



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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GRADUATE ASSISTANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE **Monday, February 4, 2013, 12:00 noon** **2124 Lee Building**

AGENDA

- 1) Welcome and introductions
- 2) Meet and Confer
- 3) Cost of retaining intellectual property rights
- 4) Support for international student visa issues
- 5) University childcare options for dependents of GAs
- 6) GA stipends
 - a) Comparability with peer institutions (Big Ten)
 - b) Variations across campus
- 7) Notification of teaching assignments for TAs
- 8) Communications between RAs/TAs and departments

GAAC NOTATIONS ON AGENDA ITEMS

- 3) It's difficult (or prohibitively expensive) for grad students to retain intellectual property rights to the work they publish. The university could stand up for us by pressing publishers to relax their restrictions and make open-access more financially feasible.

- 4) Foreign students get little (or no) university support when trying to get/retain student visa status. We want the university to provide counsel/support for students.
- 5) There are no university-supported options that we know of that offer daycare for GAs with young children. The university could work to offer on-campus daycare, even if (and especially if) the rates had to be comparable to those of outside daycare providers.
- 6) We're concerned that our stipends don't reflect the cost of living in college park. For some departments—particularly those in the humanities and the social sciences—it's difficult to live on current stipend rates. We'd like to know how departmental stipends compare to those in other Big Ten Schools, and we'd like to explore options for making sure that all graduate students are earning a living wage, regardless of department.
- 7) We are concerned that TAs in some departments are not given timely notification of their teaching assignments. In some cases, TAs are notified less than two days before classes start. This makes it difficult for TAs to plan for the semester, and negatively affects TAs and undergraduate students, because these TAs can't fully develop lesson plans, particularly for the first weeks of the semester.
- 8) We are concerned that existing mechanisms to address issues faced by RAs/TAs with regard to interactions with faculty, especially their advisors are ineffectual. Anecdotal evidence from several students suggests that students often have to stay silent and suppress their issues to avoid dealing with departmental bureaucracy and politics. There has to be a fair, unbiased and effective way to cope with such issues.