

GSGA42-R12
A Resolution Calling for the Review of Leave of Absence Policies for Graduate Students

Summary: This resolution calls upon the Graduate School to review their leave of absence (LOA) policies¹ for graduate students given that the current policies may place undue stress on a student taking an LOA and exacerbate the issues that may have led to the LOA in the first place.

WHEREAS, some graduate students at the University of Maryland may wish to take an LOA for a variety of reasons, but approved reasons are limited to military service², illness, childbirth or adoption³, dependent care, or financial hardships; and

WHEREAS, the current LOA policy allows for up to four semesters of leave (two semesters at a time) in which a student will not make progress on their degree, which effectively pauses their time to graduation; and

WHEREAS, students who take an LOA are not considered registered students and no longer have access to student resources, such as the library, campus mental or physical health services, or their student email; and

WHEREAS, students on LOA lose their graduate assistantship, and thus, their health insurance and income, which may exacerbate economic hardships that led to the leave of absence, especially because departments do not have to hold an assistantship for a student upon their return; and

WHEREAS, these policies may place a significant financial and emotional burden on students due to the loss of resources and gain of additional economic burden, especially for students who have to pay tuition remission back to their departments or whose student loans enter repayment; and

WHEREAS, international students may have their visa status threatened when they go on LOA unless for a serious medical condition, which may force some students to be deported and possibly return to an unsafe living situation or incur large travel costs; and

WHEREAS, these burdens may decrease the likelihood that a student can successfully return to campus after an LOA, which forces them to reapply to their graduate program; and

WHEREAS, flexibility in lengths of time for LOA is generally reserved only for those due to military service.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate School reconsiders the leave of absence policy for graduate students to ensure that additional undue stress is not placed upon the student,

¹ Leave of absence policies: <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/registration-policies/#text>

² Family of military members who are relocated are not eligible for leave of absence. Leave of absence for military service only applies to the individual enlisted.

³ This is a separate policy from parental leave for one's graduate assistantship.

which may jeopardize their health, safety, and ability to return to their graduate program. Examples of ways in which the Graduate School could amend the leave of absence policy are incorporating policies from other Big 10 Schools⁴, considering shorter-term absences that do not require a student to lose their registration status, and standardizing LOA policies across reasons for leaving.

Author(s): Erin Tinney (CCJS)

Sponsor(s): Rose Ying (NACS); Alyse Sherrick (CCJS); Alexa McDorman (EDHD)

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Date of Presentation: February 10, 2023 (Rules); February 17, 2023 (Assembly)

Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date

⁴ For example, MSU requires departments to hold assistantships for students upon their return and continue to give them their stipend during the LOA. <https://reg.msu.edu/academicprograms/Print.aspx?Section=351>

GSGA42-R13
A Resolution Condemning the Actions of Temple University

Summary: This resolution condemns the actions taken by Temple University against their Graduate Assistants who are currently on strike.

WHEREAS, Temple University decided to withdraw pay, tuition remission, and health benefits for graduate student works who are on strike¹; and

WHEREAS, Graduate Assistants on average make only \$19,500 a year at Temple while tuition remission can go up to \$20,000 for a full-time student; and,

WHEREAS, striking students are only given until March 9th to pay their tuition before being faced with late fees; and,

WHEREAS, this is the first time the Temple Graduate Student Association has gone on strike in it's twenty years of existence²; and,

WHEREAS, without pay, tuition remission, or health benefits it will be impossible for many of the graduate students striking to continue with their graduate education,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government condemns the retaliatory actions of Temple University and stand with our fellow graduate students .

Author(s): Lizzie Irlbacher (VPLA)

Sponsor(s): Todd Weliver (GEOG)

Date and Time of Submission: February 9, 2023, 4:46 PM

Date of Presentation: February 10, 2023 (Rules); February 17, 2023 (Assembly)

Action(s) Taken:

¹ Davis, Charles. (February 8, 2023) "Students who participated in a strike at Temple University are being told they will lose their tuition and health care benefits". *Business Insider* Accessed on February 9, 2023.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/temple-university-suspends-free-tuition-for-striking-grad-students-2023-2>

²Snyder, Susan. (February 8, 2023) "Temple withdraws free tuition for grad students on strike and gives them until March 9 to pay" *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Accessed on February 9, 2023

<https://www.inquirer.com/news/tugsa-temple-graduate-students-strike-20230208.html>

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date

GSGA42-R14

A resolution in support of Maryland General Assembly HB0295

Summary: This resolution supports the Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0295: University System of Maryland - Student Withdrawal - Reimbursement of Tuition and Fees (Cameron Carden Act of 2023)

WHEREAS, Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0295 allows students to withdrawal for extenuating circumstances and be reimbursed the tuition and fees they paid that semester¹; and

WHEREAS, HB0295 defines extenuating circumstances as injury, illness, hospitalization, and mental health; and

WHEREAS, this act is named after Cameron Carden, a former sophomore at Salisbury University who withdrew in 2019 due to trauma from multiple racist attacks made on campus²; and,

WHEREAS, there is a rising mental health crisis among graduate students³; and,

WHEREAS, a semester of full-time graduate tuition and fees at the University of Maryland- College Park cost \$8,724 for instate students and \$18,298.80 for out of state students⁴; and,

WHEREAS, that places a significant financial burden on individuals, especially minority students who face additional barriers to healthcare and traumas the contribute to mental health issues,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government supports the Maryland General Assembly HB0295 and asks for members of the House Appropriations Committee to put forward HB0295 to the House floor for a vote and that Maryland State Delegates vote in favor of HB0295, and we encourage the Maryland Senate and Governor Moore to enact the bill into law.

