



**MEMORANDUM**

**January 24, 2002**

To: Dr. William Flores, Provost  
From: Roy C. Rodriguez *RJR*  
Subject: Graduate Assistant Allocations

*original growth model*

Attached you will find the final report from the Graduate Council on the matter pertaining to **Graduate Assistant Allocations**. As you will see, the report is rather extensive and displays many hours of excellent work by the committee.

The Executive Summary overviews the main elements of the report fairly well. I ask you to pay particular attention to items 4 and 5 in the Executive Summary. The Council is very concerned that the College of Health and Social Services is extremely under represented in GA allocations. In addition, they want the Graduate Dean much more involved in the allocation of GA's, generally.

The main report gives some interesting information on the current allocation of GA's in the University. In addition, the Council came up with an equation for future allocations (the equation is relatively simple). Most importantly, however, the Council discovered that the College of Engineering is, currently, overstaffed with GA's by 19. The 19 GA's was devised by administering the new equation on the College of Engineering's current enrollments. The Council recommends that some, if not all, of these 19 GA's be redistributed to other colleges (especially HSS).

As you might imagine, the Council is recommending a substantial increase in GA positions. The increase (up to as many as 76 new GA positions) is based on an optimal number that would meet the enrollments of each college.

I am requesting that you place this issue as an agenda item at a Academic Dean's Council sometime this semester. However, I would like to discuss this with you before it is placed on the agenda.

Final Report of the  
NMSU Graduate Council  
Regarding Graduate Assistant Allocation  
December 2001

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

After thoughtful consideration of the benefits graduate assistants (GAs) provide to support the university's academic mission and goals, timely measures that reflect current needs of the NMSU colleges and that are directly related to teaching, and the feasible sources of funding, the Graduate Council makes the following recommendations:

- 1) The current system for graduate assistant allocation is antiquated and seriously flawed. It must be replaced.
- 2) The Dean of the Graduate School should implement a GA allocation formula that can be fairly applied to NMSU Colleges, that relies on NMSU College Deans to equitably allocate GA positions among internal departments, and that addresses the adequate number of GAs needed to support the academic mission and goals of the university.

The GA allocation formula recommended by the Graduate Council includes provision for:

- a) A minimum of two (2) GAs for each distinct graduate degree program approved by the Commission on Higher Education in each NMSU College; and
  - b) An additional GA for every 38 FTE undergraduate and graduate students in each NMSU College based on average student credit hours (SCH) generated over the prior three years.
- 3) NMSU should make every effort to provide more graduate assistants to the NMSU Colleges in need as determined by the GA allocation formula.
    - a) The GA allocation formula indicates the need for an additional 57 to 76 GA positions in order to bring all Colleges to an adequate level dictated by the formula. The exact number of additional GA positions required depends on the extent to which any or all of the 19 positions currently allocated to the College of Engineering in excess of the level indicated by the formula are reallocated to other colleges.
    - b) The Graduate Council advises against any precipitous or substantial reduction in the number of GAs allocated to any college that might be of detriment to existing academic programs. Reallocation should be accomplished over a period of time to allow programs to respond.

c) The Graduate Council encourages the university to demonstrate the institutional priority and support of high quality undergraduate and graduate programs by investing monies for additional GA positions. A small portion of the "last chance to buy out" for faculty retirements may provide a source of funding for additional GA positions in 2002.

4) The College of Health and Social Services, which currently has the lowest proportion of GAs relative to need of any of the NMSU Colleges, should be given special consideration in GA allocation decisions. Providing this college with 10 GAs above the 7 GAs currently allocated should be given first priority;

5) Primary responsibility for implementing the recommendations for graduate assistant allocation rests with the Graduate Dean, using the formula presented in the report. The Graduate Dean should consider the results of the formula, in terms of both proportions and the absolute number of GAs needed to reach an adequate level, when deciding how to allocate new GA positions and reallocate existing GA positions. Additionally, the Graduate Dean should have sufficient discretion in applying the formula to reduce the negative impact on academic programs when the formula indicates the need to reallocate a substantial number of graduate assistantship positions from a particular college.

6) The NMSU Graduate Council shall be responsible for providing on-going advice to the Graduate Dean and conducting periodic review of the GA allocation formula and its application. This responsibility will be assigned to a standing sub-committee created for this purpose.

