Graduate Assistant Parental Accommodation Guidelines

It is important that graduate assistants becoming parents be accommodated; that parental accommodation be regarded as accepted practice; that the terms of an accommodation be reasonable and appropriate; that accommodations within a unit be consistent and equitable in application; and that a request for parental accommodation, if denied, receive timely review.

1. Parental accommodation is a “best practice.” Departments are encouraged to continue their custom of offering reasonable accommodation to graduate assistants. Though reasonable accommodation will vary across campus, it might include providing stipend and benefits for a period whose duration would be determined locally (for example, four to six weeks).

2. Departments, faculty, and graduate assistants should continue to work collegially to fashion the duration, schedule, and other terms of an accommodation, recognizing that these may differ from case to case owing to individual student circumstances and departmental cultures.

3. A graduate assistant whose request for a reasonable accommodation is not approved should consult first with his or her Director of Graduate Studies or Department Chair, next with his or her college Dean, and last, if necessary, with the Dean of the Graduate School. Alternatively, the assistant may go directly to the Ombuds Officer for Graduate Students for advice and/or informal mediation. In either case, the Dean of the Graduate School will serve as the final arbiter between college/department and student.

Approved by the Graduate Council on October 26, 2011