DATE: 8 August 2016

TO: Deans, department chairs, directors of graduate studies and graduate program coordinators

FROM: William J. Karpus, Dean of the Graduate School

RE: Rate-based method for graduate assistant pay

On 21 July 2015, Interim Dean Wendy Crone communicated the recommendations of the ad hoc committee on Graduate Assistantships to Provost Mangelsdorf and Vice Chancellors Mailick and Bazzell. The committee widely engaged campus leaders, faculty members and staff to develop a rate-based process that harmonized the three graduate assistantship (GA) mechanisms: teaching (TA), project (PA) and research (RA) assistantships.

Over the past academic year I constituted an implementation committee consisting of James Montgomery, Albee Messing, Susan Bernstein, Julie Karpelevia, Brian Bubenzer, Catharine DeRubeis, Martha Kerner and Cynthia Burnson that further examined the rate setting process with the goal of ensuring no adverse affects to students, departments or schools/colleges. Additionally, I held meetings with faculty, program coordinators and graduate students as well as consulted school and college associate deans ad departmental staff. We discovered some unintended consequences of the original plan and the implementation committee has arrived at a revision that mitigates those problems and meets the adjusted implementation deadline of May 29, 2017. The time interval between now and May 2017 allows for the Offices of Human Resources and Business Operations to make and test modifications to the systems necessary to implement the process as well as to provide training to program coordinators as necessary.

Below are the essential elements of process that should guide your planning for academic year 2017-18.

1. Retain RA, TA, PA, lecturer SA, reader/grader hourly job titles with current tuition remission and benefits
2. The Graduate School will establish a minimum, but not maximum, pay rate for GA mechanisms.
3. Schools/colleges will work with their departments/graduate programs to establish rates above the minimum; this will allow flexibility to accommodate different market factors.
4. The Graduate School will review exceptions, including appointments above the 75% limit during the summer and semester breaks.
5. The maximum RA appointment will be 50%.
6. The maximum combination appointment of RA+TA, TA+TA, RA+PA, PA+TA or any GA+hourly will remain 75%.
7. The maximum total appointment for international students for any GA or combination of GA mechanisms during the academic calendar will be 50%, per federal immigration requirements
8. The Graduate School will send a worksheet prior to October 1 indicating the central minimum rate and the GA rates for the specific department/program can then be entered by the program/department staff and returned to the Graduate School for approval by November 1.

Cc: Rebecca Blank, Chancellor
Sarah Mangelsdorf, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Marsha Mailick, Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education
Michael Lehman, Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration
Charles Hoslett, Vice Chancellor for University Relations
Raymond Taffora, Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs