

Graduate Assistantship Appointments

- Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate Assistantships will undertake the development and implementation of a new rate-based method for graduate assistant pay with the overarching goals of
 - harmonizing graduate assistantship appointments,
 - allowing for market-informed compensation, and
 - more consistency with national standards of operation
- The UW-Madison campus will adopt a rate-based method for adjusting graduate assistant pay that does not rely solely on modifying the percentage of appointment, to be implemented July 1, 2015.
- This new method will include the following features:
 - Maintenance of the current categories of graduate assistants: RA, TA and PA
 - A minimum rate to be set centrally with an annual review/decision process
 - A cap on the total of all assistant appointments for an individual at 50% (with very rare exceptions)
 - Tuition remission and benefits for all graduate assistant appointments at or above 33%
 - Appointment percentage is directly tied to hours
 - The possibility of a cost neutral implementation, while allowing for the flexibility to accommodate different market factors faced by programs/departments

Our Current System

- UW-Madison sets a single rate for a 100% RA appointment and units adjust the appointment percentage to achieve the pay rate they desire.
- For TA/PA appointments the percentage is directly tied to hours of work
- A percentage at or above 33.3% produces eligibility for tuition remission and health insurance.
- Adjusting the percentage is the only mechanism that programs currently have to provide a market-driven salary.
- Parity now achieved between RA and Senior TA for same percentage and duration of appointment

Peer Institution Systems

- Rather than setting an individual's pay by adjusting the percentage, peer institutions primarily use a range of rates so that an appointment can be competitive and consistent with market factors in the field.

Other Examples – U of Iowa

- TA, RA, Law RA
- Salary Minimum
 - \$22,090 @ 50% (9-month)
- 50% Maximum Appt
 - (exceptions w Grad School approval; but rare)
- TAs and Most RAs are Unionized

Other Examples – U of Michigan

- Grad Asst Instructor, Grad Staff Asst, RA
- Salary Minimum for All Appt Types
 - \$18,971 @ 50% (9-month)
- 50% Maximum Appt
 - (exceptions w Grad School approval)
 - 50% = 16.5 – 20 hrs/week
- GSIs, GSAs, and RAs are Unionized

Other Examples – USC

- TA, RA, Grad Asst Lecturer
- Salary Minimum for All Appt Types
 - Grad students must get minimum \$21,000 stipend/year
- 50% Maximum Appt
 - (55% w Grad School approval)
 - 50% = 15-20 hrs/wk; 25% = 8-10 hr/week, on average
 - TAs must fill out report at end of semester re: whether they worked > 20 hrs/wk on average
- Not unionized

Cost Neutral is Possible

- Converting between the current method and a new alternative could be done in a cost-neutral way that would allow individuals to be paid the same unless the unit decides to modify the rate within the allowable range
 - Assume that we set the minimum assistantship rate at the current standard TA rate
 - 33% 9mo. TA paid \$10,027 → 33% 9mo. TA paid \$10,027 (at min)
 - 62% 9mo. RA paid \$21,532 → 50% 9mo. RA paid \$21,532 (above min)

Next Steps

- Identification of best practices used by peer institutions which would have applicability in alignment with our campus culture
- Development and implementation of a consultation and communication plan with key campus stakeholders, including
 - University Committee
 - Graduate School Academic Planning Council (GSAPC)
 - Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC)
 - Associate Deans for Research
 - Admin Associate Deans
 - University Council on Academic Affairs and Assessment
 - Research and Sponsored Programs
 - Teaching Assistants' Association
 - Graduate Students
- Determination of the additional features needed in addition to the above requirements
- Identification of all business processes that will be impacted (e.g. appointments, international student services, financial aid, sick leave, FMLA, title guides)
- Creation of an implementation plan which includes training needs
- Catalog all business processes that will be impacted
- Develop a consultation plan that includes the following groups: