



Boulder Faculty Assembly

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

BFA Diversity Committee Resolution on
BFA Support for a Self-Sufficiency Wage for Graduate Students at CU Boulder
BFA-R-1-020118 (with Friendly Amendments)

Whereas the Boulder-based Committee on Rights and Compensation (CRC) has identified that many of CU-Boulder's graduate students are paid only approximately two-thirds of a Boulder self-sufficiency wage standard¹; and

Whereas recent estimates of the cost of living in Boulder county place CU-Boulder's graduate students at a deficit of on average \$9500 per year²; and

Whereas graduate student compensation directly affects the ability of graduate programs to recruit and retain talented and diverse students; and

Whereas recent and planned increases in graduate student compensation are important steps in the right direction but still fall far short of Colorado's self-sufficiency wage standard³; and

Whereas graduate students -- in their multifaceted roles as students, teachers, and researchers -- make essential contributions to the research and teaching missions the University, enhancing both the intellectual and economic vitality of the University; and

Whereas the Chancellor of CU-Boulder has challenged us to "... engage, for the first time in our history, in a comprehensive effort to craft a strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusive excellence"⁴; and

¹ Based upon 9-month salaries; <http://bouldercrc.org/>, accessed 12/04/17, and <http://cclponline.org/our-issues/economic-self-sufficiency/colorado-self-sufficiency-standard/>, accessed 1/16/18; For information on the general concept of the self-sufficiency standard, see <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/node/3> ; The self-sufficiency standard for Boulder county in 2015 was estimated to be \$28,209 for a single adult (with no dependents): <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/Colorado> . That estimate does not include the unique fees that graduate students pay, but does include an allotment for health care and "miscellaneous".

² <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AYugEdHd3LmjXoOiR1wbiQ6T1RTP28w2AavZat2b-Q4/edit?usp=sharing> , data compiled in 2015 by the Committee on Rights and Compensation, accessed 12/05/17. Cost-of-living estimates therein were calculated using MIT's living wage calculator (<http://livingwage.mit.edu/>) and, before student fees are considered, are slightly less than the self-sufficiency standard noted above.

³ http://www.dailycamera.com/cu-news/ci_30024771/cu-boulder-graduate-students-demand-higher-wages-offset , accessed 12/04/17

⁴ <https://www.colorado.edu/studentsuccess/inclusive-excellence>, accessed 12/04/17



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Whereas adequate compensation is one of the keys to a vibrant, diverse, and equitable graduate program⁵;

be it now therefore

Resolved, that the Boulder Faculty Assembly urges CU-Boulder's leadership and administration to take even more decisive, aggressive, and rapid action to ensure that the combination of graduate student salaries and summer support meets or exceeds the Colorado self-sufficiency wage standard and to adjust salaries and support each year to meet or exceed this standard. The BFA recognizes that there is currently great heterogeneity across departments, units, and institutes in 12-month graduate student salaries and support. Reaching a self-sufficiency wage would likely occur through different mechanisms in different units.

⁵ <https://www.nature.com/articles/550333d> , accessed 12/04/17