



Council of Graduate Schools

Statement on the Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Budget

February 15, 2011

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) commends President Obama for releasing a budget that emphasizes investments in education, research and innovation. The proposed budget presents a strategy for moving forward on the priorities outlined in the State of the Union message to out-innovate, out-educate and out-build the rest of the world while taking responsibility for our deficit and reforming government.

The FY 2012 budget maintains, and in some instances increases, investments in key graduate education programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health, the Department of Energy, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Education. Given the current economic situation, CGS especially appreciates the following key provisions that support graduate education and research:

- A 45% increase over the FY 10 enacted budget for the Graduate Research Fellowship program at NSF, as part of the ongoing plan to maintain the doubling of new fellowship awards, increase the cost of education allowance, and to begin addressing the long-stagnant stipend level.
- Continued support for graduate education programs at the U.S. Department of Education through level funding of the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) program and continued level funding to support Javits fellows.

We are concerned about the proposed elimination of the in-school interest subsidy on loans for graduate and professional school students. In 2007-2008, 44% of students at the master's level financed their education at least in part with loans as did nearly 32% of doctoral students.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that by 2018 more jobs will require people with graduate degrees, specifically an 18% increase in jobs requiring a master's degree and a 17% increase in jobs requiring doctoral degrees.

Encouraging more students to pursue and complete graduate studies must be a national priority. We look forward to working with the Administration and Congress on maintaining fair and equitable federal student loan policies that address the needs of all students pursuing higher education including those at the graduate and professional levels.

Today's graduate students are tomorrow's creators -- scientists, engineers, teachers, experts and leaders in a wide array of fields. They are also the future college and university faculty we will need if we are to meet President Obama's goal of doubling the number of college graduates by 2020.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. Among U.S. institutions, CGS members award 93% of the doctoral degrees and 76% of the master's degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*

* Based on data from the 2009 CGS/GRE Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees

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