

**GSG Referendum – GSG Fee – Factual Statement  
(Approved by assembly-Jan 11<sup>th</sup> 2006)**

**The current situation:**

Currently, the GSG’s constitution specifies an annual fee as a fixed amount (\$5), which is charged to every member of the Graduate Student Body (GSB) at the beginning of the academic year. The fee can only be changed by a referendum passed by the GSB.

**What do these amendments mean?**

The idea of the amendments is two-fold:

- a) to increase the “base” GSG fee to \$10 (instead of five) and
- b) to tie it to an appropriately calculated annual rate of increase.

To achieve this in an elegant manner, there are two separate amendments that are being brought forward for consideration.

The first amendment proposes an increase of the GSG fee to \$10 starting next academic year (collected Sept 2006). This amendment by itself does not account for any annual increase. The second amendment proposes that the fee be calculated as a particular fraction of (an average) monthly graduate student stipend. This way, the fee will be increased annually, at the same rate as stipends increase. There are two proposed fractions (1/175 and 1/350) depending on whether the first amendment passes or not, which would set next year’s fee close to \$5 or close to \$10. Stipend rates would be taken from the previous academic year.

**How is the proposed fee calculated?**

There are five major ways that students get paid by the University: fellowship stipends, pre-generals AI, post-generals AI, pre-generals AR and post-general AR. (These do not include external fellowships.). Also note that the AI/AR rates are currently published for a 10-month period, so we divide those rates by 10 to obtain monthly rates.

$$\text{GSG fee} = \text{fraction} \times [(\text{AI} + \text{AR})/2 + \text{Fellowship}]/2.$$

The particular fraction 1/350 (1/175) has been determined by taking into account the above number for 2005-2006 and keeping the calculated fee very close to the current value of \$5 (\$10).

<b>Amendment 1</b>	<b>Amendment 2</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Pass	Pass	The GSG fee starting in 2006-2007 will be 1/175 <sup>th</sup> of the amount described above. Eg. This would correspond to a fee of \$10.25 for the next academic year (2006-2007) and an annual increase thereafter tied to increases in stipends.
Pass	Fail	The GSG fee will be fixed at \$10 for all future years.
Fail	Pass	The GSG fee starting in 2006-2007 will be 1/350 <sup>th</sup> of the amount described above. Eg. This would correspond to a fee of \$5.13 for the next academic year (2006-2007) and an annual increase thereafter tied to increases in stipends.
Fail	Fail	GSG fee stays at \$5

**How does the GSG budget work?**

The Treasurer of the GSG drafts an annual budget in October which is amended and approved by the GSG Assembly. For the current year the expected revenue is \$9640, of which \$9400 comes from the GSG fee and the rest comes from income from our endowment account. Expenses are grouped into three subcategories:

- a) GSG initiated activities: Wine and Cheese, Valentines Party, Frolic in Frist, Alumni mixers, etc

- b) Co-sponsorship budget: Events organized by other student groups
- c) GSG operating expenses: Orientation BBQ, orientation mugs, attending the Ivy Summit, refreshments for Assembly meetings, GSG office expenses, etc.

The GSG has its own endowment account to which a portion of any surplus is deposited annually. This endowment is aimed at helping the longevity and financial stability of the GSG and currently provides a small portion of our annual budget.

Although the annual budget allocates all of the anticipated revenues to be spent, the GSG is often left with a surplus at the end of the year. The following are surplus amounts from recent years, but are only approximate since some expenses remain unresolved from previous fiscal years:

Amount Available in the beginning of 2002 Fiscal Year: ~\$ 4800  
Surplus Generated in 2002-2003 Fiscal Year: ~ \$ -4700  
Surplus Generated in 2003-2004 Fiscal Year: ~ \$ 3400  
Surplus Generated in 2004-2005 Fiscal Year: ~ \$ 2100

Overall Surplus(as a result of accumulation of all past years):~ \$6000

The recent surpluses can be attributed to a number of factors. Most prominently is under-spending on GSG initiated events. Our Social Chairs have been able to find co-sponsors and have run our large social events without spending all of the GSG funds available to them. Next, there are a number of line-items in the operating expenses which are reserved for potential expenses but often go unspent, for example: office supplies. There is also conference attendance (e.g. Ivy Summit) where we have been able to secure outside funds to offset our costs. The last category is co-sponsorship. Often student groups are granted funding which they do not collect, either because they did not need all of the money, or they missed the deadline to collect it. Also, since we do not know when groups will request co-sponsorship funds, we usually have a small amount leftover at the end of the year.

#### **Additional new sources of funds**

The Vice President for Campus Life, Janet Dickerson, has offered additional funds to supplement the GSG budget if graduate students vote to increase the fee. If the amendments pass, she will contribute a few thousand dollars from her budget to the GSG annually. She wants to encourage student-run activities on campus for graduate students and feels it would be useful for the GSG to distribute additional funds.

### Appendix 1: At what rate have stipends been increasing in recent years?

Year	% increase from previous year
05-06	3.15%
04-05	2.90%
03-04	2.92%
02-03	2.63%
01-02	7.38%
00-01	3.65%
99-00	6.09%
98-99	3.93%
97-98	11.53%
96-97	3.31%

Year	% increase from previous year
95-96	3.81%
94-95	3.32%
93-94	3.69%
92-93	5.17%
91-92	5.16%
90-91	5.14%
89-90	5.42%
88-89	11.04%
87-88	8.33%

This table shows the rate of increase of stipends over recent years, using the averaging proposed in the amendment. Note that there has been a steep increase in some years because the grad school suddenly increased one of the AI/AR/fellowship rates. The averaging procedure helps smooth out such irregularities.

### Appendix 2: Fees at other institutions:

Most of our peer-institutions collect much larger student government fees from graduate students than either our current \$5 or the proposed \$10. Similarly, the USG at Princeton charges undergraduates a larger fee, in addition to class dues and residential college fees.

- Brown: \$30/yr
- Columbia: \$30/yr
- Cornell: \$62/yr
- Dartmouth: \$45/yr
- Harvard: \$20/yr
- UPenn: \$70/yr
- Our USG fee \$60/yr

### Appendix 3: Partial listing of student groups that have requested co-sponsorship from GSG (in past 2-3 years)

- Association of Chinese Students and Scholars (ACSS)
- Association of South Asians in Princeton (ASAP)
- Black Men's Awareness Group
- Butler Committee
- CGSA
- Consortium of International Student Organizations (CISO)
- Graduate College House Committee
- Graduate Football Club
- Graduate Research Symposium
- International Festival
- Intervarsity/Graduate Christian Fellowship
- Princeton Committee for a Free Palestine
- Princeton Handbell Choir
- Queer Graduate Caucus
- Swing Club
- The Game