

DEPARTMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Graduate Assembly of Students in Psychology



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FUNDING

What improvements have been made to funding in the department?

The GSR rate (which is set by department depending on available funds) was increased very recently. It was initially at Step V. Now it's at Step VII (thanks to faculty who listened and responded to the needs we've expressed). Check out the table below to see what this increase translates into. There are some charts with the going stipend rates for other common sources of funding to give you an idea of how these salaries compare.

UCB	UCB			Salary
	Annual	Monthly	at 50%	4.5 acad mos
V	46,908	3,909	1,955	8,795
VI	49,080	4,090	2,045	9,203
VII	53,016	4,418	2,209	9,941
VIII	57,240	4,770	2,385	10,733
IX	61,836	5,153	2,577	11,594
X	66,768	5,564	2,782	12,519

Fee remission per semester \$ 7,817.75

NIH-NRSA			
Career Level	Years of Experience	Stipend for FY 2014	Monthly Stipend
Predoc	All	\$22,476	\$1,873

Career Level	Years of Experience	Stipend for FY 2014	Monthly Stipend
Postdoc	0	\$ 42,000	\$ 3,500
	1	\$ 43,680	\$ 3,640

Last year we shifted about \$20,000 in **travel award expenses** to Graduate Division. Many of our students (no one has told us they were turned down) who might not have otherwise used this resource were able to get funding there easily. This saved us a lot of money and allowed those who couldn't get funds anywhere else to be funded by the department. Excess funds then get applied to other student needs (e.g., a bonus to summer research fellowships). Because this new structure is still in beta mode, we're interested in hearing ideas for ways to make a good set up even better. We'll be hosting a meeting to discuss the Travel Award set up in May.

We know a lot of you are looking for funding for research to avoid having to teach

(which eats up a lot of time that you could be spending on your work). For next year, we are planning to hook students up with **federal work-study** so that more of you are funded for research (and not teaching). We believe this strategy will incentivize faculty to use their funds to support more of their grad students because work study will pay for a large proportion of a GSR. The idea for this came from our very own students. It really makes a difference when you get involved, and GASP is here to help you move these ideas along in the department.

Some first steps are being taken to set up **internships with companies in the Bay Area**. These positions would be “rotating” meaning a company would hold an internship position open for a grad student to be hired into each year. We think this would be a nice opportunity for the many students interested in getting a range of experience, especially non-academic. This innovative idea was generated by a student who is working now with faculty to make this happen.

You might have missed this email about **department fellowships** from John Schindel:

 **Psychgradinfo Departmental** (sent by jschindel@berkeley.edu) Mar 19 ☆  
to psychgrads ▾

The department is pleased to announce a new addition to our support package for all graduate students!

All graduate students are now guaranteed to receive one Departmental Semester Fellowship (\$10,000 stipend plus tuition) at one point between their 3rd and 5th years. Applications will be solicited each Spring semester and will be considered for the following academic year. To be eligible, students must have:

1. passed their qualifying exam by the end of the Fall semester of the academic year during which the DSF will be used.
2. not received a multi-year fellowship from an external or a University source (e.g., NSF, Ford, Regents, Chancellors).
3. completed their minimum GSI requirement before they use the DSF.

Once awarded a DSF, the student can choose to use it during the fall or spring semester of the following year. Students cannot defer an award to a future year because this would create problems for our funding model. If a DSF is awarded and the student does not use it during the following academic year, they will have forfeited their DSF award.

While the department guarantees the one semester DSF between years 3 and 5 for all students who meet the above criteria, the exact timing of the award will depend on seniority and budgetary considerations.

These guidelines apply to everyone who already submitted a 2014-15 application. I will contact eligible students who did not apply with instructions for submitting an application. The Awards Committee will then review all of the applications received and make their decisions as soon as possible based on these new guidelines.

Best,
John

Plans are in the works to bring more **financial saavy** to our students so that they don't feel overwhelmed with financial stress. We hope this will help with managing the money we have now as the strategies to increase funding are in the works. GASP will

post a Tax Information page on our new website this summer. We are also planning to work with financial literacy student groups on campus to direct **workshops** on managing expenses, finding lower rates on rent, and investing while you're in school.

GASP was recently approved for a **yearly \$2,000 budget** from the department to fund social activities and other events and has an official account set up with ASUC on campus. This is unprecedented in the history of GASP (as some of the older students might know). The funding will allow students involved in GASP to be reimbursed more quickly or to use funds directly without ever having to front the cash yourself (and wait to get it back). Our hope is that this will remove the burden on students who give some much already of themselves and their time to make GASP what it is. A few students in GASP with Carly Giffin at the lead crafted the proposal for this and reviewed it with the faculty.

GETTING INVOLVED

Are there specific ways I can get involved in GASP or the department that won't feel like a drag on my time?

GASP has adopted the mission of the Diversity Student Alliance and has created a **task force of students who are interested in improving conditions in the department for minority students** (this means racial-ethnic minorities as well as other underrepresented backgrounds). A brainstorming meeting was held this year to discuss ideas for recruitment and retention efforts and these will start to be fleshed out and implemented next year. This is a good time to join if you're interested in this topic (it's a great application of research focused on race and diversity). Email gasp@berkeley.edu or talk with Malik Starks (1st year in SP) or Jocelyn Meza (2nd year in CS), two awesome students heading up this new cause. Their emails: cmb@berkeley.edu for Malik and jmeza@berkeley.edu for Jocelyn.

One great way to get involved that takes the least time is to **help out with an event**. Look out for agendas that get sent out with GASP meeting announcements. That will help you figure out if we're going to be planning something that's relevant to you. If you're interested in planning for something new but need support on how to get started, come and tell us at a meeting! We usually reserve some time for announcements at the beginning of these, and that's a perfect time to let everyone know what's on your mind. We'll help you think about the resources available to you on campus and help you gather support among the students to get going. This has led to some fun and well-attended events like the ski trip (although unfortunately it didn't end up snowing in Tahoe), faculty-student bowl, synchroniciTEA (hosted by Justin Riddle), and movie nights.

THE NEW BUILDING

What's the word on the new building to house our department?

Here's the recent news from Rich that you might have missed:

Mar 20, 2014

I received word last night that funding for the new building was included in the UC Regents meeting yesterday. While I have not heard word from University officials, the following report in the Daily Cal indicates that the Regents have approved funding at the full level.

<http://www.dailycal.org/2014/03/19/tolman-hall-slated-replacement-due-seismic-concerns/>

There is a planning meeting tomorrow morning and I'm sure this will be the first item for discussion. More to come but I did want to send along this very promising news.

Rich

Mar 20, 2014

I have gotten some clarification on the Regents' vote and the news is more mixed.

As reported in the Daily Cal, the Regents approved the 150m project, with 75m in campus debt and 75m in state funds. What the Daily Cal did not report is that the state has not authorized their part of the funds.

So while this is an important and necessary step forward, it is not a done deal.

More to come.

Rich Ivry

CAMPUS RESOURCES

It's really annoying to have to go to so many different websites to access my student records. Has anything been done to improve this?

Check out Cal Central. It's an awesome new site developed by the university to centralize things like previous coursework and grades, a list of courses you've taught, bSpace, CARS, etc. It's really streamlined and you can personalize the page so that the information that's important to you stands out first. Go to www.calcentral.berkeley.edu to see what we're talking about.

What statistics and computing resources are available to me?

Although the conversation on improving graduate student education in our own department, especially for statistics, is ongoing, we know that some students are not aware of the already available campus resources for this. Here are some you may not have heard of that are really great: free consultation by appointment or drop-in in the **Statistics Department**, the **Data Lab** in Main Library (Tim is super helpful there!), **D-Lab** in Barrows Hall (over on Bancroft). If you've used or heard of other resources, please email gasp@berkeley.edu so we can add to this list and get the word out!

IMPROVED COMMUNICATION

How do I stay in the loop more about department events and announcements?

GASP has a website now at: www.gasp.berkeley.edu. This has information about us, a calendar with events for GASP and will soon feature pages with information on Travel Awards, Tax Information, Resources Around Campus, and more to help you along the way through your training here in the department.

In case you haven't noticed, GASP now has an active core group with strong faculty support. Most of the student-initiated ideas for projects and events get dreamed up in our monthly meetings. You can drop into one anytime! They happen on most first Fridays of each month from 5-6pm (we don't meet in January because of the Winter Break) in the Grad Lounge (2311 Tolman). Because we run through dinnertime, we like to feed our students, and it helps us get a head count if we get RSVPs. Shoot an email to gasp@berkeley.edu if you want to RSVP (announcements are always made with this info in the week before meetings if you forget).

GASP also has a Facebook group that is private and membership is only extended to graduate students in the department. This is just to make the room as comfy as possible for our students to post without worry about prying eyes. Send a request to join if you're part of the group already at www.facebook.com/groups/CalGASP.

GASP, staff, and faculty devised a new system for listservs in the Fall that is meant to make it easier to know where to find official versus more casual/student-specific information (like a furniture sale from a fellow student or leftover food in the grad lounge). You can post to PsychLife (psychlife@lists.berkeley.edu) for the latter. PsychGrads (psychgrads@lists.berkeley.edu) is reserved for more official announcements to students from staff and faculty.