




Paul R. Peluso, Ph.D.  
Department of Counselor Education  
College of Education  
777 Glades Road  
Boca Raton, FL 33431  
tel: 561.297.3602  
fax: 561.297.2309  
[ppeluso@fau.edu](mailto:ppeluso@fau.edu)  
[www.coe.fau.edu/faculty/ppeluso](http://www.coe.fau.edu/faculty/ppeluso)

#### MEMORANDUM

To: University Graduate Council  
From: Paul Peluso, UGC Chair   
Date: February 24, 2016  
RE: UGC Discussion about Graduate College Budget Requests  
CC: C. Beetle, G. Perry, D. Floyd

On January 24, 2017, at the monthly University Graduate Council meeting, Dr. Deborah Floyd, Graduate Dean announced that budget requests will be due to the Provost's office on March 1, 2017 for Academic Year 2017-2018. A substantive and lengthy dialogue took place in the Council, which continued themes that the Council has addressed over this past year. These concerns apply to all of the graduate programs related to the vision for graduate education and support for graduate students, graduate student research, and other elements that affect the success of the graduate mission at Florida Atlantic University. It was decided that a memo, unanimously endorsed by the University Graduate Council, would be drafted in order to lend independent support for several initiatives that the Council feels are imperative to improving the lives of graduate students, as well as insuring the ongoing success of graduate programs. As you are aware, the University Graduate Council is a standing committee of the University Faculty Senate, and as such, we represent the voice and interests of the graduate faculty at the university, and we believe that these are cross-cutting amongst all of the colleges and respective graduate programs within them.

During this Academic Year, there have been several efforts made by the administration that have begun to address aspects of graduate student life, and graduate programs. In the Fall, the Graduate College increased the number of Fellowships available to departments to award to incoming students as an incentive for coming to FAU. These types of incentives are crucial to successfully recruiting the best students, and often programs at FAU have to compete with other universities (both out of state, and within the SUS) that can offer far more attractive financial packages. This hampers the success of graduate programs achieving their mission, as well as impacts the research mission of the university. The University Graduate Council urges the Provost and administration to increase the number and/or amount of fellowships that pass through the Graduate College to departments in order to provide competitive packages to recruit and retain the best graduate students.

Related to the use of fellowships to recruit graduate students, another issue that potentially affects *all* graduate students is the provision of affordable health care. The Council has been heartened to hear the Provost and President publically mention this as an important issue that they would like to see addressed in the near future. Recently in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, provision of graduate student health insurance has been recognized as an important recruiting tool that weighs heavily on the mind of graduate students. Given the recent ruling by the Federal government on the nature of graduate health insurance (vis-à-vis

the Affordable Care Act), but mindful of the fact that there will be overhauls of the ACA, we feel that the need for stable, affordable insurance will be even more important. The Council lends its full support to the administration in taking swift and decisive action on this.

During the Fall semester, 2017 the Graduate College initiated the first-ever "Three Minute Thesis" competition that spotlighted graduate student research in a round-robin competition format. This unique, and global, framework challenged students to get out of their research laboratories and engage the wider university community (and, in the case of the final round, the larger Palm Beach and Broward County communities) by creatively relating widely diverse and often complex research findings in an easily relatable way. Students discovered the power of distilling their research to its essence (in order to fit the three-minute time-frame), and gained critical experience in publically communicating their projects. The turnout of the university community was extraordinary, including students, faculty and administrators who competed, judged or merely attended in the audience. Given the overwhelming response and success (despite the modest allocation of funding for the program), the Council believes that this showcase of graduate research should be continued and expanded. Given the response in an admittedly tight time-frame from inception to completion, we can only imagine that it has the potential to grow exponentially. However, we are mindful that this will require a significant increase in the funding of the Three Minute Thesis. Given the value to students, as well as the value in highlighting the research mission of the graduate programs in the university, this can be a powerful marketing tool for recruitment of top-notch faculty and student to FAU. The Council strongly urges continuation of the Three Minute Thesis, and a commensurate increase in the funding of it.

