



Resolution No. 1617-04

A Resolution Requesting the University Revisit Certain Policies Surrounding the Assessment and Collection of Tuition and Fees

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

- WHEREAS,** Graduate-professional students and graduate workers have an interest in the policies surrounding the disbursement of stipends, honoraria, fellowships, and other such funding sources; and
- WHEREAS,** Graduate-professional students and graduate workers have an interest in the policies surrounding the assessment of tuition, fees, and any late penalties related to the same; and
- WHEREAS,** GPC's constituency comprises all graduate-professional students, including those ~2,000 who are employed as graduate workers; and
- WHEREAS,** The unfortunate refusal of university administration to recognize the Coalition of Graduate Workers (CGW) threatens to leave the employee-specific interests of graduate-professional students inadequately protected, which obligates GPC to temporarily address threats to those interests via resolutions such as this; and
- WHEREAS,** Current policies surrounding both funding and compensation disbursement as well as tuition and fee assessment cause unnecessary and avoidable hardship to graduate-professional students; and
- WHEREAS,** Hardships are related to (1) The timing of first paychecks vs. when mandatory fees are due, (2) The unnecessary assessment of late payment penalties for mandatory fees, and (3) The practice of automatic crediting fellowships, "honoraria", and other payments processed through the "financial aid" system against outstanding university balances; and
- WHEREAS,** Fees can range from \$500 to well over \$1,000 each semester; and
- WHEREAS,** Those fees can consume entire paychecks of graduate workers, thereby leaving them without income for two months each year without recourse; and
- WHEREAS,** The assessment of late payment penalties against graduate-professional students is unnecessary given the robust relationship that such students and student workers have with the university; and
- WHEREAS,** The practice of automatically crediting payments processed through the Office of Financial Aid (e.g., fellowships, awards) against outstanding university balances (e.g., fee balances) is tantamount to illegitimate garnishing of funds disallows graduate-professional students in tight financial conditions (i.e., most graduate students) to choose



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to allocate those funds (often \$500-\$1000 at the outset of each semester) to more pressing financial needs that are not university fees, but rather may be medical expenses, childcare expenses, student loan debt, or credit card debt that may be accruing at as high as 20% each month; and

WHEREAS, The practice of automatically crediting payments processed through the Office of Financial Aid (e.g., fellowships, awards) against outstanding university balances (e.g., fee balances) frequently occurs in conjunction with false invoices generated by the university with the assistance of the Office of Graduate Students arising from how the Office of Graduate Studies processes tuition and health insurance waivers for graduate assistants, which leads to not just garnishing of such funds, but indeed amounts to a fraudulent withholding of students' own money; and

WHEREAS, Despite these problems admitting of relatively simple solutions, the number of offices involved has made it difficult for graduate-professional students, generally, and GPC executive board members, specifically, to get traction on this issue; therefore be it

RESOLVED, By majority vote of the General Assembly here gathered that the Graduate Professional Council requests the university administration revisit those policies mentioned herein; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the GPC Treasurer or his designee(s) will work with Chief of Staff Brian Millner and with other offices on campus as necessary to address the issues described herein; and be it further

RESOLVED, The Graduate Professional Council will communicate with the Coalition of Graduate Workers as progress is made on the issues described herein; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution will be sent to Chief of Staff Brian Millner, the Registrar, the Bursar's Office, the Cashier's Office, the Office of Financial Aid, Ms. Gruen, Dr. Rubin, Provost Stokes, Interim Chancellor Foley, and the Coalition of Graduate Workers.

SUBMITTED,

Alex Howe

Treasurer