

**Graduate Student Advisory Council
Fee Increase Proposal
March 25, 2003**

The current fee was established in 1995 - 1996 to support the Graduate Student Advisory Council. The Council serves Eastern's 1800 graduate students by reviewing graduate education policies and programs and insuring that graduate students have a voice in the graduate education enterprise on campus and at national professional associations. Below is a list of recent accomplishments.

- GSAC provided research and guidelines to assist the Dean with developing a plan to increase graduate stipends after stipend levels had been frozen for nine years. The plan implemented in 1999 has insured that stipends have increased in every academic program.
- GSAC provided the research and guidelines to assist the Dean with developing three graduate level awards. These include the Williams Travel Award, the Graduate School Research Award, and the Thesis Awards. These have become the most important forms of recognition for graduate students on Eastern's campus. These awards have brought local, regional, and national recognition to EIU's graduate programs.
- GSAC developed the graduate faculty mentor award. This award recognizes the contribution of graduate faculty members to the graduate education process and is the most important award for graduate faculty members.
- GSAC provided research and guidelines to the Commencement Committee to restructure commencement so that graduate students received recognition appropriate to graduate achievement.
- GSAC provided evidence related to assessment of fees for graduate assistants that was not equitable. As a result of their work, new fee procedures were adopted by billing to insure that fees are equitably assessed for graduate students.
- GSAC established procedures to insure that a GSAC member was named to the Council on Graduate Studies prior to the Council's first meeting insuring a voice in policy making and development.
- GSAC established the template and guidelines for the Graduate Exposition and Distinguished Awards Ceremony and has provided the leadership needed to establish a Graduate Journal showcasing graduate education accomplishments.
- GSAC members have been elected to regional councils of the National Council on Graduate and Professional Students. This achievement has provided regional recognition for EIU's graduate programs.

Originally, the \$1.00 graduate student fee was established to provide GSAC with the start up resources required to formulate the council and initiate participation in policy and program development and participation in the national organizations. GSAC has fulfilled its expectations and invested its fee resources

in ways that brought campus recognition to graduate education and brought local, state, and national recognition to Eastern's graduate programs.

A fee increase is requested in order to achieve the following goals:

- Support GSAC leadership so that minimally two representatives from GSAC can attend the annual national and regional meetings of graduate and professional students. This is essential to insure that the most relevant issues, policies, and programs are brought to the attention of the university.
- Support GSAC's Graduate Exposition and Distinguished Graduate Awards Programs. GSAC has established a 13 year legacy of effective graduate education programming. To maintain the current programs and to complete plans to publish the *Graduate Scholar*, a journal of graduate student achievements, and develop the Graduate Student Advisory Council Award of Excellence. This award would recognize the highest achievement in graduate scholarship and include a stipend and recognition.
- Support GSAC's initiative to collect survey data from all graduate students to expand its strategic plan for fiscal years 2004 to 2007. The survey data provides ongoing data and information to guide graduate development of graduate student services, programs, and policies.
- Support GSAC's initiatives to extend plans to increase assistantship stipends, provide additional benefits to graduate students and assistants, and insure that graduate education policies provide appropriate support for graduate students.
- Support GSAC's initiatives to establish bonds between Eastern Illinois University and graduate alumni by stronger and expanded programs for graduate alumni during homecoming and related campus events.
- Reduce GSAC's reliance on the Graduate School to subsidize all of its programs and resource needs. Currently the Graduate School provides significant support to insure that GSAC can execute all of its programs.