

**Resolution Opposing the Re-Classification of
Student Leadership Stipends as Financial Aid or Assistance**
Adopted by the DSC on September 21, 2018

WHEREAS, the Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council (hereafter, "DSC") comprises representatives from Doctoral and Master's programs at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; and

WHEREAS, the DSC promotes the democratization of the City University of New York (hereafter, "CUNY") in order to enable its students, faculty, and staff to participate in the important social, political, and economic decisions that affect the quality of their lives and of their community; and

WHEREAS, the DSC serves as the allocating body for Student Government Fees as a portion of all Student Activity Fees, subject to review by the Graduate Center College Association; and

WHEREAS, each student of the Graduate Center pays student activity fees; and

WHEREAS, it is mandated by the CUNY Fiscal Accountability Handbook that DSC leadership shall earn a stipend of a specified amount through a non-tax funds, and makes no mention of financial aid or assistance; and

WHEREAS, the CUNY Board of Trustees provides grounds for the payment of stipends within guidelines determined by the Board (Policy 7.156), and with the only requirement being to report changes to the Board (pt. 4), and also makes no mention of financial aid or assistance; and

WHEREAS, stipends, generally considered compensation for work done in service to the DSC and Graduate Center students, have been distributed directly to student leaders of the Steering Committee and Affiliate Coordinators in the past; and

WHEREAS, a recent change in process imposed upon student funds without consultation or consent by the students would now involve the classification of student leadership stipends as "financial aid" or "financial assistance," thus potentially prohibiting some students from receiving stipend payments on the basis of not being eligible to receive financial aid or assistance; and

WHEREAS, it is the utmost priority of the Steering Committee of the DSC to ensure that all eligible students may have the option to serve as student leaders, regardless of their residency status, their right to work within the United States, or their enrollment in a master's degree program; and

WHEREAS, these antidemocratic changes in process has resulted in the Steering Committee of the DSC, Affiliate Coordinators, and Social Media Correspondents providing services to students without compensation since July 2018, and it is imperative that student leaders receive the pay that is commensurate to their labor; and

WHEREAS, the various administrative offices at the Graduate Center have made these decisions without the consideration of the current policies of CUNY and have failed to produce the precise legal language justifying this change in policy implementation; and

WHEREAS, this procedural change, if rolled out on the other campuses would threaten the democracy and legitimacy of student governance CUNY-wide; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the DSC condemns any procedure change that places oversight over Student Activity Fees into the hands of an administrative body within the Graduate Center; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the DSC condemns and rejects any procedure that reclassifies Student Leadership Stipends as financial aid and/or assistance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the DSC condemns and rejects any policy that could discriminate against the right of International Students and Master's students to serve as student leaders; and

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED, the DSC orders the immediate processing of all back-owed stipend requests (July 2018, August, 2018, and September 2018) by the Business office the Graduate Center, without their reporting to the Office of Financial Aid; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the DSC supports the resolution of the Steering Committee of the DSC to engage directly with the Office of Financial Aid and use any legal and/or extra-level resources to resolve this matter in a manner that is just for all students.