

MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty Senate, Admin Council, Leadership Council, Deans Council, Chairs and Program Directors
From: GA Charter Committee

RE: GA ALLOCATION RECOMMENDED CRITERIA AND PROCESS

As you are likely aware, in Spring of 2019 President Satterlee's office issued a project charter that articulated two primary goals: 1) to "develop a predictable and transparent model for distribution of GA lines/funding" and 2) to ensure that this model "increases GA funding to accommodate graduate program growth (enrollment and innovation)." The GA Charter Committee, which was established to carry out the work of the Charter, is made up of faculty from across the university, and is chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School. In accordance with the Charter's directive, we recommend the below process for consideration and possible implementation.

GA ALLOCATION PRINCIPLES

The GA Charter Committee seeks to articulate a set of principles derived from our institutional priorities for graduate education as a means of establishing transparency and predictability in the awarding of graduate assistantships for the institution, and to do so in a way that facilitates program growth and sustainability. Currently, our institutional priorities related to graduate education are named in our strategic plan, which contains 5 goals that any principles we articulate should serve. These are:

1. *Grow Enrollment (i.e. Degree Production)*
2. *Strengthen Retention*
3. *Promote ISU's Identity* (promote ISU's unique identity by 12% as Idaho's only institution delivering technical certificates through graduate and professional degrees).
4. *Strengthen Communication, Transparency, and Inclusion* (ISU will continue building relationships within the university).
5. *Enhance Community Partnerships* (establish 100 new partnerships within its service regions and statewide program responsibilities to support the resolution of community-oriented, real-world concerns).

In line with these institutional priorities, the GA Charter Committee supports the following set of guiding principles:

1. GAships should be allocated to support degree production in graduate programs across the university.
2. Allocations to support degree production should come from new GA lines made possible through increases in institutional or state funding, Graduate School development efforts, and reallocations of GAships from programs demonstrating decreases in degree production.
3. Programs whose degree production remains consistent should at minimum maintain consistent levels of GA support so as to support the overall mission of the university which is to "advance

scholarly and creative endeavors through the creation of new knowledge, cutting-edge research, and innovative artistic pursuits.” It is counterproductive to program health to reduce GAships to programs maintaining healthy degree production. Programs that meet the criteria for reallocation should have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with the Graduate School and their College Dean about the impact of reallocation. Removing funding from current students making adequate progress towards degree should be avoided.

4. The purpose of the Graduate School is to support the strategic vision of the programs, departments, colleges, and broader institution, and, as such, it should stand ready to offer assistance to programs: A) experiencing declining degree production, and B) whose current levels of support in the form of stipend levels or length and tuition benefits are not nationally competitive. As it relates to declining degree production, the reallocations of GAships from a program should mobilize the Graduate School to lend its support to a program or department -- if desired -- to assist with the development of additional recruitment and retention strategies, ideas for internal programmatic innovation, and/or the exploration of interdisciplinary partnerships. As it relates to establishing nationally competitive stipends and tuition benefits, the Graduate School should work with departments to establish targets for what such stipend and benefits packages should look like and strategize ways to reach those targets in accordance with institutional, college, and departmental/program priorities.
5. GAships for new program development should come from either reallocations or new resources, and due to the lack of historical data related to degree production, will rely on data from within the SUS and peer institutions to demonstrate anticipated levels of degree production.

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

1. In June of every year, the Graduate School will conduct a degree production audit that quantifies the number of degrees earned by any program over the course of a 5 year period.
2. For programs whose degree production has remained consistent or increased, admissions data will also be audited to examine the likelihood that additional GA resources will result in additional degree production. The Graduate School will seek feedback from departments on their recruitment efforts and application numbers if these do not suggest a high likelihood that additional GA resources will result in degree production. (For more information on how increases, consistency or decreases are quantified, please see the accompanying flowchart).
3. This information will be correlated with the program health outcomes.
4. Those programs whose degree production has increased or maintained itself over the 5 year period, and whose admissions data suggests that additional GA resources will likely result in additional degree production, will be eligible for additional GAships if ranked in the top 3 program health quintiles. For programs ranked in the bottom 2 quintiles, a submission of their action plan and an update on the program’s progress on implementing it will be required and assessed by the Graduate School Dean in consultation with the respective College Dean. A market/disciplinary analysis will then be conducted to determine what market or disciplinary standards are like for the awarding of GAships in these areas. Programs with disciplinary standards or market conditions that indicate that GAships are necessary to maintain program health and/or increase degree production will be

prioritized. We wish to avoid granting GAships to programs in disciplines where such awards are not common across academia.

5. Reallocations of GAships from programs showing declines over the 5 year period examined will take place in proportion to the declines being experienced.
6. Programs who are eligible for receiving allocations and programs targeted for reallocation of existing GA resources will have the opportunity to provide feedback or context to both the Graduate School Dean and their respective College Dean for how these allocations or reallocations will impact their programs. The Graduate School will be especially interested in understanding if reallocation will remove funding from a student currently reliant upon it.
7. The Graduate School will notify the respective College Deans of its recommendations for the allocation of new GAships to the college's existing program(s) or the reallocation of existing GAships from those programs. For colleges in the Kasiska Division of Health Sciences, the Vice-President of the Division will also be notified. In addition, programs will be made aware of the Graduate School's recommendations. In consultation with the Graduate School Dean, the Academic Deans of the respective colleges (and, in the case of the Division of Health Sciences, the VP of the Division) may work collaboratively to alter the recommended allocations for strategic purposes. Graduate School allocations to the Academic Colleges will occur on or about November 1.
8. All colleges receiving GAships will report back to the Graduate School with confirmation of which students received GAship allocations, what award levels have been given to these students (stipend and tuition), and what their teaching, lab, or support responsibilities are. This data should be made broadly available to the graduate programs throughout the institution.

NOTE: New programs will follow the same process for securing GAships, however, in lieu of steps 1&2 they will submit degree production data from peer institutions, especially those in the SUS, to establish degree production expectations. The new degree program proposal submitted to the Graduate Council and the State Board of Education should also be included and will be referenced to help establish such expectations. In addition, until new programs are placed into the program prioritization rankings, they will be exempt from meeting any of the above criteria dependent upon such rankings.

ABBREVIATED ALLOCATION FLOWCHART

