

COVID-19 AND GRADUATE EDUCATION: GRADUATE DEANS WEIGH IN

In June of 2020, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) reported on data collected from its *Survey on the Impact of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic on Graduate Education*. The survey was distributed to CGS member institutions between May 4th and May 11th of 2020. It yielded 201 responses from graduate deans in the United States and Canada.

Respondents were asked how confident they were that their institutions would be able to execute certain actions during the 2020–21 academic year. Findings indicate that graduate deans were most confident that their institutions would be able to provide “adequate training, resources, and support for graduate teaching assistants to teach online.” Graduate deans reported the least confidence in their institutions’ ability to allocate “adequate resources to engage in the international outreach and recruitment activities for graduate students to meet the enrollment target.”

(Using 5 Point Likert Scale)	
AREAS	CONFIDENCE
Providing adequate training, resources, and support for graduate teaching assistants to teach online.	3.51
Providing adequate training, resources, and support for graduate faculty to teach and mentor graduate students virtually.	3.47
Providing adequate training, resources, and support for graduate administrators and other departmental/program staff members to help graduate students navigate this crisis.	3.37
Maintaining the staff FTEs of your unit (i.e., Graduate School or equivalent).	3.22
Providing adequate resources and support for graduate students to cope with psychological/emotional challenges associated with this crisis.	3.22
Maintaining the student employment opportunities (both graduate and undergraduate) in your unit (i.e., Graduate School or equivalent).	3.10
Providing adequate resources and support for graduate students to meet basic needs (e.g., food and housing, etc.) during this crisis.	3.04
Maintaining the total available funds for grant aid, assistantship, fellowship, and other financial support for graduate students at the pre-COVID-19 level.	3.02
Allocating adequate resources to engage in domestic outreach and recruitment activities for graduate students to ensure the diversity of the incoming cohort.	2.92
Ensuring that graduate students can and have access to experiential learning opportunities (e.g., internships, clinical training, etc.)	2.70
Maintaining the total available direct financial support for graduate student travel and other professional development activities (e.g., conferences, field works, and professional development, etc.) to the pre-COVID-19 level.	2.45
Allocating adequate resources to engage in the international outreach and recruitment activities for graduate students to meet the enrollment target.	2.29

Respondents were also asked to select three resources/needs they plan to protect as they navigate the financial effects of COVID-19 within their institutions. The table below illustrates graduate deans’ top priorities for the upcoming academic year.

AREAS	Priority			
	#1	#2	#3	TOTAL
Grant aid, assistantship, fellowship, and other financial support for graduate students.	75	28	21	124
Supporting graduate students meeting basic needs during this crisis.	37	35	19	91
Offering graduate students support for coping with psychological challenges associated with this crisis.	10	21	41	72
Maintaining the staff FTE of my unit.	14	25	18	57
Engaging in domestic outreach and recruitment activities for graduate students to ensure the diversity of the incoming cohort.	14	19	20	53
Supporting graduate faculty to teach and mentor graduate students virtually.	17	15	14	46
Funds for direct student financial support for graduate student travels (e.g., conferences, field works, and professional development, etc.) and other professional development activities.	5	12	15	32
Engaging in the international outreach and recruitment activities for graduate students to meet the enrollment target.	8	8	9	25
Providing preparation and support for graduate assistants to transition to online teaching.	5	10	9	24
Programming for graduate career development activities.	0	7	14	21
Maintaining the student employment opportunities (both undergraduate and graduate) in my unit.	3	8	7	18
Other areas (Please specify).	2	1	1	4

Note: Public Institutions and R1 Doctoral Universities were overrepresented among respondents.

Source: *The Impact of COVID-19 on Graduate Education*, The Council of Graduate Schools. View the report here: https://cgsnet.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/CGS_ResearchInBrief_COVID19_June_2020_For_Web.pdf.