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## HISTORY

In 1999, a sub-committee of the Graduate Council was appointed to examine the past, and then current, method for allocating GAs to departments in the various NMSU Colleges. This sub-committee developed and recommended a multiple regression model to determine the number of GAs allocated to each department. Various alternative models were proposed to the Graduate Council for further consideration. The Graduate Council approved these recommended models in March 2000, but the Deans' Council did not support implementing any of them. Failure to implement any of the multiple regression models in Spring 2000 appeared to be related to the numerous alternative models proposed and over-reliance on past history in all the recommended models.

## REPRESENTATION IN DECISION MAKING

The Graduate Assistant Allocation Committee (GAAC) appointed in Fall 2000 did not initially include representatives from each NMSU College. While the GAAC met during Fall 2000, activities focused on information gathering until January 2001. At that time, additional GAAC members were appointed assuring that each NMSU College was represented in making decisions about the GA allocation process.

## EARLY UNDERSTANDINGS

### The Role of the College Dean in GA Allocation

GAAC members decided that a GA allocation formula should determine the overall number of GAs for each College rather than specifying how GAs should be allocated to college departments. While a GA allocation formula could be used to allocate GA positions among departments, the GAAC considered the interests and activities of the departments to be so varied that they could not be reasonably reflected in a formula without in-depth analysis beyond GAAC available resources.

## The Approach to Examine GA Allocation Issues

The GAAC members agreed that a conceptual approach to GA allocation issues would foster the collaborative development of a GA allocation method that was fair and reasonable. While the present number of GAs was fixed due to financial constraints, GAAC members recognized this did not mean that the present number of GAs was adequate to meet academic program needs. The GAAC did not support radical GA reallocations that would be detrimental to academic programs. However, the committee members did not want to spend a great deal of time and effort only to document past practice if a defensible rationale to do so was not apparent.

As an alternative approach, GAAC members agreed to examine how the need for GAs could be measured as a first step and then compare needed and current GA allocations later. GAAC members understood that this approach, while helping GAAC members to think broadly rather than provincially, could later indicate that the number of GAs needed might be greater or less than the current number of GA positions.

### PURPOSES OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

To examine the need for GAs, GAAC members initially examined the purpose, roles, and uses of graduate assistants in the various colleges. Each committee member interviewed department heads or graduate student coordinators in the colleges to gather information on how GAs contribute to the university's mission and goals. It was clear from these conversations that GAs apply their talents in varied ways to the university's benefit. GAs improve the quality of undergraduate education in a cost-effective manner. GA positions help the university attract and retain high quality new scholars in the various graduate programs. GAs conduct research and grant writing activities that improve faculty research productivity, enhance faculty contributions to the knowledge base, and facilitate the acquisition of external funds to the university.

In considering the varied benefits GAs provide and how GAs might be allocated, the GAAC considered a number of measures that might be applied to an allocation procedure (See Appendix A). In examining the various measures, the GAAC agreed that if measures only reflected the past experiences of the various Colleges, any implemented allocation formula would be a perpetuation of the past rather than a means to recognize current needs and priorities of the university. Consequently, the GAAC evaluated possible measures on three criteria:

- The measure should be unambiguous in its relation to teaching;
- The measure should reflect current needs; and
- The measure should be accessible in a timely manner.

After considering the pros and cons of various measures, the GAAC decided to emphasize the following two purposes of GAs in the development of an allocation method:

- 1) To provide teaching faculty with assistance in meeting the undergraduate teaching mission of the university; and
- 2) To support existing graduate programs by providing financial support for the graduate students in these programs.

The research conducted by GAAC and the recommendations presented in GAAC's draft final report were used as the basis for this report from the Graduate Council. ..

### FUNDING GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

At NMSU, GAs are supported by Instructional and General (I & G) funds that are allocated to and administered by the Dean of the Graduate School, by I & G funds that are allocated to and administered by college deans, or by externally acquired funds (e.g. grants and contracts) that are also administered by college deans.

The Graduate Council recognizes that the number of GAs supported from externally acquired funds indicates financial support available to graduate students who would not otherwise have a GA position and additional graduate assistant support available to the faculty and students within the various colleges. However, the Graduate Council also finds that the colleges should not be penalized for success in external funds acquisition by a reduction in the number of GAs allocated from the Graduate School. Colleges should not be penalized if the I & G funds that are allocated to and administered by college deans are then similarly used to provide additional GAs to support academic programs. The Graduate Council also recognizes that resource constraints do not allow rewards to colleges that are able and successful in external funds acquisition.

