

Resolution on Living Wage and Equal Representation for Graduate Students

Whereas, the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (hereafter UHM) eliminated the Ombuds Office, which was created to “provide confidential, impartial, informal problem-solving assistance to students, faculty and staff” and “bring troublesome trends to the attention of anyone at the University who might be able to deal with them,” effectively negating equal representation for students and dramatically lessening the possibility for much-needed adjudication between students, faculty, and administration as evidenced by the Ombuds Office’s annual report for the 2008-2009 academic year, which notes that the Ombuds Office fielded 338 cases, half of which were brought by students. See Table 1; and

Whereas, the Graduate Student Organization (hereafter GSO) promoted House Bill No. 2859, which set out to “amend Section 89-6, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, not to exclude from collective bargaining ‘...students of a state institution that are not employed by the State’” such that graduate students could rally together and work with administration towards the development of a living wage for Graduate Assistants (hereafter GA) and equal representation for all students, but failed to receive support from UHM’s administration, including the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost, who testified that changing the statute “could be interpreted as extending collective bargaining rights to HIDOE K-12 students” and that “a graduate assistant is similar to an on-the-job training or apprenticeship program”; and

Whereas, the pay scales for GAs have not changed since 2004 and compensation has not kept pace with inflation and cost of living increases as well as rates of pay at peer and benchmark institutions, and Graduate Division has suggested “edits” to Executive Policy E5.223 regarding GAs that would add eight additional steps increasing the maximum pay scale for GAs but not increase any of the existing pay scales. See Table 2 and Table 3; and

Whereas, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services calculates the poverty line for an individual living in Hawaii at \$12,860; and the U.S. Census reports that Hawai'i has the highest median rent at \$1,291 per month; and the cost of living in Honolulu not only exceeds those of its peer and benchmark institutions but is topped only by New York City according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2010 report; and

Whereas, the GSO has previously resolved that the Strategic Planning Committee’s Implementation Proposal regarding the Admission of Graduate Programs offering Ph.D. Degrees requires greater clarity on issues relating to how mandatory five-year funding will impact the academic health and diversity of the university and its students,

especially as funding sources are not identified within the proposal, which implies that programs might shrink and possibly favor candidates with a privileged socio-economic background. See Appendix 2; and

Whereas, GSO has serious concerns that policies mandating graduate programs to “provide five years of funding for Ph.D. students” and “only admit graduate students if full financial support is readily available” does not adequately identify metrics for what constitutes “full financial support” relative to cost of living and compensation at peer and benchmark institutions; now, therefore,

Resolved, GSO recommends that the Strategic Planning Committee take the current and future state of GA compensation into consideration when calculating the financial implications of the mandatory five-year funding initiative; and be it further

Resolved, GSO recommends reopening the Ombuds Office to “provide confidential, impartial, informal problem-solving assistance to students, faculty and staff” and “bring troublesome trends to the attention of anyone at the University who might be able to deal with them” to ensure that student needs are adequately and fairly addressed; and be it further

Resolved, GSO will continue to pursue collective bargaining to secure a living wage for GAs and equal representation for all graduate students and plans to draft a new bill for the 2013 legislative session; and be it further

Resolved, GSO recommends removing six steps from the 9-month personnel and five steps from the 11-month personnel and add eight steps to the top of the GA Stipend Schedule (B.3.) as follows (eliminate steps 1-6 for TAs and 1-5 for RAs); and be it further

Resolved, GSO recommends that the GA Stipend Schedule be discussed with GSO before approving the biennium budget every two years. We also request a graduated matriculation schedule for teaching assistants, so that compensation is increased one step after one year of teaching service, with at least a two-year guarantee. Furthermore, we request the inclusion of benchmark raises for students when: 1) A student receives his or her master's degree and becomes a PhD student, and/or 2) a student's status changes to ABD (all but dissertation). See Table 5; and be it further

Resolved, GSO recommends that existing GAs retain their scale rank such that a nine-month GA at scale six, currently the largest cohort, would have his or her compensation adjusted from \$16,176 to \$19,680, which does not actually constitute a raise but rather

compensates for inflation and adjusts for buying power relative to the dollar value of 2004, which was the last time the GA pay scales were amended; and be it further

Resolved, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to: the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Chancellor Tom Apple, Mānoa Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair Bonnyjean Manini, University of Hawai'i Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost Linda K. Johnsrud, University of Hawai'i President M.R.C. Greenwood, the Board of Regents, Ka Leo O Hawai'i, Unite Here Local 5, University of Hawai'i Professional Assembly, HGEA, and ILWU.

Resolved, on (enter date here), the General Assembly of the Graduate Student Organization voted in approval, support, and dissemination of this resolution to the above named parties.

