

R F2017.09

A Resolution in Support of the Creation of Ten Graduate Student Staff Assistant Positions to Aid in the Implementation of the LSA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan

A bill for the consideration of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government

4 October 2017

Sponsors: Nicholas Fadanelli & Lorraine Furtado

Whereas, the mission of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government (hereafter LSA SG) is to “actively seek the voices of LSA students and advocate their interests to improve academic and non-academic life”;¹ and,

Whereas, in March 2017, the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (hereafter LSA or the College of LSA) released its finalized Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (hereafter DEI) Strategic Plan, outlining over 100 programs to be conducted within the next five years to address issues related to DEI;² and,

Whereas, the programs outlined in the LSA DEI Strategic Plan span across the College of LSA, ranging from improving resources for transfer students, minimizing differences in access to resources due to socio-economic barriers, improving the Race and Ethnicity Requirement, and reforming Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) courses and departments in the College of LSA;² and,

Whereas, the College of LSA and the University of Michigan at-large both utilize graduate student labor, in the form of Graduate Student Instructors (hereafter GSIs), Graduate Student Staff Assistants (hereafter GSSAs), and more, to function both inside and outside the classroom; and,

Whereas, initiatives around diversity at the University of Michigan, especially those regarding course instruction, often rely on graduate student employees, particularly those from marginalized identities, to implement - frequently requiring graduate student employees to go above and beyond their expected hourly contribution and job descriptions to accomplish;³ and,

Whereas, the sensitive political atmosphere regarding issues of diversity, and some of the programs to be implemented as part of the University and LSA DEI Strategic Plans, as well as the potential for additional

¹ The Constitution of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Student Government. Article II

² College of LSA DEI Strategic Plan <https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/lsa-site-assets/documents/dei-documents/2017-Feb22-UM-LSA-DEI-plan-full.pdf>

³ UM Graduate Employee Organization Letter to LSA Associate Dean Fiona Lee <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y6aWc6fwjYF--joYbEtvzS0JC9DzYb0gMaXci-rVVv8/edit>

training for individuals working on them, makes utilizing temporary workers in the place of permanent workers to accomplish these tasks infeasible;⁴ and,

Whereas, the overworking of current graduate student employees, particularly GSIs, in order to fulfill DEI work is directly against the interests of undergraduate LSA students, as it could lead to negative impacts on classroom learning environments for undergraduate LSA students; and,

Whereas, the successful implementation of the LSA DEI Strategic Plan provides immense benefits to the undergraduate LSA student body; and,

Whereas, the University of Michigan Graduate Employee Organization (hereafter GEO) has proposed the creation of ten GSSA positions in the College of LSA specifically to aid in the implementation of the DEI Strategic Plan;³ and,

Whereas, amongst graduate students there is great demand for these positions, with over 70 individuals already expressing interest in the positions should they become available;^{3,5} and,

Whereas, a number of the College of LSA's departments have already stated they are willing to aid in covering the costs associated with these additional hires in order to stimulate the implementation of DEI work in their departments, greatly reducing the costs to the College of LSA.⁶

Be it therefore resolved, LSA SG supports UM GEO's proposal to create ten GSSA positions in the College of LSA for the implementation of the LSA DEI Strategic Plan; and,

Be it further resolved, LSA SG supports having departments partially fund GSSAs located in their departments for DEI work, and for departments requesting these GSSAs to stipulate major DEI projects and initiatives they plan on having the GSSAs work on; and,

Be it finally resolved, the sponsors of this resolution, in consultation with the Executive Board, shall send a copy of this resolution alongside a letter of support to LSA Dean Andrew Martin, LSA Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education Angela Dillard, and LSA Associate Dean for DEI Fiona Lee.

⁴ <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/mic/20-questions-about-dei-gssas-answered-0>

⁵ Are Graduate Students Interested in DEI GSSA positions (Appendix B)

⁶ Cost of LSA DEI GSSA figures (Appendix A)

R F2017.09 Appendix A

Cost of DEI GSSA at 0.50 fraction (20 hrs/week)		
	For Michigan resident, with no dependents	For Non-Michigan resident with dependents
Salary	\$9,868.50	\$9,868.50
Tuition	\$13,357.00	\$22,074.00
GradCare	\$980.00	\$2,708.00
Cost per term	\$24,205.50	\$34,650.50
Cost of DEI GSSA at 0.25 fraction (10 hrs/week)		
	For Michigan resident, with no dependents	For Non-Michigan resident with dependents
Salary	\$4,934.25	\$4,934.25
Tuition	\$13,357.00	\$22,074.00
GradCare	\$980.00	\$2,708.00
Cost per term	\$19,271.25	\$29,716.25

R F2017.09 Appendix B

Are Graduate Students Interested in...

DEI-GSSA POSITIONS?

As of June 5th **70** graduate students have expressed interest in applying for positions to assist in implementing their unit's DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION plans.

1/3 of interested applicants are Masters' students

2/3 are Ph.D. students



About *half* of interested applicants are in **LSA**

while the rest are in Engineering, Social Work, Law, SNRE, Public Health, and Education

23% of respondents said they would have applied to a DEI GSSA position in the past, had those roles been available

WHY ARE STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THESE POSITIONS?

- 1) Professional development gained from a DEI GSSA position**
- 2) Climate concerns within the respondents' departments**

36 people noted ways in which DEI aligns with their research and/or professional development. For many, DEI work was cited as important experience for continuing work in academia. For others, DEI work experience adds depth to their research

*Results based on an interest form distributed to GEO members that was not designed as a survey and the data are not representative of all graduate students, only those who filled out the form (not unlike a job posting).