

Dear Graduate Student Community:

I am writing to update you on the activities the Office of the Provost is undertaking to improve graduate education and life at the University. I am pleased to announce that we have decided to suspend the annual five percent increase in Advanced Residency (AR) tuition for the 2008-09 academic year. This is a temporary one-year suspension of the tuition increase while I convene a committee to examine the AR system as it currently operates.

The Committee on Advanced Residency will be composed of faculty, graduate students, and staff and will focus on a number of issues, including the out-of-pocket tuition paid by students during advanced residency and its yearly increase. The Committee will explore how the AR system might be restructured to lessen the financial burden confronted by graduate students entering AR status. The Committee will also investigate the link between the AR system and the time to degree among our students. A number of our peer institutions have recently instituted incentives, directed at both students and departments, meant to lessen the time to degree among graduate students. The Committee will explore what new incentives might be adopted to reduce our time to degree without lessening the quality of graduate education. I am in the final stages of appointing members to the Committee and hope that we will have our first meeting next week. I expect that the Committee will submit its report by the beginning of the Winter Quarter.

I have also convened a committee of faculty, students, and staff to examine the current state of graduate student teaching and to make recommendations for improvement in this area. One of the first tasks the Committee will undertake is to review the levels of remuneration for graduate teaching and the system through which compensation is evaluated. Using information from peer institutions and data about graduate student teaching at the University, committee members will make recommendations to the Deputy Provost about the appropriate levels and structure of compensation for graduate student teachers. The Committee will also suggest options for an on-going system for evaluating teaching remuneration in the future. Every effort will be made to implement some of the accepted recommendations by the beginning of the 2008-09 academic year.

In addition to investigating issues of remuneration, the committee will also explore a number of other topics, including the pedagogical training that students need and receive prior to and during their teaching assignments, the roles and responsibilities of graduate-student teachers, and better systems of monitoring and improving the experience of graduate-student teachers. I expect this part of the committee's work to be completed by the beginning of Winter Quarter.

Finally, we have posted a memo with the corrected calculations from the *Report of the Working Group on Graduate Student Life in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Divinity School* on the Office of the Provost's website under the news section. If you have questions about any of the issues detailed in this e-mail I will be at the Graduate Council meeting on April 28th at 6:30 p.m.

Thank You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cathy J. Cohen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cathy J. Cohen
Deputy Provost for Graduate Education
David and Mary Winton Green Professor of Political Science