Table 1: Ombuds Office data (2007-8 & 2008-9)

**Person Initiating Contact
 2008 - 2009 and 2007 - 2008**

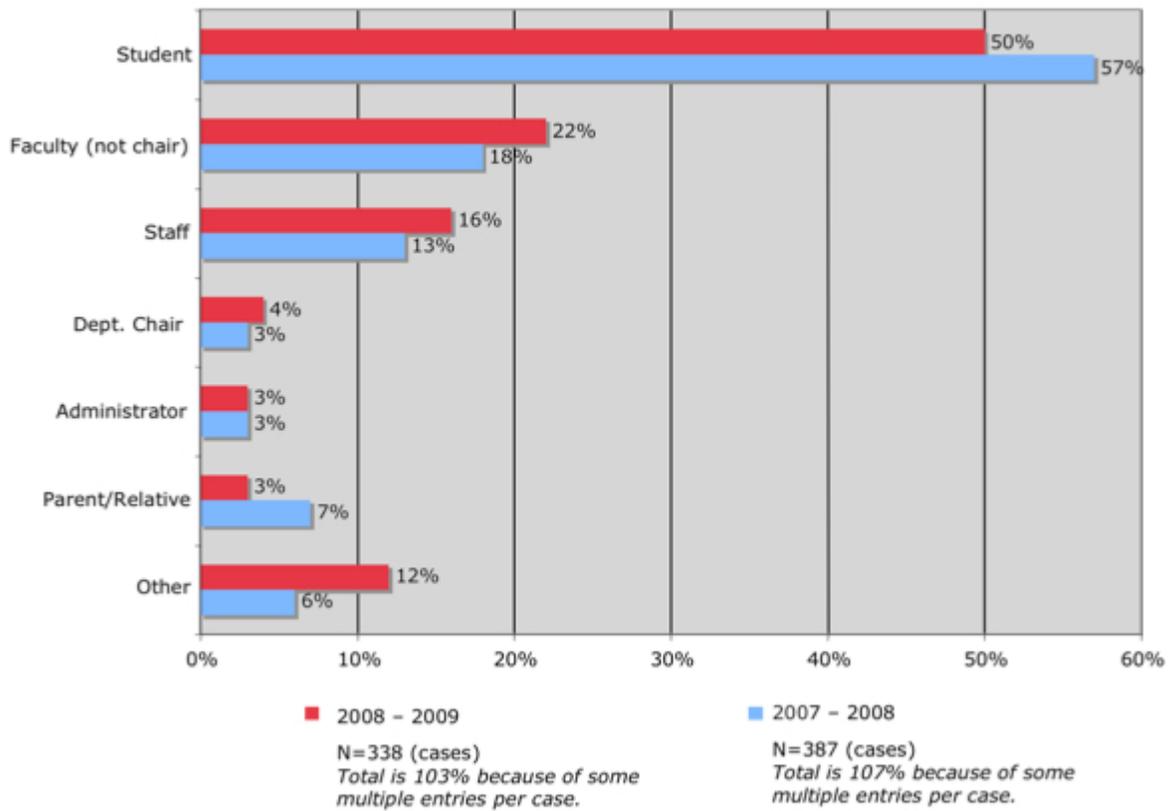


Table 2: Current GA pay scales

GA scales STEP	9-month	11-month
1	\$13,296.00	\$15,552.00
2	\$13,830.00	\$16,176.00
3	\$14,382.00	\$16,824.00
4	\$14,958.00	\$17,496.00
5	\$15,552.00	\$18,198.00
6	\$16,176.00	\$18,924.00
7	\$16,824.00	\$19,680.00
8	\$17,496.00	\$20,466.00
9	\$18,198.00	\$21,288.00
10	\$18,924.00	\$22,140.00
11	\$19,680.00	\$23,022.00
12	\$20,466.00	\$23,946.00
13	\$21,288.00	\$24,906.00
14	\$22,140.00	\$25,902.00

Table 3: Proposed GA pay scales

STEP	9-MONTH PERSONNEL	11-MONTH PERSONNEL
1	\$13,296	\$15,552
2	13,830	16,176
3	14,382	16,824
4	14,958	17,496
5	15,552	18,198
6	16,176	18,924
7	16,824	19,680
8	17,496	20,466
9	18,198	21,288
10	18,924	22,140
11	19,680	23,022
12	20,466	23,946
13	21,288	24,906
14	22,140	25,902
15	23,256	26,938
16	24,186	28,016
17	25,153	29,137
18	25,159	30,303
19	26,165	31,515
20	27,212	32,776
21	28,301	34,087
22	29,433	35,451

Table 4: Comparison of minimum/maximum pay scales

School	Minimum (9mo)	Maximum (11mo)
UH Manoa	\$13,296.00	\$25,902.00
UC Berkeley	\$16,697.00	\$32,730.00
UC Davis	\$16,697.00	\$32,730.00
UCLA	\$16,697.00	\$32,730.00
UC San Diego	\$16,212.00	\$31,776.00
U Washington	\$16,775.00	\$25,212.00

Table 5: GSO GA pay scale recommendations

Step	9-Month Personnel	11-Month Personnel
1	-	\$18,924
2	\$16,824	\$19,680
3	\$17,496	\$20,466
4	\$18,198	\$21,288
5	\$18,924	\$22,140
6	\$19,680	\$23,022
7	\$20,466	\$23,946
8	\$21,288	\$24,906
9	\$22,140	\$25,902
10	\$23,256	\$26,938
11	\$24,186	\$28,016
12	\$25,159	\$29,137
13	\$25,559	\$30,303
14	\$26,165	\$31,515
15	\$27,212	\$32,776
16	\$28,301	\$34,087
17	\$29,433	\$35,451