

How Can we Improve Graduate Student Pay and Recruiting within COE?

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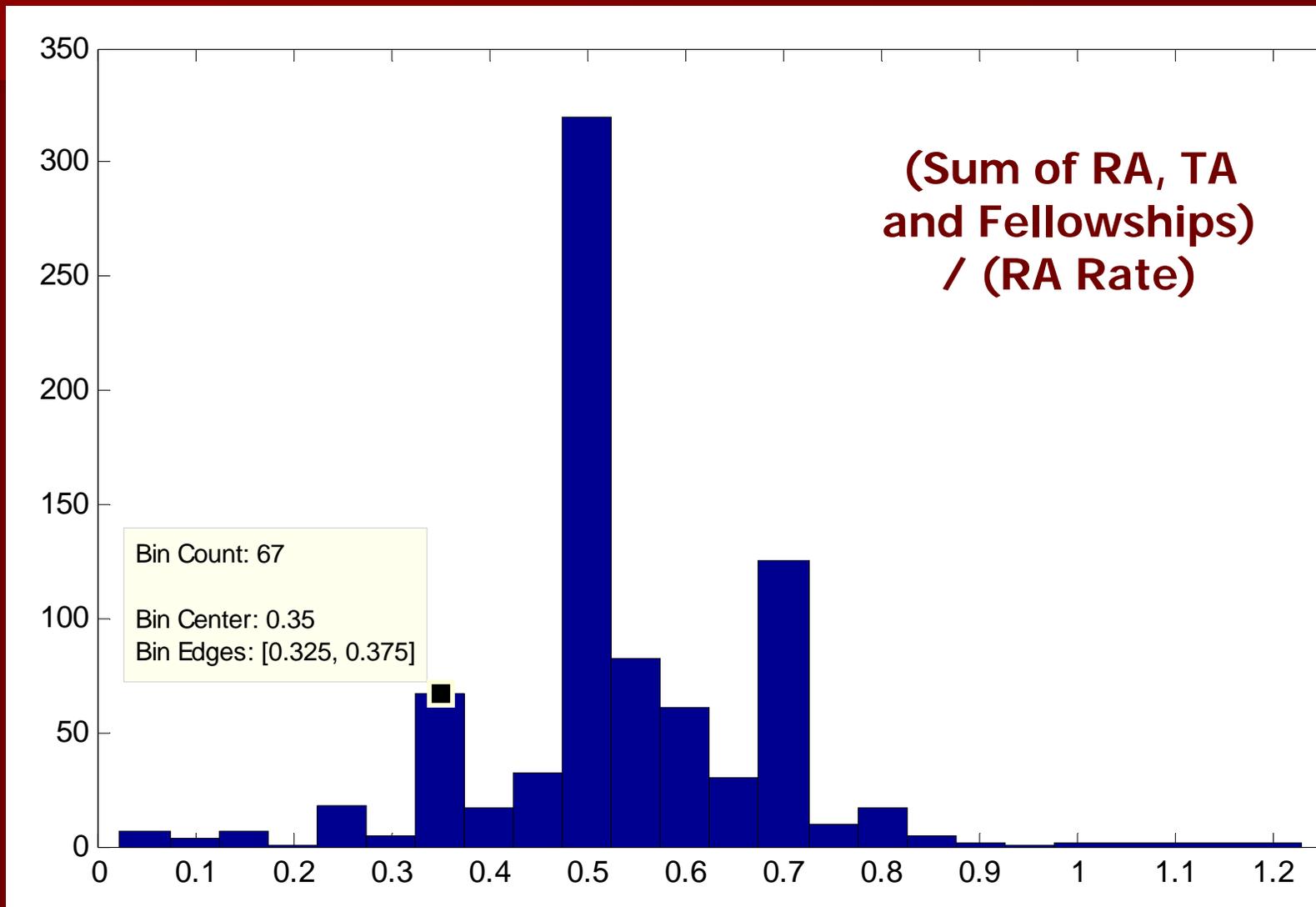
Original Committee Charge

- Should there be a minimum RA appointment within COE?
- Our thoughts:
 - If there are many low-paid RAs/TAs, why would this be a problem? (i.e. why would one limit opportunities and circumvent supply and demand?)
 - Could there be “bait and switch” scenarios in play that lock students into artificially low pay?
 - Are there significant numbers of poorly paid RAs in the COE?
 - If so, why and where are they?

