

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
UDC RESOLUTION NO. 2023 - 39**

**SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA APPROVAL OF A
REVISED COMPENSATION SCALE FOR UDC UNDERGRADUATE
AND GRADUATE STUDENTS**

WHEREAS, pursuant to D.C. Code §§ 1-611.05, 1-611.11 and 1-608.58, the Board of Trustees shall provide for the periodic review of its basic compensation systems, including but not limited to, a review of the adequacy of the rates of basic pay for all employees including students; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to D.C. Code §1-611.1, the Board of Trustees shall provide continuing conformity with the principle of equal pay for substantially equal work; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to D.C. Code §§ 1-611.05, 1-611.11 and 1-608.58, the Board of Trustees shall cause to be submitted to the Council of the District of Columbia all proposed pay changes and adjustments to the compensation systems; and

WHEREAS, the University currently utilizes a flat compensation structure whereby all students employed by the University receive minimum wage regardless of their position, classification or capacity; and

WHEREAS, the minimum wage rate utilized by the District of Columbia increased from \$16.10 to \$17.00 effective July 1, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the University strives to ensure employment opportunities for students remain competitive and enriching as a valuable component of the student educational experience, and a cornerstone of campus life for both graduates and undergraduates, and

WHEREAS, the current compensation structure does not incentivize graduate students to seek employment on campus when their experience and maturity qualify them for job prospects with compensation above the minimum wage; and

WHEREAS, the University receives grants where the compensation may exceed the maximum compensation on the compensation table for students and the University must comply with the requirements of the grants.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the University of the District of Columbia approves a revised compensation table, attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, and approves compensation for students as required by grants received by the University.

Submitted by the Operations Committee:

August 24, 2023

Approved by the Board of Trustees:

September 12, 2023

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher D. Bell". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Christopher D. Bell

Chairperson of the Board

Exhibit A

Position:	Education Level:	Recommended Salary Range (Hourly)
Work Study Aide IV	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Work Study Aide III	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Student Worker	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Residential Life Advisor	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$25.50
Undergraduate Research Assistant	Undergraduate	\$17.00 – \$25.50
Graduate Teaching Assistant	Graduate	\$22.50 – \$27.00
Graduate Research Assistant	Graduate	\$22.50 – \$27.00

UDC Student Employment Compensation Proposal (FY 2024)

Executive Summary

The University of the District of Columbia proposes the creation of a student compensation table that applies competitive pay ranges for different student worker roles. There is currently no pay table for student workers; rather, all student employees at UDC receive minimum wage, regardless of job type, classification, or role. Effective July 1, 2023, the District minimum wage will increase from \$16.10/hour to \$17.00/hour and more increases are anticipated to keep pace with rising cost of living adjustments. Even with this increase to the minimum wage, there are copious job opportunities throughout the District that pay upwards of \$20 per hour which lure our students away from the benefits of campus employment and becoming more engaged with the academic community.

The University allocates roughly \$1M annually to support student employment through myriad sources including \$300k from federal work study (FWS), grants and sponsored programs, and a supplemental portion of local funding from the District government through the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Relying on the availability of current student employment funding, UDC seeks approval from the Board of Trustees to adopt a new pay table for student employment but will phase in the application of the pay ranges to mitigate the fiscal impact upon the institution. The first phase of implementation will accommodate the new minimum wage and provide more options for students funded through grants that allow for student remuneration above the minimum wage. With these parameters, there could potentially be about 300 students employed on grants that may afford them the opportunity to earn above minimum wage with the adoption of the new pay scale in FY '24. All student compensation must adhere to the specifications of the adopted scale regardless of what might be allowed by a particular funding source. As the implementation of the new pay scale unfolds in FY '24, UDC will continue exploring additional revenue sources to underwrite student employment and absorb the additional costs associated with increasing more student worker roles beyond minimum wage.

Rationale

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) is an academic institution that employs student workers to supplement their income and support routine institutional operations through student employment. At most colleges and universities throughout the country, work study and student jobs on campus are considered an integral part of the academic enterprise which richly complements formal instruction and degree attainment. Beyond their practical benefits, these experiences can also afford students active learning and research opportunities outside of the classroom, ultimately making them more marketable and competitive in the workforce. Student workers at UDC fulfill an array of roles from administrative and office work, to conducting research for specialized fields and disciplines. These opportunities accelerate knowledge attainment and help students cultivate the “soft skills” that are highly coveted in the workforce.

They also provide faculty and staff the rewarding experience of mentoring students as they strive to fulfill their ed goals. Within the wider scope of a campus community, work study experiences for students prove to be mutually beneficial for all and contribute to building morale and affinity between students, faculty and staff.

The report provides the rationale for a phased, adjusted compensation structure for student workers at UDC – one that is more aligned with market realities which can also support recruiting efforts and student satisfaction with their UDC experience. There is also a requirement that University pay scales align with the District’s new minimum wage which increased from \$16.10 to \$17.00 per hour, effective on July 1, 2023. Currently, the University has a flat compensation structure for student employment whereby all students earn minimum wage (\$16.10) regardless of their classification or job type. This “one-size-fits-all” practice undermines the University’s capacity to retain talented students in campus-based positions when job opportunities throughout the District, routinely provide compensation upwards of \$20 an hour. This is even more challenging when it comes to attracting and retaining graduate students who possess more experience and are typically qualified to receive more substantive compensation. The 754 student workers who were employed at UDC in 2022 can be categorized according to the following positions and corresponding education levels.

Job Position¹:	Total students in 2022	Education Level:
Work Study Aide IV	59	Undergraduate and Graduate
Work Study Aide III	65	Undergraduate and Graduate
Student Worker	419	Undergraduate and Graduate
Residential Life Advisor	12	Undergraduate and Graduate
Graduate Teaching Assistant	80	Graduate
Graduate Research Assistant	37	Graduate
Student Research Assistant	82	Graduate and Undergraduate

Based on information from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), annual rates for undergraduate student earnings range from \$10,160 to \$20, 485. Depending upon role and placement, graduate students typically earn between \$21,062 and \$56,492. These annual figures amount to an hourly rate for undergraduates from \$9.77 to \$19.70, while graduate students can potentially earn \$20.25 to \$31.01 per hour.

During the academic year (fall-spring semester) Federal law and relevant university policy limit undergraduate and graduate students to report no more than 20 work study hours per week. Outside of the academic year, undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to work up to 40 hours per week based on funding, while doctoral students can work between 20-35 hours per week. These caps on work schedules underscore the importance of compensating students at

¹ Student workers at UDC are still classified by different position titles in PeopleSoft and at one time these different titles corresponded to different funding sources (i.e., Title III) and pay rates. The compensation structure was flattened to raise all student compensation in alignment with the minimum wage which, at the time, was higher than what UDC was paying student employees.

competitive rates if the University expects them to rely on campus employment for a significant portion of their livelihood.

The salary range for student workers tends to fall between the minimum wage established by the Department of Labor Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and the minimum wage adopted by a respective state. The FLSA has maintained the federal minimum wage at \$7.25, but in January 2022, select states adopted a higher minimum wage of \$11.25 that was more reflective of cost-of-living realities in certain parts of the country. Similarly, at that time, the District of Columbia implemented a minimum wage of \$15.00 and in July 2022, the minimum wage in Washington, D.C. increased to \$16.10 which is what all UDC students currently earn. Higher educational institutions within and surrounding Washington D.C. offer student wages ranging from \$13.50 to \$25.50 per hour.

According to the Federal Student Aid Policy, the share of Federal Work Study (FWS) wages paid to a student may not exceed 75% of what students earn. The 75% applies to expenditures for FWS wages and does not include any administrative cost allowance. Schools must supply at least 25% of a student's total wages from nonfederal sources. However, UDC is among the institutions that have been exempted from this requirement and students can be compensated 100% from Federal Work Study. The Federal Work Study (FWS) program provides UDC with an annual budget of roughly \$300,000 which are supplemented grants, sponsored programs, and local dollars from the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) which averages a little over \$1M annually in total. To mitigate a substantial fiscal impact to the University, the immediate increase in student wages will be absorbed by available funding sources. Therefore, as UDC increases its hourly wage for students, it will result in fewer FWS funded student FTEs unless a supplemental source of support can be identified.

Adjusting the possible earnings for graduate students has similar sourcing implications. There are opportunities for researchers and program managers to develop budget requests to underwrite graduate research and teaching assistant positions that would be specific to a given sponsored program. However, even in instances when a Principal Investigator has been able to secure funding at a competitive rate for a research or teaching assistant, without the approval of an updated pay scale, the University has been unable to allocate these funds, significantly undermining our ability to attract new recruits to our graduate programs.

Recommendation

Based on the market realities for student compensation throughout the US and the increasing cost-of-living demands for the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area, UDC proposes a revised pay scale for student employees, including both undergraduate and graduate students. This recommendation would accommodate the new minimum wage for all students and extends the range for students, both graduate and undergraduate, whose positions are funded through grants that allow student workers to be compensated above minimum wage. The revised salary table would be implemented for FY'24 with all students receiving the updated minimum wage unless their pay rate is accounted for through a grant or some other source of external funding. At no time can student compensation exceed UDC's pay table for student employment.

This recommendation has been informed by input from numerous program managers and relevant institutional leaders from both the academic and administrative divisions including the deans, representatives from the Student Development and Success division, and the Office of Human Resources. The following recommendation for a revised student compensation structure is based on the following national ranges.

National Student Employment Compensation Ranges – NCES, 2022		
	Annual Salary Range	Hourly Wage Range
Top Earners	\$26,520 – \$32,250	\$25.50 – \$31.01
75th Percentile	\$22,880 – \$25,480	\$22.00 – \$24.50
Average	\$15,600 – \$22,360	\$15.00 – \$21.50
25th Percentile	\$10,160 – \$14,040	\$ 9.77 – \$13.50

To accommodate prospective increases in the local minimum wage and remain competitive with the regional market, UDC is proposing the introduction of salary ranges, rather than fixed rates, for all student employment assignments. The new structure aligns with the upcoming adjustment to the District minimum wage with a floor of \$17.00 and goes up to \$27.00 per hour for upper-level graduate students. For this initial phase of adjusting the student pay scale, only students whose position is underwritten by external funding can be considered for compensation above minimum wage – the position must be within the budgetary parameters of the grant and does not exceed UDC’s approved student pay scale for the position in question. Support and guidance will be provided for program managers and principal investigators once the new pay table is approved.

Following the approval of the new pay table for student employment, the University will continue exploring options for expanding compensation beyond grant-funded positions. A new source of funding would need to be identified and applied to cover the additional costs. The current adjustment in the minimum wage will result in fewer student workers available to UDC’s work-study program. UDC’s student body includes a substantial proportion of adult, non-traditional students, even at the undergraduate level. This proposed structure is flexible enough to provide a competitive rate for an adult learner who may be working to complete a bachelor’s degree yet has sufficient personal and professional experience to potentially merit higher compensation than would typically be characteristic of a traditional “work study” appointment.

Based on the internal breakdown of UDC student labor force:

Position:	Education Level:	Recommended Salary Range
Work Study Aide IV	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Work Study Aide III	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Student Worker	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Residential Life Advisor	Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$25.50
Undergraduate Research Assistant	Undergraduate	\$20.00 – \$25.50
Graduate Teaching Assistant	Graduate	\$22.50 – \$27.00
Graduate Research Assistant	Graduate	\$22.50 – \$27.00

The long-standing issue of flat compensation for student employees at UDC has adverse implications across several areas and sectors. Undergraduates often opt for more lucrative, off-campus options and miss out on the enriching opportunity inherent to working with faculty, staff and becoming an integral part of campus life. Similarly, graduate students will have the capacity and experience to seek positions that pay above minimum wage while their advanced studies would be substantively enhanced through increased engagement with their program and discipline. More broadly, UDC campuses stand to be more enlivened and dynamic through the diverse contributions and perspectives of student workers. A student compensation model with more flexibility that is better aligned with the realities of student employment rates nationwide will advance UDC's dual objectives of bolstering institutional morale and more specifically, improving the student experience and supporting all students as they strive to realize their full human potential.

Sources

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TO: The Board of Trustees
FROM: Managing Director of Finance *David A. Franklin*
DATE: July 24, 2023
SUBJECT: Student Employment Worker's Proposed Compensation Scale

Conclusion

It has been concluded that the proposed recommendation to revise the compensation structure for student employees would result in no significant financial impact to the University's operating budget.

Background

The University of the District of Columbia seeks to adjust student compensation, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, to be in line with the new minimum wage which will be adopted by the District of Columbia on July 1, 2023. Currently all UDC students earn minimum wage through a flat compensation practice for student workers. UDC proposes the adoption of pay ranges for various student employment roles, all of which would have a floor of \$17.00 – the new minimum wage in the District. The new student compensation structure will not only accommodate the new minimum wage but also allows students funded through grants, sponsored programs, and external resources to earn compensation above minimum wage which is particularly relevant for graduate students whose grants have provisions for compensation commensurate with their capacity, training, and academic level. Without a corresponding pay table, students funded through grants are unable to avail themselves of higher wages that would be supported through their project budget.

These changes will help ensure the retention of student workers as UDC becomes more competitive with off-campus employment opportunities. Similarly, stronger compensation options for graduate students can potentially improve enrollment in UDC's graduate programs.

Fiscal Impact

The adoption of this modified compensation structure will have no significant fiscal impact upon the institution. UDC will increase student compensation to the new minimum wage of \$17/hour which may result in fewer FTEs that can be supported through current resources. Students who are supported through grants and sponsored programs will be eligible to receive compensation according to the respective budget parameters if they fall within the ranges delineated in the adopted pay table which is provided below:

Based on the internal breakdown of UDC student labor force:

Position:		Education Level:	Recommended Salary Range (Hourly)
Work Study Aide IV		Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
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Student Worker		Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$22.50
Residential Life Advisor		Undergraduate and Graduate	\$17.00 – \$25.50
Undergraduate Research Assistant		Undergraduate	\$17.00 – \$25.50
Graduate Assistant	Teaching	Graduate	\$22.50 – \$27.00
Graduate Assistant	Research	Graduate	\$22.50 – \$27.00

All student workers employed by UDC would adhere to the above pay ranges and under no circumstances could a student earn more than what is prescribed for their given job classification. With the adoption of the student pay table, approximately 300 students who are compensated through grants and sponsored programs may benefit from additional compensation. UDC will continue exploring funding options and resources to offer more students work opportunities above minimum wage.