MEMORANDUM

DATE: 11 August 2016

TO: UW-Madison Graduate Students

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 Maillick 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. Last fall we discovered some unintended consequences of the original plan and I delayed implementation until a solution could be found.

Over the past academic year I constituted an implementation committee consisting of James Montgomery, Albee Messing, Susan Bernstein, Julie Karpelenia, 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 and departmental staff.

The implementation committee has arrived at a revision that mitigates the earlier problems and meets the adjusted implementation deadline of May 29, 2017.

Below are the essential elements of the new rate-based process.

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.