Author(s): Lizzie Irlbacher (VPLA)

¹ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebwebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0295?ys=2023RS>

² <https://www.delmarvanow.com/story/news/local/maryland/2019/11/11/after-racist-threat-whats-changing-salisbury-university-chuck-wight/4167490002/>

³ <https://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2021/the-mental-health-crisis-in-science/>

⁴ <https://billpay.umd.edu/GraduateTuition>

Sponsor(s): Todd Weliver (GEOG)

Date and Time of Submission: February 9, 2023, 4:46 PM

Date of Presentation: February 10, 2023 (Rules); February 17, 2023 (Assembly)

Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date

GSGA42-R15

A resolution in support of Maryland General Assembly HB0384/SB0248

Summary: This resolution supports the Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0384/SB0248: Institutions of Higher Education - Transcripts - Prohibition on Punitive Measures Related to Student Debt

WHEREAS, Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0384¹, crossfiled Senate Bill 0248, prohibits a University of Maryland institution from denying a transcript request or taking other punitive measures against a student's transcript due to a debt owed by the student; and

WHEREAS, transcripts are necessary to pursue internships, jobs, grants, fellowships, other educational opportunities, and numerous activities; and,

WHEREAS, this can deny students the opportunity to have paying jobs that will allow them to pay down their debt from the university; and,

WHEREAS, moving away from withholding transcripts over debt is a growing trend across the country²,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government supports the Maryland General Assembly HB0384 and asks for members of the House Appropriations Committee to put forward HB00348 to the House floor for a vote and that Maryland State Delegates vote in favor of HB0348.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government supports the Maryland General Assembly SB0248 and asks for members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee to put forward SB0248 to the Senate floor for a vote and that Maryland State Senators vote in favor of SB0248.

Author(s): Lizzie Irlbacher (VPLA)

Sponsor(s): Todd Weliver (GEOG)

Date and Time of Submission: February 9, 2023, 4:46 PM

¹ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/hb0384?ys=2023RS>

² Kolodner, Meredith. (October 3, 2022). "Withholding College Transcripts for Loan Payment is 'Abusive' Agency Says". *New York Times*. Accessed on February 8, 2023. <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/30/business/college-transcripts-student-loans.html>

Date of Presentation: February 10, 2023 (Rules); February 17, 2023 (Assembly)

Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date

GSGA42-R16

A resolution in support of Maryland General Assembly HB0356

Summary: This resolution supports the Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0356: Public Institutions of Higher Education – Pregnant and Parenting Students – Policy

WHEREAS, Maryland General Assembly House Bill 0356 requires universities to bring their policies on pregnant and parenting students into line with Title IX of the Federal Higher Education Act¹; and

WHEREAS, HB0356 requires institutions to post the policy regarding pregnant and parenting students on their website; and

WHEREAS, Title IX protects students from discrimination at school which includes prohibitions on discrimination on the basis of sex, which includes pregnancy and parental status²; and,

WHEREAS, there have been violations of Title IX against pregnant graduate students³,

THEREFORE, BE IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government supports the Maryland General Assembly HB0356 and asks for members of the House Appropriations Committee to put forward HB0356 to the House floor for a vote and that Maryland State Delegates vote in favor of HB0356 and we encourage the Maryland Senate and Governor Moore to enact the bill into law; and,

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Legislative Action Committee and the Parents and Families Affairs Committee of the Graduate Student Government lobby the state legislature for this bill to become law.

Author(s): Lizzie Irlbacher (VPLA)

Sponsor(s): Todd Weliver (GEOG)

Date and Time of Submission: February 9, 2023, 4:46 PM

¹ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/hb0356?ys=2023RS>

² <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-know-rights-201306-title-ix.html#:~:text=Title%20IX%20Protects%20You%20From%20Discrimination%20At%20School&text=Title%20IX%20of%20the%20Education,in%20educational%20programs%20and%20activities.>

³ To protect the privacy of graduate student impacted by this issue, specific examples are omitted from this bill

Date of Presentation: February 10, 2023 (Rules); February 17, 2023 (Assembly)

Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date

GSGA42-R17

A resolution asking for Access for the Graduate Student Listserv

Summary: This resolution calls for the graduate student government to gain access to an all-graduate student email listserv for the purpose of open communication with the graduate student body.

