

## A RESOLUTION OF THE DUKE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF A LIVABLE STIPEND FOR DUKE GRADUATE STUDENTS

### The GPSC General Assembly,

Whereas Duke Ph.D. students require a 12-month stipend of \$31,160 for 2018-19 to cover basic living expenses in Durham, NC;

Whereas there is a significant funding gap at Duke when the Duke Graduate School claims to offer all Ph.D. students a 12-month stipend of \$31,160 for 2018-19<sup>1</sup> while the actual annual stipend for many graduate students is closer to \$23,000<sup>2</sup>;

Whereas this financial burden discriminates against students from less privileged socioeconomic backgrounds.

Whereas this financial burden discriminates against international students, who are prohibited, by law, from seeking other forms of employment while studying in the United States;

Whereas the funding gap counteracts all students' ability to focus exclusively on their studies and thus complete their Ph.Ds in a timely fashion;

Whereas time to degree on average exceeds the funding package offered by the graduate school, the financial burden of students drastically increases beyond their fifth year;

Whereas at Emory University, a peer institution to Duke, the analogous graduate school stipend was recently raised to \$31,000 despite Emory having an endowment of \$6.97 billion<sup>3</sup>, compared to Duke's all-time high endowment of \$8.5 billion<sup>4</sup>;

Whereas the required living wage in Durham has increased 23% over the past five years while our stipends have gone up only 8% over the same period<sup>5</sup>, and

Whereas stipends lower than \$31,160 impose a financial burden on graduate students that increases their personal financial liability without consideration for the rapid rise in cost of living;

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<sup>1</sup> "Duke University Graduate School Tuition, Fees & Stipend", 10 Oct. 2018, [https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/tuition\\_fees\\_stipend\\_schedule.pdf](https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/tuition_fees_stipend_schedule.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Data gathered from actual pay stubs submitted by a representative sampling of humanities grad students

<sup>3</sup> "Emory to increase stipends for PhD students in Laney Graduate School", *Emory News Center*, 2 Oct. 2018, [https://news.emory.edu/stories/2018/10/upress\\_lgs\\_announcement/campus.html](https://news.emory.edu/stories/2018/10/upress_lgs_announcement/campus.html)

<sup>4</sup> "Duke Endowment Gains 12.9%; Value Hits Record \$8.5 Billion", *Bloomberg*, 29 Sept. 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-29/duke-university-endowment-gains-12-9-as-value-hits-8-5-billion>

<sup>5</sup> "City of Durham's Livable Wage Rate History," from 2013-2018, <https://durhamnc.gov/3695/Livable-Wage-Rate-History>

now, therefore be it:

Resolved, that Duke University ensures that:

1. stipends for doctoral students are comparable with competitive institutions;
2. the Duke Administration consult with faculty members in stipend-granting graduate programs about how to support graduate students with 12-month stipends that are at least \$31,160; and
3. the Duke Administration institutes a stipend floor where all graduate student stipends are at least \$31,800 for the 2019-2020 academic year (as communicated in the TFE schedule<sup>6</sup>).
4. In order to promote transparency, the Duke administration releases detailed information regarding stipends and fees across all departments within the University.

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<sup>6</sup> "Duke University Graduate School Tuition, Fees & Stipend", 10 Oct. 2018, [https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/tuition\\_fees\\_stipend\\_schedule.pdf](https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/tuition_fees_stipend_schedule.pdf)