



A Proclamation Endorsing The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, New Minimum Stipend Increase for Graduate Assistants and Associates

Sponsors: GSS Legislative Steering Committee Chair Jeronimo Silva, Legislative Steering Committee members John McAlister and Jenna Spurlock

Co-Sponsors: GSS President Katherine Trubee, GSS Vice President Hannah Thompson

WHEREAS, the Graduate Student Senate is the official legislative body and voice of all graduate and professional students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, on August 31, 2023, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Chancellor Plowman and Provost Zomchick announced an increase on the minimum stipend for Graduate Assistants and Associates¹; and

WHEREAS, this increase sets the new minimum stipend for all nine-month graduate assistants and associates at \$19,401², and

WHEREAS, this increase sets the new minimum stipend for all 12-month graduate assistants and associates at \$25,868³, and

WHEREAS, this announcement also includes a note that the University will regularly review the graduate stipend minimums and their alignment with the University's estimated living expenses for graduate students⁴; and

WHEREAS, while this adjustment is significant, it falls short of the cost of living by Chancellor Plowman's own account⁵, meaning that continued investment into graduates students is necessary; and

WHEREAS, the speedy implementation of this minimum stipend increase and regular review of estimated living expenses is the direct result of the GSS's passage of the 'Resolution

¹<https://provost.utk.edu/2023/08/minimum-graduate-student-stipends-are-being-raised-effective-immediately/>

² ibid

³ ibid

⁴ ibid

⁵<https://gss.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2023/09/Knox-News-Article-9.15.23.pdf>

Addressing the Need for Increases in Graduate Stipends and the Establishment of Cost of Living Adjustments' passed on May 9, 2023⁶; and,

WHEREAS, this minimum stipend increase is also the result of years of advocacy and conversations by Graduate Student Senate leaders and senators with campus administrators; and,

WHEREAS, this minimum stipend increase is also the result of conversations and support by Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Dixie Thompson, Interim Vice Chancellor Allen Bolton, Faculty Senate Leadership, and many more campus partners.

THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the UT Graduate Student Senate extends our sincere gratitude to the administration at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville for the decision to increase minimum stipends and their commitment to enhance the graduate student experience; and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED, that this decision represents a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to support the academic and professional pursuit of our graduate students and will empower and enable our students to pursue their educational goals with fewer financial burdens; and

BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED, that this decision highlights the administration's dedication to our shared values of advocacy, community, and engagement, and reflects our vision⁷ for a brighter future for our institution; and

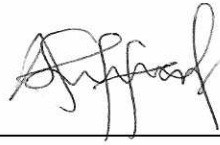
BE IT FURTHER PROCLAIMED, that it is a priority of the UT Graduate Student Senate to see stipends further adjusted towards the cost of living; and

BE IT FINALLY PROCLAIMED, that this document be distributed to the Office of the Chancellor, Office of the Provost, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, the Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Life, Faculty Senate Leadership, and the Student Government Association.

⁶<https://gss.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2023/05/A-Resolution-Addressing-the-Need-for-Increases-in-Graduate-Stipends-and-the-Establishment-of-Cost-of-Living-Adjustments-Passed-and-Signed-05.09.2023.pdf>

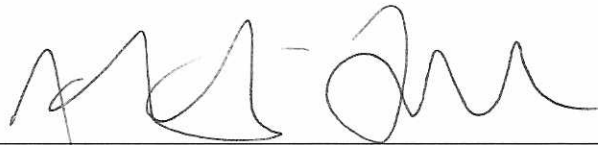
⁷<https://gss.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/55/2023/09/Open-Letter-on-2023-2024-Graduate-Student-Senate-Vision-Passed-and-Signed-08.31.2023.pdf>

Adopted by the Graduate Student Senate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville on the twenty-first of September in the year two thousand and twenty-three.



Samuel Affar
Senate Chair

The Graduate Student Senate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, President, does hereby approve / refuse to approve this resolution.



Katherine Trubee
President

9-25-23

Date