



Resolution No. 1617-06

A Resolution Requesting A Detailed Plan on Implementing the AY 17-18 Increase of Minimum Stipend Levels

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

- WHEREAS,** Academic Year 2015-16 saw significant unrest among graduate workers over a number of labor and quality of life issues; and
- WHEREAS,** Said unrest prompted the democratically-affirmed formation of a labor union—the Coalition of Graduate Workers (CGW)—which is most appropriately situated to bargain on labor and quality of life issues directly related to employment by the university as a graduate-professional student; and
- WHEREAS,** A long history of employers pitting their most vulnerable employees against each other is a well-established pattern in labor relations; and
- WHEREAS,** The notion that better labor treatment for one population of employees entails either (i) a smaller number of said employees or (ii) a decrease in salary for another population is false; and
- WHEREAS,** The decision of whether and how to improve labor conditions for one vulnerable population of employees is not a question of *budget* per se, but rather of *budget priorities*; and
- WHEREAS,** Until 2014, graduate student employee stipends failed to keep up with inflation for a decade; and
- WHEREAS,** In 2015, it was revealed that graduate-professional student satisfaction data had not been reviewed in more than a decade; and
- WHEREAS,** The unfortunate refusal of university administration to recognize 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,** In partial reaction to said unrest, the Chancellor’s Office announced that the minimum stipend level for nine month .5FTE PhD appointments would be increased to \$15,000 for AY1617 and that the same would be increased to \$18,000 for AY1718, and that the stipend levels for all other appointments would be increased proportionally; and
- WHEREAS,** In making the aforementioned announcement, the Chancellor’s Office announced that the differential funds required for departments with affected assistantships to meet the new minimum stipend levels would come from central sources, rather than falling on individual departments and divisions to cover; and
- WHEREAS,** The significant administrative turn-over witnessed over the last year raises concern for the implementation of the AY1718 raise to the minimum stipend level; and
- WHEREAS,** The implementation of the AY1617 minimum stipend level was accompanied by reports of raises not being provided and of raises falling on departments and of raises occurring in conjunction with reported decreases in other places, such as to NTT compensation; and



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- WHEREAS,** Graduate workers have a vested interest in ensuring that the promised AY1718 raise to the minimum stipend level is implemented correctly and without undue ill-effect on other more vulnerable members of the university community, such as contingent faculty and “non-administrative” staff; and
- WHEREAS,** The diversion of monies to the purpose of implementing the announced AY1718 raise to the minimum stipend for graduate-professional student employees will have a financial impact on some other area of the university’s functions; and
- WHEREAS,** A transparent and publicly announced plan for implementing the raise ensures the campus community may see the details of the broader impacts of implementing the announced increase so that there may be adequate discussion on the matter to ensure more vulnerable contingents on campus are not needlessly affected; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** By majority vote of the General Assembly here gathered that the Graduate Professional Council requests the Chancellors Staff develop and release a detailed financial plan for implementing the announced AY1718 raise to the minimum stipend level for graduate workers; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That a copy of the plan be distributed to both the GPC Executive Board and to the Coalition of Graduate Workers Coordinating Committee; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the relevant administrators meet with members of the GPC Executive Board and with members of the CGW Coordinating Committee as necessary to ascertain the views and concerns of graduate-professional students and graduate workers as they pertain to the plan for implementing the raise; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That a copy of this resolution will be sent to the Coalition of Graduate Workers, MU’s Chief Executive Officer Dr. Foley, the Chancellor’s Chief of Staff, the MU’s Chief Financial Officer, MU Staff Advisory Council, the UM System President’s Chief of Staff, and to other administrative staff as appropriate.

SUBMITTED,

Alex Howe, Treasurer