

**GSGA44-R01****A Resolution in favor of the University of Maryland, College Park Establishing a Centralized Accommodation Fund (CAF)**

**Summary:** The Graduate Student Government urges the University of Maryland, College Park to establish a Centralized Accommodation Fund (CAF) for graduate students, including graduate assistants, with approved disability accommodations.

**WHEREAS**, in March 2023, the University of Maryland Department of Entomology hosted ADS Director Tessa Cahill for a talk on “Getting The Help You Need! Accessibility and Disability Services At University of Maryland.” ADA Coordinator Emily Lucio helped contribute the following information:

“Covering the costs of accommodation can sometimes be challenging for faculty working to provide equal educational access to all students ... if ADS or Environmental Safety, Sustainability, and Risk (ESSR) recommends a piece of equipment (like an accessible desk), or additional salaried labor as accommodation for disabled students (for example, to accommodate relief from certain physically demanding duties in the lab or field), there are not always established funds ... Financial responsibility for employment-based accommodations first falls to the department, but if financial resources are lacking at the department-level, funding may be available at the level of the college, university, or even the State of Maryland government.”<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, graduate students with disabilities (and their advisors and department heads) have attempted and failed to access funds at the college and university level.<sup>2</sup>

**WHEREAS**, CAFs help increase equity for people with disabilities by eliminating unit-specific concerns about accommodation costs and/or accessing funds.<sup>3</sup>

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<https://entomology.umd.edu/news/getting-the-help-you-need-accessibility-and-disability-service-at-university-of-maryland>

<sup>2</sup> [April 2024 email to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and CMNS; March 2024 focus group with ADS and the Counseling Center; August 2023 email to Grad School Dean Roth](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://askjan.org/articles/Best-Practices-in-Establishing-a-Centralized-Accommodation-Fund.cfm>

**WHEREAS**, CAFs for graduate students can be found in at least three Big 10 schools (Northwestern,<sup>4</sup> Michigan,<sup>5</sup> and UW-Madison<sup>6</sup>).

**WHEREAS**, the National Science Foundation (NSF) is currently accepting applications for funding to support persons with disabilities.<sup>7</sup>

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Graduate Student Government urges the University of Maryland, College Park administration establish a Centralized Accommodation Fund, possibly funded in part through NSF and/or other grants, to ensure access and equity for graduate students with disabilities.

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**Sponsor(s):** Lasair ní Chochlain (ENTM), Keegan Clements-Housser (Director of Operations)

**Date and Time of Submission:** October 11, 2024

**Date of Presentation:** October 25, 2024

**Action(s) Taken:** Approved by Assembly vote without amendment and presented to relevant University of Maryland, College Park parties, including ADA Compliance within the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Accessibility & Disability Service (ADS) within the Division of Student Affairs, and the Office of the President.

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<https://www.northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation/reasonable-work-accommodation-faqs.html>

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<https://rackham.umich.edu/rackham-life/students-with-disabilities/accommodations-for-graduate-students-with-disabilities/funding-employment-or-appointment-accommodations/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-6035>

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<https://new.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/broadening-participation/supporting-persons-disabilities-stem>

Approved

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Decision of GSG President

*Varaa Kukreti*  
[Varaa Kukreti \(Oct 28, 2024 01:44 EDT\)](#)  
Signature of GSG President

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Oct 28, 2024  
Date

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# [Passed] GSGA44-R01 University-Wide Accommodation Fund

Final Audit Report

2024-10-28

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