Compensation and Benefits for Funded Graduate Students

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Council of Graduate Students
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Compensation and Benefits for Funded Graduate Students

Part I: Introduction

Barbara A. Pletz
President, Council of Graduate Students
Long-term Partnership to Improve Compensation and Benefits

- Council of Graduate Students
- Graduate School
- Academic Affairs
- Executive Deans and College Deans
- Vice Presidents
- Office of Human Resources
Compensation and Benefits for Funded Graduate Students

Part II: Improvements and Plans

Barbara R. Snyder
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Commitment and Impact

- University is committed to improving compensation and benefits for graduate students, even in climate of budget uncertainty.

- Improvements affect approximately 5,000 graduate students.
Improvements for Funded Graduate Students

FOR AY 05:
- Increased minimum GA stipend to $1,000/mo
- Increased health insurance subsidy to 64%; began 25% for dependents
- Implemented pre-tax premium deductions

FOR AY 06:
- Increase health insurance subsidy to 75% (individuals) and to 50% (dependents)
- Implement guidelines for short-term and extended absences
- Introduce standard GA appointment document
- Formalize GCBC
Plans for the Future

- Continue to work with CGS and new Senate GCBC to identify and implement further enhancements
- Comprehensive communications plan will inform graduate students about improvements
- Background and details next...
Compensation and Benefits for Funded Graduate Students

Part III: Context and Approach

Carole A. Anderson
Vice Provost and Interim Dean, Graduate School
Graduate Quality of University Experience Report (2001)

• Joint project of CGS and Graduate School

• Based on G-QUE survey data from
  • Graduate students
  • Graduate studies committee chairs
  • Department chairs
  • College deans
  • Non-matriculants

• Eight broad recommendations, with strategies and action items
G-QUE Financial and Healthcare Recommendations

- Raise minimum monthly stipend for GAs
- Reduce healthcare costs for funded graduate students and their families
- Address other healthcare concerns
- Implement pre-tax deductions for healthcare premiums
- Clarify terms and conditions of graduate appointments
Improvements

Some examples:

- Increased interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary activity
- Enhanced professional development and career services
- Implementation of required training for GTAs
- Improved compensation and benefits

Work is ongoing...
Ongoing Partnership: Next Steps

- Partner to integrate graduate student satisfaction assessment into university’s ongoing institutional research timetable

- Respond to relevant recommendations of Beck and Freeman committees

- Work with GCBC to plan for AY 2006-07 and beyond
Part IV: The Multi-Year Plan

Larry M. Lewellen
Associate Vice President for Human Resources
Partners in Previous Stipend and Healthcare Improvements

- Health insurance subsidy for funded graduate students introduced for AY 2001-02
  - Currently 64% for GAs, fellows, trainees; 25% for dependents
- Pre-tax health insurance premium deductions introduced for AY 2004-05
- Adult family members of GAs, fellows, and trainees able to utilize the pharmacy at Wilce Student Health Center
- Minimum stipend increased to $1,000/month in 2004-05
- Bereavement leave for GAs enhanced
NEW for GAs, Fellows, and Trainees (AY 2005-06)

- Health insurance subsidy for funded graduate students increases from 64% to 75%
- Health insurance subsidy for enrolled dependents increases from 25% to 50%
- Standard GA appointment document
- Guidelines for short-term absences and leaves of absence
- Senate Graduate Associate Compensation and Benefits Committee (GCBC)
# Health Insurance Subsidy

Increasing University subsidy for funded* graduate students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AY 04-05</th>
<th>AY 05-06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual:</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependents:</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Subsidy % based on Comprehensive Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) premium

*“Funded” = GAs, grad fellows and trainees ≥ 50%

- Excludes fellows paid by non-OSU funds
## Health Insurance Subsidy: Single Coverage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Subsidy</th>
<th>Subsidy Per Quarter</th>
<th>GA Premium Per Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AY 00-01</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$236.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 04-05</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>$259.00</td>
<td>$145.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 05-06</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>$327.00* (estimated)</td>
<td>$109.00* (estimated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Assumes an 8% premium increase over 04-05 rates*

- **WITHOUT pre-tax premiums – Single coverage (AY 04-05):**
  - Quarterly premium *(less subsidy)* $145
  - Tax savings $0
  - Net cost of coverage $145

- **WITH pre-tax premiums – Single coverage (AY 04-05):**
  - Quarterly premium *(less subsidy)* $145
  - Tax savings *(23.45%)* $34
  - Net cost of coverage$111

¹Assumes the following marginal tax rates: Federal - 15%; Medicare Hospital – 1.45%; State – 5%; Local 2%
Standard GA Appointment Document

- Purpose is to provide clear, complete, written information about terms and conditions of appointments that is consistent across the university.