WHEREAS, the Graduate Student Government currently has no direct way to communicate with the entire graduate student body; and

WHEREAS, there is no efficient way that GSG can send out communications to the full graduate student body pertaining to GSG assembly meetings, elections, legislative updates, and community development opportunities such as Graduate Research Appreciation Day; and

WHEREAS, graduate student representatives are our main source to contact the graduate population at large; and,

WHEREAS, with almost 75% of our seats open that means that many departments do not have representation leaving those departments totally out of contact with no way to reach those students; and,

WHEREAS, GSG resolutions and initiatives are often countered with the argument that GSG proportionately small size and low access to speak to all grad students means that GSG cannot be an accurate “voice” of graduate students - the one way to remedy this is through GSG having the ability to contact, inform and engage the whole constituent population; and,

WHEREAS, Currently lack of access to a way to contact all graduate students as needed limits the ability for graduate students to know what GSG is and that is is a resource to them, and acts as their official representative body; and,

WHEREAS, Graduate Student Government is allotted \$7,000 a year to provide to graduate student organizations. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 lockdown, many student group leadership dissolved. It is imperative GSG has access to these groups to communicate to them about these funds for the purpose of community development; and,

WHEREAS, part of the difficulty in reaching students is ensuring that the incoming students also know about the opportunities that are available for them and can be contacted; and,

WHEREAS, GSG is willing to create a proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the University Communications team to address the following concerns: Over-inundation of

emails to graduate students; Filtering and censorship of email content (i.e issues that are directly counter to the university's interests); Privacy and/or security concerns; Other concerns that may appear,

THEREFORE, BE IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government is given access to a listserv of all graduate students the university with the listserv being updated each semester.

Authors: Lizzie Irlbacher (VPLA), [Joey Haavik](#) (President)

Sponsors: Shabab Ahmed Mirza (ECAM)

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Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date

GSGA42-R18

A resolution to establish a process to phase out the Athletics fee

Summary: This resolution calls upon the UMD Athletics Department, the department of student affairs, the committee for the review of student fees, and the University System of Maryland to establish a process that phases out the requirement for UMD graduate students to pay an athletics fee every semester.

WHEREAS, student fees are intended to help auxiliary units provide meaningful engagement. In the case of UMD Athletics, which is touted as “revenue-generating”, the graduate student perception is that student fee money is depended upon to help mitigate the strain of compounded debt and budget shortfalls; and,

WHEREAS, full time UMD graduate students are required to pay \$133, while part time graduate students are required to pay \$66.00, towards the athletics department every academic year as part of mandatory fees, equating to approximately \$800,000 worth of revenue for the athletics department; and,

WHEREAS, a recent survey¹ conducted by the Graduate Student Government suggests that less than 9% of the graduate student body has ever attended an athletics game; and,

WHEREAS, graduate students have recurrently cited that offerings from the athletics department are not accessible to them, due to busy schedules of graduate students, lack of interest, and moral opposition to the athletics department; and,

WHEREAS, recurrent conversations have taken place since 2018 between the GSG, the committee for the review of student fees, and the Athletics department about this issue, and there remains no progress in phasing out the athletics fee for graduate students; and,

WHEREAS, In the spring term of 2019, administrators within the Athletics Department committed in writing (through an email to student leadership) that a fee reduction plan could begin in the 2020-2021 academic year, this never materialized; and²,

¹ [Mandatory Student Fee Position Paper, Unit: Athletics, Graduate Student Government](#)

² [Mandatory Student Fee Position Paper, Unit: Athletics, Graduate Student Government](#)

WHEREAS, of the top 20 salaries in the UMD administration, 7 of these salaries belong to individuals in the athletics department, all earning above \$425,000 annually³, more than the Maryland Governors⁴; and,

WHEREAS, The highest paid member of the Athletics Department in 2019, 2020, and 2021 was D.J. Durkin⁵. D.J. Durkin was central in a controversial period of the Department's recent history where an undergrad student, Jordan McNair, died of heatstroke after a team practice⁶; and,

WHEREAS, UMD is an outlier in the Big 10 athletics conference as one of the only universities to still require a mandatory athletic fee for graduate students.

THEREFORE, BE IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Graduate Student Government calls upon the USM board of regents, the athletics department, and the university of Maryland to establish a multi-year plan that phases out the requirement of graduate students to pay a mandatory athletics fee every semester and proposes a switch to an opt-in model for the 9% of graduate students who do interact with the athletics department.

Author(s): Joey Haavik (GSG President)

Sponsor(s): Lizzie Irlbacher (VPLA), Sujeeth Ganta (VPFA), Alexa McDorman (EDHD)

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Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

³ <https://salaryguide.dbknews.com/>

⁴ <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/Pubs/BudgetFiscal/2022-Governors-Salary-Commission.pdf>

⁵ <https://salaryguide.dbknews.com/>

⁶

https://www.espn.com/college-football/story/_/id/25137549/maryland-terrapins-football-coach-dj-durkin-fired-one-day-reinstatement

Signature of GSG President

Date