

Dear deans, associate deans, graduate program directors, and colleagues,

As you're aware, the evolution in graduate education structure and operations—along with the expiration of a funding stream that made possible the award of Chancellor Scholarships directly to students—has prompted reconsideration of central administrative funding streams intended to promote graduate student recruitment and retention.

The most meaningful way to make CU Denver graduate education attainable for more people—and to attract scholars of high caliber—is through scholarship support distributed directly to students. In consideration of the above, I am pleased to announce that we now have approval to make the recently piloted Graduate Education Scholarships program permanent and an ongoing part of our Office of Graduate Education budget.

In recent years, central administrative support for graduate education came from two sources:

1. **Funding allocated to doctoral programs** to be used at the discretion of deans to directly or indirectly support doctoral student recruitment in a variety of ways within each school or college. While these funds benefited our recruitment for 14 CU Denver doctoral programs, they were inequitably distributed, and their usage was not tracked by or reported to central administration, thereby inhibiting accountability and assessment in a time of increasing budget pressure. This funding mechanism did not provide needed financial support for students in more than 50 CU Denver master's programs.
2. **Scholarship funding through the Chancellor Scholarships** program. While for several years this scholarship program—the only university-wide scholarship program for graduate students—had robust funding thanks to a one-time 2019 allocation from the CU President's office, those funds have now been fully committed and cannot support future scholarship commitments beyond those already made for 2024-25 through the piloted Graduate Education Scholarship program.

Since it is a high priority to ensure a consistent ongoing funding stream for scholarships not only to doctoral but also to master's students, we are redeploying the budget line that had been allocated to general doctoral program support, and will use these funds to support the Graduate Education Scholarships program that we piloted effectively in Academic Year 2024-2025.

These Graduate Education Scholarships will be allocated based on nominations of deserving master's and doctoral students submitted by graduate faculty, program directors, and chairs. Approximately \$455,000 in scholarships will be available for allocation beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year, in maximum amounts of \$5,000

(master's) to \$7,000 (doctoral) for full-year scholarships, prorated for one-semester allocations, respectively.

These nominations will be reviewed on a rolling basis by a Graduate Education Scholarships Committee, which will make award recommendations to the AVC of Graduate Education. This Committee, consisting of members from Graduate Council, the Graduate Support Team (GEST), and representatives from each school and college, will be formed and will begin convening in late fall 2024. (More updates will follow in coming months about evolutions in the Graduate Council and the Graduate Education Support Team.) Additional information about scholarship nomination criteria, the nomination process, and related timelines and allocation amounts will be posted on the Graduate Education website in mid fall 2024.

While we recognize that some programs have relied on the doctoral program funding that will no longer exist to fund their priorities, we are committed to finding a long-term solution, including through fundraising, for graduate scholarships to increase our efficiency and ability to recruit and retain graduate students.

Please share this email with relevant members of your team. If you have any questions or concerns about the Graduate Education Scholarship program, please reach out to me directly. Thank you for all you do to support graduate education at CU Denver.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Kocet, Ph.D., LMHC, NCC, ACS
Assistant Vice Chancellor | Graduate Education