

RESOLUTION TO REDUCE GRADUATE STUDENT FEES

TO: PRESIDENT ÁNGEL CABRERA

FROM: GT ACADEMIC FACULTY SENATE

to be presented for review and vote on October 22, 2019

Whereas, current Georgia Tech graduate student fees are far above peer institutions; GT is the only public institution from Georgia represented in the American Association of Universities (AAU) [1]; We estimate that Georgia Tech had the highest mandatory fees of any AAU institution in 2018-2019 [2], totaling \$2,776 per year;

Whereas, graduate students are at the core of GT efforts to ‘create the next’; strategic investment in recruitment and retention of future engineers, scientists, and entrepreneurs offers a significant return on investment to fuel discovery, innovation, growth, and new jobs in Georgia;

Whereas, talent need not start rich; substantial graduate fees are paid after-tax and out-of-pocket by graduate students from modest stipends. Graduate SGA analysis reveals that students typically pay in excess of 45%-60% (or more) of wages to rent, far above the 30% threshold for Housing and Urban Development Guidelines for rental assistance [3]; Georgia Tech’s efforts to fully realize Bloomberg Philanthropies’ ‘American Talent Initiative’ [4] requires investment in the next generation of undergraduates and graduate students across the spectrum of economic levels;

Whereas, annual budgets should not be borne on special institutional and athletic fees paid by graduate students; Total mandatory fees of \$2,776/yr in FY 2019 (which increased slightly in FY 2020) include a special institutional fee of \$1,032/yr and athletic fees of \$296/yr. Neither core operating costs nor support of Division I athletics (for which graduate students are almost entirely ineligible) should be borne by graduate students [5,6];

Whereas, financial stress negatively impacts graduate student productivity; Economic hardship significantly reduces the ability of students to realize their full potential and detracts from the core mission of graduate research assistantship and graduate teaching assistantship support;

Whereas, a graduate fee reduction initiative would demonstrate institutional values through action-taking and will send a clear signal: **GT is committed to a sustained ascendancy among leading American universities;** now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Academic Faculty Senate of the Georgia Institute of Technology, on behalf of the academic faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology:

1. Requests that Pres. Cabrera work with the University System of Georgia Chancellor and the Chair of the Board of Regents to reduce the special institutional fee charged to full-time graduate students at Georgia Tech from \$344/term (in FY20) to \$172/term (in FY21) to \$0 (in FY22); this is equivalent to a \$1,032 reduction per student annually.
2. Requests that Pres. Cabrera work with the Faculty Executive Board, Georgia Tech Budget Office, and the Georgia Tech Graduate Student Government Association to eliminate the athletic fee charged to full-time graduate students (from \$296/yr in FY20 to \$0 in FY21).
3. Requests a moratorium on increases to all other graduate student fees, pending an institute-wide re-evaluation of graduate assistantship stipends, mandatory fees charged to graduate students, graduate tuition costs, and availability of affordable graduate housing.

*Graduate Fee Reduction Resolution – Approved for advancement to the Academic Faculty
Senate by Faculty Executive Board in 7-0 vote – Board meeting, Sept. 24, 2019*

References:

1. AAU Institutions:

<https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are/our-members/georgia-institute-technology>

2. Comparison of fees amongst AAU institutions and other institutions (compiled by Prof. Joshua Weitz, School of Biological Sciences, GT)

http://bit.ly/aau_grad_fees_2018_2019

3. HUD.gov

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/

4. Initiative 2020: Student Support

<https://development.gatech.edu/initiative-2020/support-students>

5. Fees at Georgia Tech:

<https://www.bursar.gatech.edu/content/tuition-fees>

6. USG Fees:

https://www.usg.edu/assets/fiscal_affairs/documents/tuition_and_fees/FY_2020_Mandatory_Fees.pdf

Signatories for the Proposed Resolution from Members of the Academic Faculty with Active Roles in Graduate Studies

Joshua S Weitz, Professor of Biological Sciences, Founding Director of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Quantitative Biosciences

David Ballantyne, Associate Professor of Physics, Associate Chair for Graduate Studies in Physics

Mark Davenport, Associate Professor of Electrical & Computer Engineering, Graduate Recruiting Coordinator, School of Electrical & Computer Engineering

Benjamin Klein, Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Emanuele Di Lorenzo, Professor of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Co-Founding Director of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Ocean Sciences and Engineering

Justin Romberg, Schlumberger Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Director of the Machine Learning Graduate Program

Ingeborg Schmidt-Krey, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Biological Sciences Graduate Committee. Chair

Francesca Storici, Professor of Biological Sciences, Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, Biological Sciences

Greg Turk, Professor of Interactive Computing and Coordinator for PhD with Major in Computer Science

Eric Vigoda, Professor of Computer Science, Coordinating Committee, PhD in Algorithms, Combinatorics and Optimization

Xingxing Yu, Professor of Mathematics, Director of Graduate Studies in Mathematics

Additional signatories follow

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Additional Signatories

Sam Brown, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Steve Diggle, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Konstantinos Dovrolis, Professor of Computer Science
Audrey Duarte, Associate Professor of Psychology
Mohammad Ghomi, Professor of Mathematics
Greg Gibson, Professor of Biological Sciences
Daniel Goldman, Dunn Family Professor of Physics
Brian Hammer, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Raquel Lieberman, Professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry
William Ratcliff, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Frank Stewart, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences
Soojin Yi, Professor of Biological Sciences
Andrew Zangwill, Professor of Physics

Current as of September 25, 2019