

REVISED September 25, 2007

**State University System
Graduate Student Support
2008-09 Budget**

Note: On August 27, 2007, the State University System Council of Academic Vice Presidents met, discussed this potential budget issue, and expressed unanimous support for it. However, several questions were raised as to whether such a program should cover graduate fellows. Board staff members have worked with the Council of Graduate Deans to determine the level of need if these individuals are included and to identify an appropriate distribution model for funding this form of support for graduate students.

Total budget need, as recommended by the SUS Council of Graduate Deans: \$16,830,000 for graduate assistants, with an additional \$4,027,500 if graduate fellows included, for a total of \$20,857,500.

- Graduate assistants provide the foundation for much of the state universities' cutting-edge research and provide valuable and competent assistance to faculty in teaching laboratory skills and beginning undergraduate courses. To produce more graduates from advanced degree programs, particularly in targeted areas, and to achieve the goal of building world-class academic programs and research capacity, the State University System must offer competitive incentive packages to attract and retain the best and brightest graduate students.
- In their most recent research, the SUS Student Health Insurance Task Force discovered that all 34 of the AAU public institutions offer a health insurance subsidy for their graduate assistants, with more than 70% covering 100% of the cost.
- In fall 2006, the SUS employed 14,675 individuals to serve as graduate research associates, graduate research assistants, graduate teaching associates, graduate teaching assistants, and graduate assistants for ten hours or more per week (with 7,765 working 20 hours or more per week). The SUS also enrolled 2,685 graduate fellows (with 1,264 receiving fellowships equal to or greater than \$2,000 per semester).
- Funding received as a result of this LBR will be distributed to universities based on the most recent data available at the time of distribution. Allocations for the graduate assistant support will be based on the number of graduate assistants (graduate research associates, graduate research assistants, graduate teaching associates, graduate teaching assistants, and graduate assistants) working between 10 and 20 hours per week and the number working 20 or more hours per week. If graduate fellows are included, the allocations will be based on the number of graduate students receiving fellowships up to \$2,000 per semester and the number of graduate students receiving fellowships equal to or greater than \$2,000 per semester.

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- This investment will allow the state universities to recruit better graduate students, which in turn will increase the quality and quantity of research performed, and the competence of students and graduates at all levels.