### GRADUATE ASSISTANT POSITIONS SUBJECT TO ALLOCATION

The Graduate Council recommends that the proposed GA allocation formula should be applied only to those GA positions supported by I & G funds and under the decision-making authority of the Dean of the Graduate School. Presently, 398 GA positions that meet this definition are allocated by the Dean of the NMSU Graduate School to various departments in NMSU Colleges.

## RECOMMENDED GA ALLOCATION FORMULA

A GA allocation formula was developed by the GAAC and has the support of the Graduate Council. The recommended GA allocation formula (the allocation formula, hereafter) should be recognized for what it is and can be – one means to make a complicated decision making process more consistent over time. The allocation formula determines an adequate number of GAs for each NMSU College rather than reallocating a set number of GA positions. This allocation formula quantifies the relationship between the two primary purposes of GAs and the need for GAs in the NMSU Colleges in a very simple manner. The recommended number of GAs for each college,  $N$ , is given by

$$N = xP + y(U/15 + G/9)$$

Where

$x$  is the minimum number of GAs allocated to each graduate program,

$P$  is the number of graduate programs in each college,

$y$  is a factor that represents the GA to student ratio,

$U$  is the average undergraduate student credit hours (SCH) per term over the past three years for each college, and

$G$  is the average graduate SCH per term over the past three years for each college.

Specifically, the Graduate Council recommends:

$$N = 2P + \frac{1}{38}(U/15 + G/9)$$

The base allocation ( $xP$ ) recognizes that all graduate degree programs should receive a minimum number of GAs and provides the minimum number of GAs to new graduate programs. In keeping with the GAAC formula, the Graduate Council recommends the allocation of 2 GAs for each graduate program in recognition of the minimum graduate student class size and the time to completion for the various graduate degrees.

The number of graduate programs in each college includes Masters programs (stand-alone and those leading to a doctorate) and doctoral programs leading to a specific degree approved by the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).

The GA to student ratio ( $y$ ) is a factor in the allocation formula that represents an adequacy standard. This adequacy standard recognizes the contributions to quality instruction made by GAs in relation to the current commitment of faculty to students at NMSU. By using an adequacy standard, the allocation formula can be applied to determine the need for GAs in each NMSU College by examining its current number of GAs as a proportion of the adequate number of GAs. The GAAC considered that the specific value recommended for the adequacy standard:

1. should recognize that today's GA to student ratios reflect past history, not current needs;
2. should recognize that precipitous and substantial reallocation among the colleges is to the detriment of current academic programs; and
3. could avoid reallocation among the colleges entirely by bringing all NMSU Colleges up to the same GA to student ration, but this would result in such a large number of additional GA positions required that the recommendation would not be financially feasible.

One additional GA for every 38 FTE undergraduate and graduate students is the recommended adequacy standard in the allocation formula. The adequacy standard implies that GAs will support two times the number of students when compared to faculty who have the primary responsibility for service to students. The faculty to student ratio (1:19) is reported in the NMSU 1999 Factbook (<http://www.nmsu.edu/Research/iresearch/factbook/99/>).

The undergraduate SCH (U) recognizes that one purpose of GAs is to provide teaching faculty with assistance in meeting the undergraduate teaching mission of the university. The average SCH per term is calculated over the past three years (six Fall & Spring semesters) for each college in the allocation formula. The average undergraduate SCH is divided by 15 credit hours, the recognized undergraduate full time equivalent (FTE) per term.

The graduate SCH recognizes the other purpose of GAs to support existing graduate programs by providing financial support for graduate students beyond the minimum two GAs for each masters and doctoral degree level program. The average SCH per term is also calculated over the past three years (six Fall & Spring semesters) for each college in the allocation formula. The average graduate SCH is divided by 9 credit hours, the recommended full-time credit hour load per term for GAs.

#### DETERMINING THE ADEQUATE NUMBER OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS FOR EACH NMSU COLLEGE

When the allocation formula is applied to current SCH and graduate program data for each NMSU College, the number of GAs recommended for adequacy and the number of GAs currently allocated can be compared. (See Appendix B for details). Table 1 shows that 57 additional GAs are needed to achieve adequacy even if 19 GAs from the College of Engineering are reallocated to other NMSU Colleges.



Table 1. Comparison of Adequate and Current Number of GAs based on the allocation formula.

NMSU College	Adequate # of GAs	Current # of GAs	GAs Needed (Adequate # of GAs less Current # of GAs) Increment/(Decrement)	Current # of GAs as a Proportion of Adequate # of GAs
Agriculture & Home Econ.	50	40	10	0.80
Arts and Sciences	240	200	40	0.83
Business Admin. & Econ.	52	52	0	1.00
Education	52	41	11	0.79
Engineering	39	58	(19)	1.49
Health and Social Services	22	7	15	0.32
Total	455	398	57	N/A

Table 1 illustrates the serious inadequacy of the total current number of GA's as well as the wide disparities in the adequacy of GA's in each of the colleges. According to the formula, NMSU needs 57 additional GA positions to adequately meet current needs, assuming that 19 positions currently allocated to the College of Engineering in excess of the level indicated by the formula are reallocated to other colleges. Table 1 indicates that the College of Arts and Sciences is in need of the largest number of GA positions (40) based on absolute numbers. While the sheer number of positions needed by the College of Arts and Sciences is notable, the proportions reported in Table 1 provide another measure of need that suggest a different focus.

The proportions reported in Table 1 represent the current number of GA positions as a percent of the adequate number as indicated by the formula. The varying proportions shown in Table 1 indicate that the most pressing need for additional GAs is in the College of Health and Social Services. The allocation formula indicates that presently the College of Health and Social Services is operating with fewer than one-third (32%) the number of the GA positions needed for an adequate level of support. The Colleges of Education, Arts and Sciences, and Agriculture and Home Economics are also below the adequate level, currently having roughly 80 percent of the adequate number of GA's each. The proportions reported in Table 1 also show that the College of Business Administration and Economics presently has an adequate number of GA positions, and the College of Engineering has more GA positions than the formula would assign.

In applying the formula to decisions regarding allocation of new positions and reallocation of existing positions, the Graduate Dean is encouraged to consider both the relative proportions of each of the Colleges as well as the absolute number of GA's needed to bring each College to an adequate level. The goal is to bring each college to at least the level indicated by the formula. Wherever possible, this will be achieved using new GA positions, however it is expected that some reallocation will be necessary. In making reallocation decisions, the Graduate Dean make every effort to avoid drastic cuts in the allocation for any college that could jeopardize that college's graduate programs.

#### A SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR AN INCREASE IN GA POSITIONS

The current GA needs of NMSU's six Colleges cannot be met by reallocation alone. As such, the first priority should be to increase the number of graduate assistant positions at the university.

One possibility for funding this increase is to use a portion of funds available from the "last chance to buy out" for faculty retirements. The investment of some of these monies in additional GA positions would provide an indication of the institutional priority and support of high quality undergraduate and graduate programs. In July 2002, these funds are estimated to be in the range of \$6 million. While the funds available from faculty retirements will also be needed to replace faculty who are retiring, the Graduate Council suggests that a small percentage of this money could be used for additional GA positions. Based on a stipend of \$13,200 for a Graduate Assistant in an academic year, roughly 15 percent of these monies could provide enough resources to bring all of the colleges at or very close to the level indicated by the formula.

#### A SPECIAL CASE OF NEED THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Using the allocation formula to examine the varying needs for additional GAs among the NMSU Colleges identifies that the College of Health and Social Services is a special case of need. While the Graduate Council does not support a precipitous and substantial reallocation of GA positions to the detriment of current academic programs, special consideration in allocating additional GA positions to the College of Health and Social Services is supported by the Council.

The proportion of current GAs to the adequate number of GAs determined by the allocation formula in the College of Health and Social Services is far below that of the College of Education, the college with the next highest level of need. The allocation of 10 additional GA positions to the College of Health and Services will treat it in a manner comparable to the other NMSU Colleges that also need additional GAs. Based on the \$13,200 GA stipend for an academic year, the cost of 10 additional GA positions for the College of Health and Social Services is \$132,000, roughly 2% of the estimated funds available from faculty retirements.

Even if the proposal to provide more graduate assistants to all the NMSU Colleges in need does not receive financial support, additional GAs to the College of Health and Services should be provided. If financial constraints do not permit additional GAs to be allocated now, the College of Health and Services should be given first priority in reallocation decisions and as future resources become available.

## REVIEW PROCESS

Graduate faculty should have a continuing role in GA allocation decisions because GA resources significantly influence the working and academic lives of faculty and their students. It is also important for each college to know the allocated number of GAs at least one year in advance to allow the colleges to plan for any anticipated changes in the number of GAs allocated. The most important priority in GA allocation decisions is to assure that academic programs have adequate GA support.

While the authority to make GA annual allocations to the Colleges shall rest with the Graduate Dean, the Graduate Council should maintain an advisory role. A standing sub-committee of three Graduate Council members should be established for this purpose. This sub-committee would:

1. review the application of the GA allocation formula on a regular basis;
2. review the GA allocation formula and the overall process periodically; and
3. evaluate new program requests or other proposals that may create a need for additional GAs or that may significantly influence future allocation of the limited number of GA positions available from the Graduate School.

Academic program decisions that influence future allocation of the GA positions available from the Graduate School are most commonly reviewed in Faculty Senate. The Graduate Council recommends that one member of the sub-committee be a member of Faculty Senate. If this is not possible, a mechanism to communicate with the Faculty Senate on these decisions should be implemented by the sub-committee.

## APPENDIX A. Measures Considered

In the development of these procedures, the GAAC considered a wide variety of possible measures for use in an allocation formula. Many possible measures were excluded because the information necessary to construct a measure did not meet the adopted criteria:

- The measure should be unambiguous in its relation to teaching (and use of I&G funds);
- The measure should reflect current needs; and
- The measure should be accessible in a timely manner.

Formula Funding: This measure was proposed as a way to account for the differences in costs of operating departments/programs. It was rejected because:

- 1) the funding formula weights are not frequently updated;
- 2) the funding formula weights have been adjusted in response to unique needs over time; and most importantly,
- 3) the committee could not identify or justify how the number of GAs was related to other operating costs.

SCH (student credit hours): Several committee discussions focused on whether SCH should be differentiated between upper and lower division and graduate student credit hours. Since it was decided that allocation would be at the college level, all student credit hours for a college were aggregated with different credit hours applied for graduate and undergraduate student FTE calculations.

Majors: The GAAC considered whether the number of majors in a discipline or college was related to the number of GAs allocated. While this initially appeared to be a reasonable relationship, finding informative numbers (some form of quantification) proved to be complicated. Also, it was not clear how different majors might need different numbers of GAs across disciplines. Consequently, majors were eliminated as a measure in the GA allocation formula.

Lab Courses: The sciences and social sciences offer lab courses that complement faculty lectures. The GAAC considered whether lab courses or sections could be quantified and used as a basis for GA allocation. The term 'lab' was found to be ambiguous and variously defined across colleges and even within colleges. Also it was found in discussions with department heads and others that not all "lab" courses are formally identified. Quantification and weighting factors could not be determined in a manner consistent with the committee's criteria.

Required Courses: The GAAC considered whether courses required for degree completion should be a measure in determining GA allocation. General education courses (i.e. English, Math, & Biology) are required and have large enrollments especially in lower division courses.

However, this information is not readily available and would require reviewing the requirements for all university degree programs. Also, there would be ambiguity in determining how to value required courses across disciplines. Therefore required courses did not meet the committee's measurement criteria.

Size & Number of Graduate Programs: The GAAC agreed that it is important for each existing and newly approved graduate program to have a minimum amount of support to assure its viability. The GAAC agreed that a minimum number of 2 GAs for each graduate program should be provided. The size of each graduate program was also incorporated in the recommended formula by including the number of graduate SCH converted to FTE based on the number of credit hours (9) considered to be full-time load for graduate students with assistantships.

Various Ratios Related to Instruction: The GAAC constructed various ratios and examined each to ascertain if any might serve as a viable measure in a GA allocation formula. These included FTE undergraduate and graduate students per FTE faculty member for example. While the time spent in this analysis was informative to committee members, none of the ratios met the committee's measurement criteria primarily because timely and consistent information was not readily available.

Reward for Faculty Research Effort: The GAAC considered if it were possible to reward productive faculty members for their efforts to bring additional funds to the university. However, defining productivity and determining criteria to justify an additional GA allocation could not be readily accomplished. In addition, it is common for external funding to include direct budgets for GA support. It was also becoming rapidly apparent to the GAAC that the current number of GA positions was not sufficient to provide a "reward" pool. As a result of this awareness, an original thought to "set-aside" GA positions that could be made available as a reward or for special requests was abandoned.

