

November 22, 2019

ELIZABETH H. SIMMONS
Executive Vice Chancellor

SUBJECT: Review of the Senate Administration Workgroup on Graduate Funding Report

Dear EVC Simmons,

The Senate Administration Workgroup on Graduate Funding Report was distributed to all Senate standing committees, and the Committee on Planning and Budget and Graduate Council were specifically asked to review the Report and comment. Senate Council reviewed the Report and committee comments at its meeting on November 4, 2019. In general, reviewers supported the goal of providing equitable workloads for TAs and the recommended changes to the TA allocation formula. However, reviewers felt that the report lacked sufficient detail to make a recommendation on the proposed block grant allocation formula.

Reviewers and Senate Council have the following more specific feedback:

- Reviewers endorsed the recommendations of the Workgroup to devise a simpler, systematic and transparent policy for block grant allocations.
- Reviewers endorsed the Workgroup's suggestion that criteria for the TA allocation formula be based on the pedagogical needs of the classes.
- Reviewers expressed the need for clear and measurable standards to define the course designations.
- Reviewers were supportive of the goal of the block grant formula to guarantee one year of support for each MFA and PhD students as a standard practice, with potential support for a second year. However, many questions remain about how the formula should be revised to achieve this goal. Before changes to the block grant formula are implemented, Senate Council recommends that the factors incorporated into the formula are clarified and an analysis of the model based on historical data is completed to measure the impacts on department funding.
- Reviewers and Senate Council members felt that there should be an alternate means of holding departments accountable for the quality of their graduate programs besides adjusting potential funding to a lower amount during the annual block grant review, which seems to penalize the students most.

This formal response to the Workgroup Report reflects Senate Council's discussion at the November 4th meeting, and does not incorporate developments subsequent to that date. Graduate Council plans to continue discussing graduate student funding and potential changes to the block grant formula in particular.

I look forward to continued discussion on this very important topic.

Sincerely,



Maripat Corr, Chair
San Diego Divisional Academic Senate

Enclosure

cc: Steven Constable, Vice Chair, San Diego Divisional Academic Senate
Ray Rodriguez, Director, San Diego Divisional Academic Senate