

May 12, 2021

Lori Kletzer  
Campus Provost/Executive Vice Chancellor

**Re: Graduate Student Cost of Attendance and Living Calculator Report**

Dear CPEVC Kletzer,

The Senate Executive Committee has reviewed the September 2020 “Report from the Graduate Student Cost of Attendance and Living Calculator Project,” as well as the Committee on Planning and Budget’s recommendations that grew out of its assessment of that report (March 8, 2021). Both documents are attached.

SEC enthusiastically endorses CPB’s first and most fundamental recommendation: “the need for UCSC to further bridge the gap between current ASE salary + housing fellowship and COA needs.” The \$2,500 housing fellowship was an important step in the right direction, but it does not go nearly far enough to address graduate students' needs.

We also enthusiastically endorse CPB’s recommendation that some kind of COA/COLA calculator, which can provide detailed information on actual marketplace costs of housing and goods in our local area, should be used to supplement the self-reported survey data in the system-wide Graduate Cost of Attendance Survey. Such a calculator, we believe, is an essential tool both for prospective students and various UCSC stakeholders.

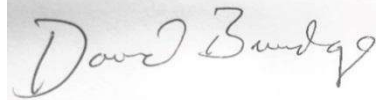
We further agree that a COA/COLA calculator should use a range of cost-estimates, rather than midpoints, but beyond that (like our colleagues on CPB), we do not feel we are in a position to critically assess the methodologies underlying various estimates.

On one point, we would like to modify the recommendations offered by CPB. Rather than a “Senate assessment committee” (CPB recommendation #2) and a separate “standing committee” (recommendation #4), SEC recommends the establishment of a single administrative-senate committee (or, alternatively, an administrative committee that meets jointly with a standing senate committee like CPB). This body would both arrive at, and then annually update, COA estimates. This committee should also address how to support “non-traditional” students and/or students with greater financial needs.

SEC believes that with the release of the final report of the Joint Senate-Administration Working Group on Graduate Education (to be discussed at the May 19 Academic Senate meeting) and with the imminent appointment of a permanent Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, the time is right to deal head on with the difficult issues raised by the 2020 COLA strike. As the CPB assessment so eloquently notes, “there is an urgent moral imperative to resolve these matters.”

We appreciate your attention to our recommendations.

Sincerely,  
David Brundage

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Brundage". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

On behalf of Senate Executive  
Committee

cc: Chancellor Larive  
Quentin Williams, Acting Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies  
Donald Smith, Chair, Graduate Council  
Dard Neuman, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget