

PC Approval of PEOC AY2223 TA Distribution

The Policy Committee strongly supports the decision of the PhD Excellence Oversight Committee not to implement the TA line allocation algorithm in AY 2022-23.

Faculty trust in the algorithm extends only as far as their confidence in the validity of the performance measures and the appropriateness of the method's assumptions. The faculty lacks confidence in both, given the faulty accuracy and consistency of the performance data used for running the algorithm as well as the questionable appropriateness of relying on a baseline TA distribution that predates the PhD Excellence Initiative. Many faculty in turn perceive recent algorithmic redistributions as unfair and excessive in scope. Even more importantly, the faculty strongly believes that excellence in PhD education cannot be achieved via redistribution while the total level of TA funding remains depressed. The current level is insufficient to allow for investment in the best performing PhD programs without threatening the viability of smaller programs and programs whose performance is not properly captured by the measures.

In light of these concerns, the Policy Committee agrees with the decision by the PhD Excellence Oversight Committee to suspend use of a performance-based algorithm for setting the TA distribution for the 2022-2023 academic year. During this time, the committee should focus on facilitating adoption of other qualitative, non-allocation recommendations from the PhD Excellence Initiative and improving the algorithm approach. When the algorithm is once again implemented, rather than continuing to rely on the TA distribution for the 2020-2021 academic year, the Policy Committee expects the PhD Excellence Oversight Committee to apply an improved allocation method. Finally, the Policy Committee again urgently calls upon the Dean's Office to prioritize increasing the total level of TA funding as a necessary condition for fulfilling the College's educational mission and achieving the goals of the PhD Excellence Initiative.