



UC Graduate & Professional Student Agenda

2015-2016



Secure Pathways to Graduate Degrees

Problem Statement

There is insufficient secure financial support for graduate students working toward doctoral degrees. This situation is compounded by a lack of consistent transparent guidelines for normative progress.

Focus

Relevant campus administrators, faculty, academic senate, graduate divisions/grad studies, UCOP;
Get admin from campuses with best practices to advocate and testify in favor of grad guarantees

Values

Graduate students deserve financial equity, job security, health and wellbeing.

Strategies

Share best practices among campuses, bring to relevant stakeholders, engage with campus admin, encourage UCOP to mandate changes, work with UAW

The problem will be solved when there are appropriate department-specific guidelines for normative progress that are founded on good research into best practices. Such research should be funded and conducted by UCOP. This should be coupled with system-wide and campus-specific admissions contracts that are transparent and consistent. These contracts need to stipulate estimated time to degree, number of years of funding, form of such funding, and expected cost of living in the area. There should also be campus-wide contingency funds to be used in the event that departments risk default on their contractual obligations. We also require guarantees for mid-degree students for the estimated remainder of what is determined to be normative time to boost retention. A \$5million UCOP ask for graduate retention may also be in order.

Current Status

UCI report coming out on 5-year guarantees
5+2 plan at UCI... engage with AFT and UCI admin to gauge the progress on their guarantees
5-year guarantees at UCR

Outcome

Chancellor-mandated guarantees for normative time to degree for terminal degree students in all departments

Strategies

Targeting chancellors to encourage departments to give guarantees.

Tactics

Set up meetings with evidentiary literature and research on existing models, and accounts by students and admin from these schools, between admin and students not providing guarantees. Draft model transparent offer letters/contracts.



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Food Security & Equal Student Service

Problem Statement

Graduate and non-traditional students don't always enjoy access to resources and other opportunities offered to undergraduates on campus, which makes them feel excluded from the campus community at large.

Values

Accessibility, dignity, equity, justice, inclusiveness.

Outcomes

- system-wide no questions asked food banks
- equal pay for equal work esp. for grad- RAs
- inclusion of non-traditional students in event attendance
- continuation of summer services for grads

Strategy

- Attend fall meeting of UCOP
- UC - wide comparison of policy to resource data results
- Demand a family or non-traditional access sticker so that children of students can access cultural experiences
- UCSA pressures the system-wide food security committee for equalized policies

Our realistic January goal: Inclusionary policy for non-traditional students in all student services (ex. family sticker)



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Healthy Graduate Student & Advisor Relationships

Problem Statement

The lines of communication between advisors and graduate students can be easily broken when the proper avenues for creating and maintaining a healthy rhythm are ruptured, or nonexistent to begin with. Since one of the top ten predictors of graduate student depression at UC Berkeley is Advisor Relationships (Panger et al., 2014), we may deduce that current methods to create and maintain positive communication channels are not sufficient. The challenges of graduate student-advisor relationships are made invisible by the expectations that graduate students are solely responsible to prevent and resolve conflict with advisors without proper guidelines nor a shared language, or by primarily relying on the Ombuds office - official channel for anonymous reporting (lacks record keeping for repeated offenses) - UC counselors who defend faculty, or fellow peers who are also untrained in conflict resolution.

Strategies for Prevention

Cultural Humility

- Shared Language
- Understanding privilege & power

Strategies for Treatment

Restorative Justice

Communication

- Research means of mediating
- Whole self
- Recognizing impact
- Restoring rhythm by giving voice

Tactics

Forming a workgroup on each campus

Enlist faculty from the Senate to sit on research committee

Enlist Ombuds representative if possible

Contact Alumni to collect victim statements

Collect Victim Statements from Graduate Students

Writing questions that ask how they were affected and what happened

Disseminating survey on these experiences to different departments

Graduate Assembly/delegate listserve

Outcome

Have a functional working group that hosts cultural humility trainings between faculty and graduate students.
UCOP Policy changes



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Affordable Graduate Student Housing

Problem Statement

Graduate students lack access to affordable and dignified housing.

Note: Campuses should add additional problem statements to further elaborate on specific issues pertinent to their campuses.

UCSC:

Santa Cruz, due to a perfect storm of city (new crackdowns on illegal granny units, proximity to Silicon Valley, tax penalties to building new multi-unit housing, seasonal tourism, vacation home ownership) and campus (limited building resources, construction disputes over several dormitories, age and disrepair of several campus housing facilities including Family Student Housing, growing numbers of both undergraduate and graduate populations, high prices and low appropriateness of on-campus housing for the funds and needs of grad students) has become a near-impossible housing market, both on and off campus.

Outcomes by January 2016

Housing distribution standards should be equalized and consistently enforced across all campuses.
Address issue at UCSF of housing shared with Staff/Residents who make much more \$\$\$

Overall outcomes by Priority

1. Graduate students should pay no more than 50% of post-tax income on campus or off campus housing. Campuses can likely achieve this by reducing on-campus costs or providing additional housing stipends.
2. Housing standards should be standardized system-wide and consistently enforced across all campuses. Concerted effort should be made to ensure that these policies help promote equity by helping vulnerable groups of students to access housing.



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Campus Climate for Diverse Graduate Student Identities

Problem Statement

While there have been some top-down campus climate efforts towards improving graduate student inclusion and the multicultural resources available at the UC, there persists a significant disconnect between administrative perception and the lived experienced of graduate and professional students. Many campuses still struggle to foster a sense of inclusion and community among groups such as students of color, LGBTQI and nontraditional students.

Values

Equity, Justice, Respect, Transparency, Access, Community, Love, Acknowledgement, Approachability, Inclusion, Dignity

Focus of Change

UCOP, Campus-specific University Administration, Graduate Division and Department stakeholders.

Strategy

- Utilize data from 2012-2013 campus climate survey UCOP
- Work with Campus climate committees
- Utilize data from UCB wellness report 2014
- Campus administrators such as vice chancellors of diversity & equity
- UCSA appointed officer for campus climate
- Anonymous, confidential UC reporting forms
- Conduct our own graduate-centered campus climate survey or urge UCOP to collect data on graduate and professional student climate
- Campus focus groups -> Where are our stories?
- Create Student-led advocacy councils
- Where is the funding going to support campus climate initiatives?
- Asks for better training for faculty & staff to support healthy campus climates
- Initial talks with the department, division and university stakeholders to identify what is working & what is not working
- Identify disconnection with administration, graduate and professional students
- Explore how we can we support students in relation to mental health and well-being, with the goal of these students feeling valued and included.

Target

UCOP & campus-specific Vice Chancellors for diversity

Outcome

Increase campus climate inclusivity among non-traditional and multicultural students