**Appendix B. Recommended GA Allocation Formula  
Calculation of the Adequate Number of GAs by College**

College	Graduate Programs (P)	Average Undergraduate SCH/Semester (U) Note 1	Average Graduate SCH/Semester (G) Note 1	FTE Undergraduates = U/15	FTE Graduates = G/9	Adequate # of GAs
Ag. & Home Econ.	13	11,167	1,203	744	134	50
Arts and Sciences	31	93,349	4,891	6,223	543	240
Bus. Admin & Econ.	5	21,364	1,627	1,424	181	52
Education	8	13,022	4,556	868	506	52
Engineering	7	11,902	1,431	793	159	39
Health & Soc. Services	3	7,097	1,278	473	142	22
Totals (Note 2)	67	157,902	14,986	10,526	1,665	455

Note 1: Average undergraduate and graduate SCH per semester – based on Fall 1998 through Spring 2001 semesters (6).

Note 2: Excludes undergraduate and graduate SCH attributed to the Graduate School.

Source: Institutional Research and Planning (SCH)  
New Mexico Commission on Higher Education (P)

**Appendix C. NMSU Program Counts By College**

College	Discipline (by Cost Center)	Programs		
		Masters (Stand-alone)	Masters (with doctorate)	Doctoral
AG	Ag. Science & Natural Resources	5	3	3
	Education (AXED)			
	Home Economics			
AS	Computer & Information Science		1	1
	Foreign Language & Literature	1		
	English Language & Literature	2		1
	Biology & Life Sciences (incl. molec. biology)		2	2
	Mathematics		1	1
	Physical Sciences	1	3	3
	Psychology		1	1
	Protective Services, Public Admin. & SW	2		
	Social Sciences & History	5		
	Visual & Performance Arts	3		
BA	Business Management & Administration Services	2		1
	Mathematics	1		
	Social Sciences & History	1		
ED	Education	2	3	3
EG	Engineering & Engineering Technology	1	5	1

HS	Health Professions & Related Sciences	2		
	Protective Services, Public Admin. & SW	1		

Total Masters Programs = 50  
Total Graduate Programs = 67

Source: New Mexico Commission on Higher Education, Working Draft of Higher Education Graduate Program Classifications



## **Revisions to Other Parts of the Report if Amendments are Adopted**

### **Table of Contents**

Remove Heading of “GAAC Proposal”

Change Heading of “Funding GAAC Proposal” to “One Source of Funding for Additional GA Positions”

Remove Heading of Related Recommendations (Prepare as a Separate Report/Memo)

Renumber pages to match text.

### **Typographical Errors**

Executive Summary Title should read “Final Report” not “Finale Report”

Page 4 the list following the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, should read “student ratio” not “student ration”

(If Table 2 remains in the document, the mathematical error for the College of Education should be corrected.)

## RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

In the interviews with GAAC members, department heads and GA coordinators expressed related issues and concerns about the work lives of GAs. In response, the GAAC formulated the following related recommendations:

### The Need for Training and Supervision

The Graduate School orientation is useful to first-time GAs. However, if GAs attended repeated orientations, the orientation is less useful. Consideration should be given to *providing a series of workshops for continuing teaching GAs that can provide support for and improvement of their instructional activities.* The Graduate School, the Center for Educational Development, or the colleges and departments could provide this training.

It is apparent that in some settings at NMSU, GAs teach or supervise undergraduate learning activities with considerable independence. This requires that there be consistent, timely, and adequate supervision by faculty to assure consistent quality in undergraduate instruction.

### Further Specification of Procedures and GA Working Conditions

General written procedures regarding working conditions for GAs may be helpful. Interviews identified that in some settings, GAs are not comfortable raising work-related concerns with faculty supervisors. Working conditions that may require clarification include: hours of work, weekend and night/evening work hours, notice of re-assignment to another faculty supervisor, notice of GA requests for re-assignment to different faculty supervisors.

### Faculty Mentor Responsibilities

The GAAC agreed that given the many benefits provided by the GAs to the university, faculty mentoring of GAs is an important responsibility. The GAAC recommends that there be checks and balances to ensure graduate students are treated fairly and equitably. It is the department's responsibility to ensure that adequate orientation, training, and supervision occur and that duties, benefits, and working conditions are consistent for GAs and support their development as emerging scholars and professionals. *Consequences for treating GAs unfairly should include losing GA positions.*

### GA Stipends, Tuition Reimbursement and Tuition Reductions

The GAAC supports further efforts to provide adequate GA stipends, tuition reimbursements or tuition reductions that will facilitate the recruitment and retention of the finest graduate students to NMSU graduate programs.