In December, 2017, the Provost took the unprecedented step (at least in recent memory) of using a portion of the Performance monies awarded by the state to provide a "bonus" to graduate students of \$1500. This was wildly successful and according to feedback from various faculty and student sources, this increased student morale and fostered a sense of recognition of the importance that the university places on its graduate students and values the important work that they do in the classrooms and laboratories across campus. The Council encourages the administration to continue to make strides and put resources towards increasing graduate student stipends to remain competitive with other SUS universities as well as with other high research intensive institutions nationwide.

Finally, the Graduate College has been understaffed for some time. While the personnel currently in place have been doing work "above and beyond the call of duty", the Council previously acknowledged the need for a Development Officer as well as a Technology Support person who can assist with the data management of the graduate programs.

As budget requests are being considered, and mindful of the reality that there is more demand than possible resources, the University Graduate Council would like to extend its gratitude for all of the efforts that have been made in the past to support the graduate mission. At the same time, we would urge the administration to make supporting graduate students, their research, and Graduate Programs a high priority, as we strongly believe that this is the clear pathway to success for FAU to achieve its goals as laid out by the University Strategic plan and become the fastest improving public institution in the United States.

**FAU GRADUATE STUDENT PRIORITIES AND FUNDING SOURCES**  
**April 11, 2017**

**Priority**  
 (ranked in order of most important)

<b>Priority</b> (ranked in order of most important)	<b>Possible Funding Source</b>	<b>Metric/Strategic Plan</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>1. Compensation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E&amp;G Funds</li> <li>Grant funding</li> <li>Division of Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate College submitted a budget request to support equity adjustment, bonus, and recurring funds</li> <li>Encourage faculty and DOR to include competitive stipends in grant proposals</li> <li>Encourage DOR to set competitive standards for stipends that colleges must adhere to</li> </ul>
<b>2. Health Insurance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E&amp;G funds</li> <li>Grant funding</li> <li>Division of Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate College submitted a budget request to support this</li> <li>Ensure graduate representation or management of health insurance funds (separate from student affairs and undergraduate insurance)</li> <li>Encourage DOR to include insurance coverage in grant proposals</li> </ul>
<b>3. Funding for Scholarly Travel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A&amp;S funds</li> <li>Foundation Funds (donors)</li> <li>E&amp;G Funds</li> <li>DOR</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request for development officer who can assist with securing donors through 3MT and other events</li> <li>Graduate College submitted a budget request to support this</li> </ul>
<b>4. Funding for Scholarly Research</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A&amp;S funds</li> <li>Foundation Funds (donors)</li> <li>Division of Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request for development officer who can assist with securing donors through 3MT and other events</li> <li>Graduate College submitted a budget request to support this</li> <li>Ensure monetary awards research Day (DOR)</li> </ul>
<b>5. Dedicated Graduate Student Space</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A&amp;S funds</li> <li>Foundation Funds (donors)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure graduate student representation on planning committee for Student Union</li> <li>Request for development officer who can assist with securing donors through 3MT and other events</li> </ul>
<b>6. Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E&amp;G Funds</li> <li>Auxiliary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure graduate student representation on housing committee</li> </ul>
<b>7. Graduate Student Fees and Representation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Fee</li> <li>Distance Learning Fee</li> <li>A&amp;S Fee</li> <li>Transportation Fee</li> <li>Financial Aid Fee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure graduate student representation on fee committees</li> <li>Consider separate graduate fee accounts that are controlled by a graduate committee</li> </ul>
<b>8. Graduate Student Scholarships/Fellowships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division of Research</li> <li>E&amp;G Funds</li> <li>Foundation Funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metric 1 and Metric 8</li> <li>Boldness, Synergy, Brand, Quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate College submitted a budget request for additional funds</li> <li>Request for development officer</li> </ul>

Created in collaboration with current Florida Atlantic University graduate students, Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA), Student Body President, University Graduate Council, and the Graduate College.