Modified Committee Charge

- How Can we Improve Graduate Student Pay and Recruiting within COE?
- How can we improve the perception of pay at UW-Madison among top institutions?

Distribution of % Appointments



Where are the 33% RAs?

| Number Tot | Number 33% | Percent | Dept Name | Unit |
|------------|------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| 112 | 1 | 0.9 | CBE | 'A191200' |
| 74 | 5 | 6.8 | CEE | 'A191500' |
| 167 | 22 | 13.2 | ECE | 'A192500' |
| 55 | 0 | 0.0 | BME | 'A194200' |
| 41 | 3 | 7.3 | ISYE | 'A195000' |
| 115 | 17 | 14.8 | ME | 'A196200' |
| 69 | 0 | 0.0 | MS&E | 'A197500' |
| 109 | 7 | 6.4 | EP | 'A198000' |
| 71 | 20 | 28.2 | Eng Exp Station | 'A1935xx' |
| 813 | 75 | 9.2 | | |

Comments

- Don't read too much into this comparison
 - RA and TA rates vary widely between disciplines.
- ECE and ISYE admit students without funding. Do any other depts do this?

Factors that may inhibit equitable compensation for grad students

- Are graduate students able to change advisors if they feel they are being treated unfairly?
 - Policies vary widely across departments
 - International students are particularly vulnerable (work restriction, loss of visa)
- Balance with compensation for advisor, who takes considerable risk when hiring.
- **These issues may merit further investigation.**

How can we improve pay for graduate students?

- A “rule” would not be helpful or appropriate.
 - Fractional appointments are needed to supplement TAs, Fellowships, etc...
 - The current system allows students who would otherwise be denied admission an opportunity to prove themselves.
 - A “rule” would presuppose that the faculty do not have the students’ best interest at heart.

How can we improve pay for graduate students?

- What factors might help to drive up pay rates?
 - Recruiting best practices
 - Improve candidate pools (more careful admissions)
- How might we improve perception of pay rates?
 - Make sure that promises to students are clearly articulated and are religiously kept.

Recruiting Approach: CBE

■ Domestic:

- Admissions committee selects top applicants, admits and invites to visit campus.
 - Typically offer admission to ~60-80. ~40-50 visit and about 1/3 of these accept our offer.
- Applicants are not paired with research advisors until October of their first year. Mutual match process.

■ International:

- ~20 offers with about 50% acceptance. Goal is ~1/3 of graduate students are international. Target students from certain universities.
- Virtual visits. Videos of recruiting talks available and group Skype calls with recruiting committee

- Offers guarantee five years of funding. There is a two semester TA requirement.

Recruiting Approach: EP

■ Domestic:

- Admissions committee selects top applicants (with input from faculty), admits and invites to visit campus.
 - Typically 20-40 visit, 30-50% accept offers.
- Applicants paired with a research group and individual professors make offers.
- TA offers (very few) are made to qualified applicants who do not receive/accept RA offers.

■ International:

- Offers made on a case-by-case basis, driven by faculty
- Offers promise funding for one year only, with the understanding that it is always renewed annually.

Recruiting Recommendations

- Market-driven stipends. Identify peer group and collect data from UW students who get offers from these programs.
- Highlight true value of offer, including insurance and other benefits
- Develop policy to target high-demand students, e.g. bonuses for fellowship students

Recommendations for COE

- Provide an insurance fund to help departments make guaranteed funding offers over a set period (i.e. 5 years).
- Educate departments on best practices for recruiting.
- Other Ideas
 - Increase TA salaries so these can be viable recruiting tools, i.e. encourage more students to gain teaching experience through one-semester TA appointments?
 - Increase transparency for international students before they arrive?