Graduate Education: A Student Perspective

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Graduate & Professional Student Federation
Today’s Graduate Student

• Research Assistant
  • Top 10 research institution
• Teaching Assistant
• Mentor
  • Academic & Student Organizations
• Community Member
• Spouse/Parent
• Oh yes, and a Student
The Data:

Graduate – 8,262
  Doctoral
  Masters
Professional – 2,513
Total: 10,755 or 37% of student population

16.5% of the graduate population is > 35 years old

3,613 graduate students NOT from NC

Minimum graduate student stipend is $15,200; Fees $1,904.05

Federal loan interest rates are a minimum of 6.8%, no subsidy
Graduate & Professional Student Federation (GPSF)

The representative body of all graduate & professional students
ADVOCATE – CONNECT – COLLABORATE

Legislative

- Congress (Grad/UG)
- Senate (Grad)

Executive

- Executive Board
- Cabinet
- External Appointments

Judicial

- Honor Court
State & Federal Advocacy

• GPSF State Advocacy Day
• Student Advocates for Graduate Education (SAGE) Day on the Hill
  UNC-CH, UC Berkeley, U of Michigan, UT Austin, U of Washington, UCLA, UC San Diego, Texas A&M
GPSF Emergency Fund

• **Affordability** is the biggest concern amongst the graduate & professional student population

• **Goal:** Minimize students taking out more loans while in school and unenrollment due to financial stress

The Fund

• Fund dedicated to providing financial assistance to graduate students with unexpected, emergency expenses

• Sustain through fundraising (Student Opportunity Chair)
Other GPSF Programs

UNIVERSITY RESEARCH DAY
Annual event open to undergraduates, graduates, and post-docs to encourage academic collaboration & discussions

GPSF GRAD GAMES
3 days of fun, social competition for new and current graduate students

COMMUNITY SERVICE
• UNC Can Castle Competition
• Ronald McDonald House
• Habitat for Humanity
• High School Mentoring
Future Directions

Strategy for GPSF & the University:

• Liaise between student population and university.

• Identify major needs and suggest workable solutions
Financial Conscientiousness

**HARD DETAILS:**
- Tuition
- Stipends
- Fees
- The intersection of these

**SOFT DETAILS:**
- How clearly and regularly information is given to us.
- Timeliness of work assignments
- Clarity of responsibilities
Mentorship

• Our relationship to faculty
  • Reason to come to Carolina
  • Matter of professional development
  • For this reason, we care deeply about the University’s ability to recruit and retain excellent faculty.

• Our relationship to each other
  • Best resource for graduate students, according to graduate students
  • Recognize our development as mentors