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Dear Colleagues:

Re: Teaching Assistant Resource Allocation Methodology Changes

Consistent with our discussions at the Deans Advisory Council, we will be revising the Teaching Assistant Resource Allocation methodology effective with the 2014-15 allocation cycle. The revised methodology continues the principles established in 2008-09 of aligning resources with the different pedagogical demands across broad disciplines, while augmenting total TA resources to improve student/TA ratios and enhance undergraduate instruction. At the same time, the additional TA support is allocated in a way to incentivize growth in doctoral and summer enrollments, and promote the use of graduate student instructors.

I appreciate your input, as well as the comments provided by both the Vice Provosts and the Committee on Planning and Budget, in the development of this enhanced TA funding model. This feedback helped shape and inform the final outcome.

Base Allocation: The revised TA allocation methodology continues to calculate annual incremental adjustments to each division’s TA allocation based on shifts in Fall-Winter-Spring undergraduate enrollment targets using the ratios established in 2008-09. The base adjustment has been simplified by removing the constraint on changes to the size of the total TA pool (previously fixed at a 44.1 ratio). The new method resets the Division’s TA base to existing budgets, net of FTE returned for budget cuts. Any TA FTE that have been restored with divisional resources are included in the Division’s TA base. See Table 1 on the attachment for divisional ratios and the new TA base.

In addition to the usual adjustments based on Fall-Winter-Spring undergraduate enrollments, the new model increases the level of funding provided for teaching assistants. $1.25M has been earmarked over the next two years to improve student/TA ratios and allocated to encourage growth in doctoral, MFA and summer enrollments, as well as use of GSIs. Beyond the two-year phase-in, meeting our enrollment goals could ultimately lead to nearly 60 additional TA FTE by 2021.

Doctoral/MFA Growth Augmentation: Allocations for supplemental TAs for graduate growth will be based on prior-year actual PhD and MFA enrollments to minimize the lag time between
enrollment changes and corresponding budget adjustments. The allocation adjustments will be weighted so that those divisions that have less access to extramural funding for graduate support will receive a greater level of TA support. After the two-year phase-in period, annual incremental adjustments will be made for PhD and MFA enrollment changes. In 2014-15 a small pool of funding will be reserved for VP/DGS Miller to conduct a pilot program aimed at encouraging greater use of GSIs on campus.

Summer Session Growth Augmentation: Allocations for supplemental TAs for undergraduate summer enrollment growth will be based on actual enrollments for the prior summer using the same divisional ratios as fall/winter/spring. After the two-year phase-in period, incremental annual adjustments will be made for enrollment changes. It is important to note that while this allocation is based on summer enrollments, the funding is intended to support instruction during the academic year. Summer Session will continue to receive resources to support TAs in summer and will fund those costs directly. Also, the purpose of this allocation is to encourage greater use of Summer Session and increase summer enrollments. Enrollments should not simply be shifted from fall/winter/spring to summer.

It is essential that you communicate the purpose of these changes clearly to your departments and how they fit with overarching campus goals. Departmental faculty will be making numerous decisions that impact how successful these allocations and incentives are toward meeting the goals. The more faculty understand the link between their actions, resource allocations and the impact on campus goals, the higher the probability that there will be better decision making.

Lastly, the undergraduate overenrollment supplemental funding will continue and is another source that may be used to fund teaching assistants, graduate student instructors, and other instructional faculty. Each division has the flexibility to direct that resource between instructional needs to best meet their specific circumstances.

Sincerely,

Alison Galloway
Campus Provost and
Executive Vice Chancellor

Enclosure

cc: Assistant Deans
Vice Chancellor Delaney
CPB Chair Friedman
Vice Provost and Dean Hughey
Vice Provost Lee
Vice Provost and Dean Miller