

RESOLUTION

Council of Graduate Students – University of Minnesota

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Topic: Teaching Assistantships

Whereas teaching assistantships provide a critical means of financial support for many graduate students;

Whereas teaching assistantships are essential tools for recruiting top students, both domestic and international;

Whereas the University community has recognized, as stated in the Strategic Positioning Statement, that we must “recruit, nurture, challenge, and educate outstanding students who are bright, curious, and highly motivated,” and that we must “attract the brightest faculty, staff, and students in the face of fierce competition from other major research universities;”

Whereas the same document also states, “American universities are facing increased competition ... with institutions outside the United States to admit the best and brightest international students;”

Whereas in the current post-9/11 climate, graduate support such as teaching assistantships is vital for attracting top international students and is the sole means by which many international students can obtain visas;

Whereas, according to the Financing Graduate Education Task Force report of September, 2004, “Providing strong support for funding graduate students is a key factor in the retention of top faculty;”

Whereas teaching assistants contribute to the quality of the undergraduate experience by sharing up-to-date knowledge in their respective fields and enthusiasm for the subject;

Whereas teaching assistantships provide valuable teaching experience for graduate students, improving their marketability upon graduation;

Whereas it has recently been proposed within CLA that teaching assistants be replaced with teaching specialists, or otherwise eliminated as a cost-saving measure;

Be it resolved that the Council of Graduate Students supports the employment of teaching assistants and graduate instructors when available, regardless of home department.

Be it further resolved that the Council of Graduate Students strongly opposes the replacement of teaching assistants with teaching specialists.