- Effective 2005-06

- All GA-appointing units required to use templates for new and renewed GAs.
Standard GA Appointment Document

- Appointing unit prepares document
- Document may accompany, follow, or replace offer letters
- Offer letters may still exist
- GA should receive appointment document no later than two weeks before the beginning of appointment
- GA must sign and return to accept
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Short-Term Absences and Leaves of Absence

- Purpose is to formalize practices to support funded graduate students during instances of:
  - Personal and/or family illness
  - Bereavement
  - Childbirth and adoption
- Each situation will be individually addressed
- Flexibility in responding to situations continues
- Guidelines in effect AY 2005-06
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Short-Term Absences

- All GAs, Fellows, Trainees eligible
- Short-term = generally 1-3 days and no more than 2 weeks
  - Should be proportionate to the need
- To be used for personal and/or family illness and bereavement
- Stipend is maintained during absence
- Make-up time will generally not be required
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Requesting a Short-Term Absence

- Student makes request for short-term absence in writing to supervisor
- Student provides documentation to support request
- Supervisor responds to request
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Leave of Absence

An absence extending up to six weeks for purpose of managing:

- Personal *serious health condition*
- Care of an *immediate family member* with a serious health condition
- *Childbirth or adoption*

- Stipend is maintained
- Make-up work is negotiated to meet needs of student and department

* Definitions follow those applicable to OSU faculty and staff and can be found: http://hr.osu.edu/policy/policyhome.htm*
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Leave of Absence

Eligibility:

- Completion of 3 of 4 consecutive quarters as a funded graduate student
- For GAs, appointment of at least 50% FTE (or multiple concurrent appointments combined for 50% FTE)
- Appointment paid through Ohio State payroll
- Registered full time
- Making *reasonable progress toward degree*
- In *good academic standing*

*Definitions can be found in Graduate School Handbook: http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/Faculty/GSpubs/Handbook.html*
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Requesting a Leave of Absence

- Student makes request for a leave of absence in writing to supervisor (as far in advance as possible)
- Student provides documentation to support request
- Supervisor may consult with student’s advisor and/or Graduate Studies Chair
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Denial of a Request

- Requests may be denied due to:
  - Inappropriate or unreasonable request
  - Inadequate documentation
  - Repeated requests
  - Documented unsatisfactory performance
  - Incompatibility with funding agency or other institutional guidelines
Guidelines for GAs, Fellows, Trainees: Appealing the Denial of a Request for Short-Term Absence or Leave of Absence

- Must follow appointing unit’s appeal guidelines
  - Informal discussion with advisor, Graduate Studies Chair, Department Chair, or Dean

- Graduate School available to offer advice and, if applicable, formal hearing and adjudication

- Office of Human Resources available to offer consultation
Academic Leave of Absence

A period of time off from both academic and appointment responsibilities

- Results in loss of student status and loss of appointment
- Off-term insurance must be purchased to maintain health insurance coverage (one period of off-term insurance may be purchased each academic year)
- May be most appropriate response to a serious situation
Graduate Associate Compensation and Benefits Committee (GCBC) in Senate

- Formalizes ad hoc GCBC to address compensation and benefits for graduate students
- Parallels Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee (FCBC)
- Complements work of Council on Research and Graduate Studies
- Membership broadly representative
GCBC Membership

17 members + additional non-voting members and consultants as committee deems necessary

- 9 funded graduate students
  - At least 2 GTAs
  - At least 2 GRAs
  - At least 2 GAAs
  - At least 1 Fellow

- 4 faculty
  - 2 from CRGS
  - 2 from Faculty Council

- 3 administrators
  - Dean of Graduate School or designee
  - Associate VP of Human Resources or designee
  - Senior VP for Research or designee

- 1 department-, school-, center-, or college-level staff member with fiscal and budget expertise
GCBC Duties and Responsibilities

- Study adequacy and other attributes of university’s policies and provisions, including stipends, outside professional services, and supplemental compensation.

- Conduct research and provide advice on economic support of GAs, professional development, quality and design of benefit programs, and appointment terms.

- Make recommendations to Senate, Council on Research and Graduate Studies, and Academic Affairs.
Planned Communications

- Electronic newsletters
- Web sites updated
- E-mail to all funded graduate students
- Letter to all funded graduate students (to home address)
Future Enhancements

- Formalize process used by OHR/Graduate School for early GA terminations (AY 2005-06)
- Continue partnership, working with new Senate Graduate Compensation and Benefits Committee
- Integrate graduate student satisfaction assessment into university’s ongoing research timetable
- Respond to relevant recommendations of Beck and Freeman committees
Additional Information

Will be posted on Web sites as available

- Graduate School
  - http://www.gradsch.ohio-state.edu/
- Office of Human Resources
  - http://hr.osu.edu/
- Council of Graduate Students
  - http://cgs.org.ohio-state.edu/index.shtml