs' contracts are negotiated at the systemwide level through the UC Office of the President. It is important to note that the TAs are represented by a multi-year collective bargaining agreement, which was mutually negotiated and remains in effect until June 2022. For these reasons, UCLA is focusing on other strategies to address the financial needs of UCLA graduate and professional students.

UCLA remains committed to engaging with our graduate students with the aim of finding solutions to the financial challenges they face while earning their degrees.

Sincerely,

Robin L. Garrell
Dean, Graduate Division
Vice Provost for Graduate Education

Michael J. Beck
Administrative Vice Chancellor