

Proposition: 6-14/15

Title: A Memorial Requesting/Demanding a Change in Policy Regarding Graduate Assistant Pay Schedule

Sponsors: Gary Rayson (A&S), Liz Schirmer

**Proposed
Committee:**

**Assigned
Committee:** University Affairs

Passed ADAC:

Passed DAC:

Endorsed by URC:

Endorsed by Graduate Council:

Proposal: It is requested that the administration change the current policy regarding payment of graduate assistants to enable them to receive their initial paycheck starting with the first pay period after completion of the hiring process. This will consist of 1/9th of their semester compensation, less any taxes and payroll deductions, of the semester for those supported by a one semester contract, 1/18th of their nine-month compensation for those students supported for the academic year, or 1/24th of their compensation for those hired for the calendar year (each check would include all required or authorized deductions).

Rationale: This is to address the current policy that delays compensation to graduate assistants until 3-4 weeks after they initially come to the campus. These students, foreign and domestic, come needing to secure a place to live (i.e., rent/security deposit), secure utilities (security deposit), and acquire food to eat for 3-4 weeks before they receive their first pay check from the University (for employment that they are assured in their respective letters of acceptance and assistantship offers). Given that these students are not paid hourly (i.e., require a time sheet), the amount of each check is known from the beginning of the semester. Delay of this initial paycheck is an unnecessary hardship imposed by the present policy. The presence of a final check two weeks following the termination of their contract does not address this situation. This is compounded by required “re-hiring” of each of these students (hired on a semester or academic year time line) each semester of academic year. Concerns in the past included those new students who would accept a teaching assistantship but would then elect not to attend NMSU after employment processing. As these are an exception, it is requested that an alternate procedure be developed that does not penalize the majority of our graduate students supported by assistantships.