

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

The present system does not take into account the expenses of time, money, and spirit in order to pursue a graduate degree at the University of Maryland. One the essence of time, many student have to work extremely long hours to meet the deadlines their advisors and themselves set. The main issue at hand is understanding how long certain task will take. The length of time expected by the student is largely underestimated leading to stress. The expense of time and the incurrence of stress is only troubled more so by the cost. For some, the cost of not an issue. The graduate school, for those students fortunate to have complete tuitions remission, does well to provide students with the opportunity to explore the course work they so desire.

However, there are several rules that are simply arcane and or detrimental to the student. For example, my graduate research assistance-ship allocates me i believe 12 or 10 graduate credits covered per semester. However, the ludicrous fact is that if i were to take 9 credits or more, i pay mandatory fees per semester of \$800-\$850 while if i take 8 credit or less the mandatory fees are around \$450. Why is there such a drastic uptick of cost of mandatory fees? i have read the mandatory fees and although i agree with them in the way that it is myself and other supporting the many services UMD has to offer but i feel i am not getting my fare part when i decide to take 3 three credit course and am hit with \$800+ mandatory fee where as if I just could drop 1 credit id reduce that cost by nearly half.

On the topic of expense, the collective bargaining agreement is important also for transportation and parking. Some graduate student live off campus and therefore need to commute to UMD. Im not sure what others believe but i think the cost of parking for graduate students should be 0\$. WE should be provided a parking space along with our Assistance ship. At least, this decision for a "free" parking pass while "employed" should be addressed for graduate student. This is even more imperative in the day of COVID where carpooling is a risk for any individual in the car. Also, because of this many of my lab mates were bombarded with parking tickets for parking in the wrong spot on campus, performing our necessary duties as graduate students, while the campus is seeing probably only or less than 10% of the traffic it would see during a normal semester.

Finally, id like to end on spirit. The spirit of UMD is community. We are TERPS. We want to support one another within the community and just outside of it by our research and our own extracurriculars. The spirit is damaged if graduate students are not allowed to act as a community

as a whole. For this reason and the others outline above, i am submitting testimony of my support for this petition.

Sincerely,

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