

Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee Spring 2024 Meeting

February 14th, 11:30am-1pm

GAAC Attendance:

UMD Administration Attendance:

1. Follow-up topics from Spring 2023 meet and confer:
 - a. Statement of Mutual Expectations template forms available on Workday? What template is being used and can we make sure GAAC is involved with this?
 - b. Remote teleworking policy follow-up: Reports of lack of parity in teleworking policy for tasks that can be just as or more efficiently performed remotely, e.g. not having a remote-work day that staff currently gets doing the same work—in Spring 2024 you mentioned you'd discuss in a meeting with graduate coordinators, any updates?
 - c. Parental leave—Family and Medical Leave Act. What has the Graduate School done to comply with federal law?
 - d. Housing - what is the status of affordable grad-student housing (Old Leonardtown? Revisions/review of partnership with Southern Management?)
 - e. Updates from Rice's working groups on improving ADS accommodations for graduate students (ask Laura DeMarco if she'd like to attend to further discuss this)
2. Stipends
 - a. What is currently being done to ensure stipends continue to increase?
 - b. Lack of campus-wide guaranteed summer funding
3. Difficulty for graduate assistants to find TA-ships
 - a. CMNS – shifting to undergrad TAs or increasing TA loads and decreasing hours
4. International graduate assistant issues
 - a. International grad fee/visa fees (should be considered a key part of their working conditions that the program hosting these students pay for)
 - b. more transparency around use of ISSS fees
 - c. Computer science and geography pays for an international fee – can that become a standard?
5. Graduate affordable housing
 - a. University administration has not implemented plans for affordable (defined as no rent burden at our stipend rates) graduate housing in College Park. When will administration be able to?
6. Abuse of power from professors/advisors

- a. Theater example – speaking up in the department has led to retaliation (paraphrasing)
 - b. Information Studies – disparaging grad workers, abusive behavior from advisors, no mechanism to deal with these issues
 - c. Follow-up from ARCH last year – department cut TA-ships and doubled work of remaining TAs. What investigations can graduate school do in these situations, what processes can be developed for grad workers to report?
7. Collective Bargaining
- a. Many graduate workers have signed a card in support of union, will you support our right to unionize and agree not to testify against it during future legislative sessions?